

# Christian on Sunday and Atheist on Monday Bridging the Faith and Work Gap in Croatian Culture<sup>1</sup>

## I. PART

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### Abstract

*Croatia is predominantly “Christian” (over 90 percent), yet is among the most corrupt countries in the EU. The complexity of Croatian culture and history have added to the problems of corruption, leadership and a negative attitude towards work. Through pilot projects, we saw that an integrated view of faith and work through a clearly communicated biblical framework can contribute to the solution. Surveys confirmed that context, culture and biblical illiteracy are key factors that must be taken into account. This thesis-project proposes more intentional, contextualized, faith based projects to bridge the value gap and contribute to a more ethical culture in Croatia.*

*Key words: integrating faith and work, theology of work, business ethics, Reformation, corruption, leadership, Communism, contextualization, worldview, Croatian culture, ethical culture, values, local church and work*

<sup>1</sup> This paper is a shortened and revised version of the first part of the thesis-project (Glavaš, 2016). Some parts of the research results were presented at the TEDx Koprivnica Library, Croatia, April, 2016. Some parts of the results were presented at the International Mission Conference (CEEAMS): *Green Pastures? Human Mobility and Christian Communities in Central and Eastern Europe*, Osijek, Croatia, May, 2016. Some results were presented at the International Leadership Conference TraNet2017, Cyprus, February, 2017.

## How to Build an Ethical Healthy Culture in Croatia?

*In nothing has the church so lost Her hold on reality as in Her failure to understand and respect the secular vocation. She has allowed work and religion to become separate departments, and is astonished to find that, as a result, the secular work is turned to purely selfish and destructive ends, and that the greater part of the world's intelligent workers have become irreligious, or at least, uninterested in religion. But is it astonishing? How can anyone remain interested in a religion that seems to have no concern with nine tenths of his life?*

–Dorothy Sayers, *Creed or Chaos*

During the 90's, the hope of a better country was on the minds and hearts of many people in Croatia, and some gave their lives for its future. Unfortunately, many of these dreams were ambushed in the ethical void of post-Communist, post-war Croatia. The fact that by percentage Croatia is a highly “Christian” country (more than 91 percent), sadly does not mean that it is a country of high ethics. In reality, as we will look at more closely, Croatia struggles on many ethical battlegrounds. Therefore, it is relevant to ask the question: How do you build a healthy ethical culture within a (new) country? How can we best share and communicate the value of the integration of faith and work in Croatian culture?

Ethnographer Clifford Geertz calls the concept of culture “systems of shared meaning” (Griffin 1997, 274). Geert Hofstede talks about the same collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another (Hofstede 1997, 5). Edgar H. Shein, who is considered a founding father in the field of corporate culture, wrote that “culture is the sum total of all the shared, taken-for-granted assumptions that a group has learned throughout history” (Shein 1999, 29). What can we learn from the Croatian “systems of shared meaning” that developed throughout history? Where did the break occur between faith and faith lived out? We see a gap between a declared Christian faith and the lack of visible works which should flow out from such a belief. Rarely today are the words “faith” and “work” used together in any manner within the Croatian business community. But if faith is engrained in the Croatian culture, why is it limited to a private, Sunday only, influence? If Croats connected Sunday and Monday, living out their (spiritual, moral, ethical) values, a workplace theology that is communicated through their work, would this contribute to a positive (ethical) change in the culture? Could the integration of faith and work redeem and transform the motivation and meaning of work? Those are some of the questions that this thesis-project tried to answer. We examined some elements of the historical and cultural foundations of Croatia, the

biblical foundations for a theology of work, and ways to bridge the gap between faith and work in the Croatian culture. The original paper contained five chapters. Chapter one provides a short introduction to Croatia, its current problems and challenges, and presents some survey results. Chapter two gives an overview of the broader body of literature and works in fields related to this thesis. Chapter three presents the biblical foundations and a (new) biblical framework for the integration of faith and work towards a biblical theology of work. Chapter four provides the research methodology and research results, and focuses on the EQUIP Leadership program that served as our case study within the Croatian context. Chapter five presents lessons learned, and ideas and strategies for moving this research forward. This paper is the first part of a shortened and revised summary of the doctoral thesis-project. This first article will focus on some of the current Croatian problems and challenges and important cultural and historical influences.

## **Description of the Problems in Croatian culture**

*We have to reject the division of life into a sacred realm, limited to things like worship and personal morality, over against a secular realm that includes science, politics, economics, and the rest of the public arena. This dichotomy in our minds is the greatest barrier to liberating the power of the gospel across the whole of culture today.*

–Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity*

To begin, we will identify some problems and challenges in Croatia today and explore how and why these problems developed. Why is there such a gap between the claim of being a Christian (on Sunday) and the practice of business ethics in the marketplace (on Monday)? Understanding Croatian culture matters, and we learn from it in order to speak and live with integrity in it.

### ***Introduction to Croatia***

People in Croatia have declared themselves, in the last few censuses, as predominantly Christian. The last census from 2011 shows that Croatia has 91.36 percent Christians of which Roman Catholics make 86.28 percent, Orthodox 4.44 percent, Protestants 0.34 percent, and other non-denominational Christians 0.30 percent.<sup>2</sup> This number is 1.54 percent lower than the census from 2001 that

2 All the statistical information about the census is taken from the Croatian Bureau of Statistics, <http://www.dzs.hr/>.

showed 92.90 percent of Christians in Croatia. Roman Catholicism is a significant part of Croatian culture and the national identity with its historical roots. The first Croatian king, Tomislav, was named king in 925 by Pope John X. Historians have different dates for the Christianization of Croats, but the general agreement is that it started between the 7th-9th century and gradually spread. The oldest archeological monument is Višeslav's baptistry from the 8th century. This all would tend to indicate that Croatia is a very religious country, and should be considered conservative with traditional values and an ethical culture. After twenty-five years of its independence, the Croatian economic and social situation is not good. The negative statistics and results paint a very discouraging picture. What makes this picture so sad is that Croatia is a new country that had dreamed about a better future with its independence and nation state for centuries.

### ***Economy***

One good description and short economic overview of Croatia is given by Index Mundi (2014):

Though still one of the wealthiest of the former Yugoslav republics, Croatia's economy suffered badly during the 1991-95 war. The country's output during that time collapsed and Croatia missed the early waves of investment in Central and Eastern Europe that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall. Between 2000 and 2007, however, Croatia's economic fortunes began to improve with moderate but steady GDP growth between 4% and 6% led by a rebound in tourism and credit-driven consumer spending. Inflation over the same period remained tame and the currency, the Kuna, stable. Croatia experienced an abrupt slowdown in the economy in 2008 and has yet to recover; economic growth was stagnant or negative in each year since 2009.

With a crisis in the economy that has been steady since 2009, it is no surprise that unemployment is a huge problem in Croatia now, although it has been high since the 90s. From 1996 to 2017, the unemployment rate in Croatia averaged 18.01 percent, with an all time high of 23.60 percent in January 2002 and a record low of 12.20 percent in July of 2008 (Trading Economics 2017). Unemployment is very high among younger people and sadly many young educated people have left Croatia in search of work and a better life. Since Croatia joined the European Union, there has been a steady exodus of skilled and unskilled workers to EU countries. Adding to this is the fact that for every five workers, we have four pensioners. By the last census in 2011, Croatia had become a country with a more elderly population, the average age of Croatians increased from 30.7 in 1953 to 41.7 in 2011. Including the fact that Croatia has serious demographic problems with a high mortality rate compared with the birth rate, the picture gets a darker tone.

### ***What Factors Have Most Influenced the Problems in Croatia?***

Croatia, known for its beautiful coastline, is a country of contradictions. On one hand, it is a new independent country that emerged only twenty-five years ago, and on the other hand, it has a long and rich history with the amphitheatre in Pula constructed in 27-68 AD. On the one hand, Croatia is a top tourist destination in the world with tourists coming from all over the world daily, and yet, on the other hand, buses leave daily filled with Croatians seeking financial stability and jobs outside of the country. Another set of contradictions is the high number of people who declare themselves to be Christians, and that would tend to indicate a very religious and ethical country, and yet it is one of the more corrupt countries in EU. With just these few facts mentioned about the situation in Croatia, one can see that Croatia faces many problems and challenges. The problems are not disputed but the reasons and causes for them are a topic for discussion. I conducted three separate surveys.<sup>3</sup> When asked for their opinion regarding the main reasons for Croatia's economic and social crisis, unemployment, high debt, brain drain, and loss of values and trust, survey participants chose as their primary responses (participants could choose from ten causes formulated in the survey or add their own): 1. Corruption, 2. Inefficient leadership (politics and economy) and 3. Negative attitude about work (including laziness, nepotism and irresponsibility).

Experts approach these causes in many ways to suggest solutions. In this work, our focus was to look through a faith lens, not in a theoretical way, but a practical, working faith. By looking through this lens, particularly its biblical foundation, we hope to offer a new vision for work - a practical sense of mission and meaning that would be accessible and communicated in a way people could understand and apply. We will briefly focus on those three main reasons mentioned in our surveys, starting with corruption.

#### ***Corruption***

Corruption is a huge problem which infects all areas of society. Analysis by the National Competitiveness Council (2015) in cooperation with the World Economic Forum for 2014-2015 place *Corruption* in the third place for the most problematic factors for doing business in Croatia after the *Inefficient government bureaucracy* (1), and *Policy instability* (2). Corruption can be individual and systemic. There are many methods and ways of corruption, but we will list only a few of the most common: bribery, fraud, theft, extortion, nepotism, favoritism, clientelism, conflict of interest, and the lack of transparency. Transparency Inter-

3 The surveys were done for the thesis-project (Glavaš, 2016) with a sample of 229 people. Surveys were conducted in 2014 and 2015. Details of the survey results and methodology will be presented in the second paper (part II).

national ranked Croatia as the fifth worst EU country in 2014. Behind Croatia are Romania, Italy, Greece and Bulgaria.

### ***Inefficient Leadership***

The second answer, mentioned as a main cause of these problems, was inefficient leadership. The present leadership crisis in Croatia can be seen in many areas, from politics and economy to church leadership. Media exposure of prominent political leaders adds to the general opinion of a “corrupt leadership” which contributes to the loss of trust in institutions. Francis Fukuyama (1995, 7) argued that “A nation’s well-being, as well as its ability to compete, is conditioned by a single, pervasive cultural characteristic: the level of trust inherent in the society.” According to *Pilarov barometar hrvatskog društva*, research about public trust levels in 2016 portrays a very low trust in institutions (1 low - 10 high): in Political parties 2.49, Croatian parliament 2.86, Government 3.12, Justice system 3.14, EU parliament 3.82, Police 4.42, President of Croatia 4.67, Church 4.94, Health System 5.21, and Education 5.59. The Croatian army had the highest trust rating (5.67). It is hard to change a culture if its institutions of culture formation are not fundamentally reformed, restructured and changed. While individuals are not powerless, institutions have much greater power.

Many explanations can be given for this situation, and history provides one of them. Many centuries of being under foreign rulers, kingdoms and empires developed a long tradition of suspicion of any leadership and shaped the leadership culture of the nation. With this stigma on leadership, it is often not seen as a desirable position for anyone who tries to live within ethical, moral principles. This, as well as the corruption within the system, repels potential ethical leaders and leaves an empty vacuum where it is hard to even find leaders to develop. For the future of Croatia, it is important to develop a culture of ethical leadership with competent leaders and build institutions with integrity.

### ***Negative Attitude toward Work***

The third reason mentioned as to what factors have led to the present economic and social crisis is a negative attitude toward work (laziness, nepotism, irresponsibility). In order to understand the present work culture in Croatia, we need to understand the influence of Communism, among other issues. For forty five years, the way to have a successful career was determined by your membership in the Communist party. Members of the Communist party were usually more upwardly mobile in their careers. There was a huge gap between the public and private sphere that created a culture of “double ethics”<sup>4</sup>. People tried to create,

4 Very helpful research on the impact of Communism on the way people think in post Communist society is the research paper, “Shadows of the Past” (Kušnierk and Čičel, 1995).

privately, a sphere of trust in their homes and built nice houses and gardens. At the same time, they did not care about public property, did not show commitment or initiative in their workplace, and did not mind lying or stealing from their companies. Often the saying was, “You cannot pay me as little as the little I can work.”

### ***Integrating Faith and Work***

Many people, from politicians to economists and sociologists and others, are trying to find the right answers to the present crisis and problems. Although scholars will look at religion, very few of them are looking at biblical faith and faith-based initiatives and programs as a potential solution, or at least as a contribution to the solution. Identifying the clear diagnosis of the situation helps in solving the problems. If the causes of the problems are spiritual, then we must look to spiritual solutions. I think that a rightly understood and clearly communicated integration of faith and work is a missing element in this discussion. Because Croatia is a country with a large number of people declaring themselves to be Christians, this provides a natural starting point.

## **Understanding Influences on Croatian Culture**

*If I were again facing the challenge to integrate Europe, I would probably start with culture.*

–Jean Monnet, *The Founder of the European Community*

Before attempting to show how the integration of faith and work, a biblical theology of work, might contribute to the solution of problems in Croatia, we will look carefully at what has already been done in addressing similar problems. We will look at literature in four broad areas. We start with understanding a paper that closely aligns with what we want to do. R. Paul Stevens saw the challenges of taking a biblical theology of work to Asia, and recognized the need for adapting and contextualizing a theology of work to suit different Asian cultures. We will look at what he did with the goal of taking a similar approach for Croatia. Secondly, we will look more deeply at Croatian culture and history. What are the characteristics of Croatia that should guide our contextualization? What is important or helpful in our adaptation for Croatia? Thirdly, we will look at literature in the field of the theology of work in two parts: Roman Catholic and Protestant-Evangelical. We do this because the country is broadly Catholic, but there are significant, helpful resources in the Protestant world. Because Croatia has a largely “Christian culture,” we believe a proper teaching of the biblical theology of work can be effective in addressing the issues in Croatia. Finally, we will look at key literature in leadership. We do this because it will take strong leadership to

bring about the desired changes in Croatia. As we look forward to deepening the impact of our work in Croatia, all of these factors will need to be included.

## **Adapting a Theology of Work to Culture**

The importance of contextualization was emphasized in the working paper “A Contextualized Theology of Work for Asia” (Stevens, 2007). This working paper is the result of the Asian consultation on marketplace theology held in Manila in 2007 where participants from different Asian countries reflected on the question of how to develop a contextualized marketplace theology for Asian countries. This is what we will try to do in relation to the Croatian culture and values. At the same time, there are areas where the gospel and the Word of God confront the culture and worldview of a particular culture what creates a challenge for contextualization. Some of the contextualizing questions asked of participants were:

- What does work mean in your culture?
- What are the cultural factors that influence how people view work?
- Does Scripture affirm, enhance or critique these factors?
- What is the actual work ethic that is in place (meaning, not how does one work ethically, but what makes people work, or work hard, or not work hard)?
- What cultural influences need to be factored into developing a theology and spirituality of the marketplace (all arenas of exchange) in your culture?
- What great biblical themes are important for developing an indigenous, local marketplace theology in your culture?
- How does Scripture point to the meaning of, practice of, and purpose of engagement in the marketplace?
- What local cultural factors and global powers influence our understanding of and practice of engagement in the marketplace? (Stevens 2007, 4-5)

Before answering the contextualizing questions asked of participants, the question was asked: “Why a theology of work?” The answers given in the paper are a great reminder and motivation for our work in Croatia.

- It brings meaning to that portion of a person’s life that occupies most of his or her waking hours; it is central rather than peripheral.
- It is essential for putting work in its place, neither one’s god (the center of one’s meaning) nor simply a curse.
- It is critical for the liberation of the whole people of God for their full-time service in the world since the church is a rhythm of gathering and dispersion.

- It is critical in understanding the mission of the whole people of God since the workplace is where most people “live” and is generally not accessible to professional missionaries.
- Scripture indicates that the deeds of Christians follow them and there will be work in the new heaven and new earth. Since work is not merely a transitory and temporary part of our humanity, we need to understand work to be fully human (Stevens 2007, 7).

We saw that the majority of Croatians declared themselves to be Christians, but at the same time, we find high corruption in the marketplace. The integration of faith (values, virtues, ethics) in the workplace is missing, and the gap between God on Sunday and Mammon on Monday is wide. Stevens and the participants of the consultation point out that one of the difficulties in mobilizing the church towards marketplace ministry is the inadequate understanding regarding a biblical theology of work.

The two words used by God in his command (Gen 2:15) to Adam to describe work are *abad* (work) and *shamar* (take care); interestingly, these words are also used to mean ‘service to God’ and ‘keeping of his commandments’ respectively. This implies that no distinction between sacred and secular work is to be made. Likewise the word *diakonia* is used both for ministry of the word and service at tables in Acts 6:2, 4 (Stevens 2007, 7).

Cultural differences in various Asian countries affected the adaptation and contextualization of the theology of work. This paper, and conversations with my mentor, challenged the question, “What would a contextualized biblical theology of work look like in Croatian culture?”

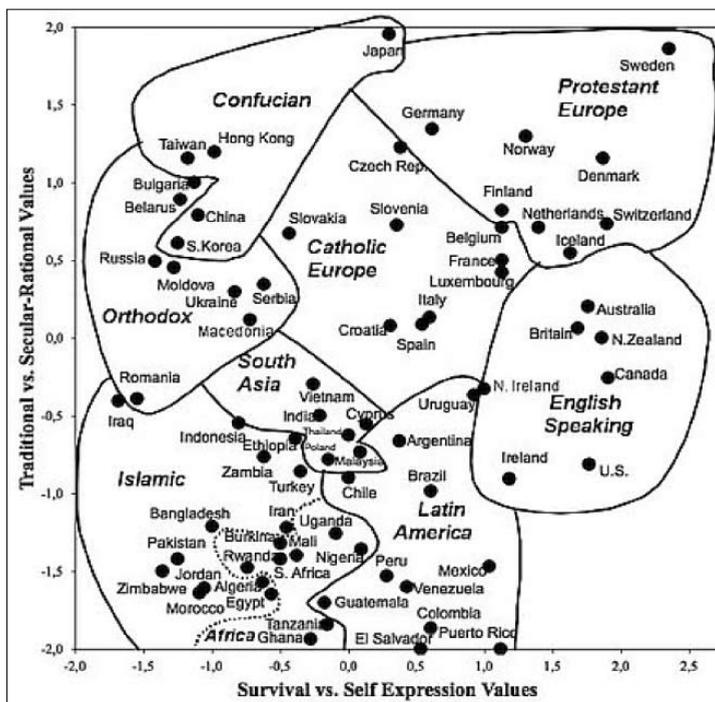
## **Influences that have Affected Values in Croatian Culture**

Many influences throughout history have affected values in Croatia. In an attempt to understand some of them, we looked at different books and papers and considered different authors who wrote about values. The World Value Surveys (WVS) provides today’s social scientists with large samples of information, particularly on values. Ronald Inglehart’s paper is based on the WVS and focuses on culture and democracy. Croatia participated in the European Value Survey (EVS) for the first time in 1999. We will look at two papers from Croatian authors that are based on the European Value Survey (Josip Baloban). Geert Hofstede’s study of culture helps us understand the specific dimensions of Croatian’s culture. Jim Sire’s book, *The Universe Next Door*, gives a good introduction to worldview, an important part of every culture. We will also look at some of the consequences of Communism on the business culture in Eastern Europe.

### Ronald Inglehart - *Culture and Democracy*

Ronald Inglehart (professor of political science and program director at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan) is one of the founders of the Eurobarometer surveys and is also involved in World Values Surveys. The following map shows where Croatia fits in comparison with other countries.

Note: The Traditional/Secular-rational values dimension reflects the contrast between societies in which religion is very important and those in which it is not. Societies near the traditional pole emphasize the importance of parent-child ties and deference to authority, along with absolute standards and traditional family values, and reject divorce, abortion, euthanasia, and suicide. These societies have high levels of national pride, and a nationalistic outlook. Societies with secular-rational values have the opposite preferences on all of these topics. The second major dimension of cross-cultural variation is the Survival/Self-expression value. The shift from survival values to self-expression values also includes a shift in child-rearing values, from an emphasis on hard work to an emphasis on imagina-



Source: The Inglehart-Welzel cultural map of the world (Inglehart, 2009b), [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/258190265\\_fig1\\_Figure-1-The-Inglehart-Welzel-cultural-map-of-the-world-Inglehart-2009b](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/258190265_fig1_Figure-1-The-Inglehart-Welzel-cultural-map-of-the-world-Inglehart-2009b).

tion and tolerance as important values to teach a child. And it goes with a rising sense of subjective well-being that is conducive to an atmosphere of tolerance, trust and political moderation.

Researchers divided Europe and the world according to the religious influence particular countries and cultures had. But Inglehart (2000, 86) also points out:

Religious traditions seem to have had an enduring impact on the contemporary value systems of sixty-five societies, as Weber, Huntington, and others have argued. But religion is not the only factor shaping culture. A society's culture reflects its entire historical heritage. One of the most important historical events of the twentieth century was the rise and fall of the Communist empire that once ruled a third of the world's population. Communism has left a clear imprint on the value systems of those who lived under it.

Croatian culture was significantly shaped by Communism, which we will look at more closely from other authors, but also by a long historical heritage of Roman Catholicism. As a Roman Catholic country, it shares many similarities with other Catholic countries. One factor can be illustrated in regard to trust. We saw in the previous chapter a very low trust level in institutions in Croatia:

Of the nineteen societies in which more than 35 percent of the public believe that most people can be trusted, fourteen are historically Protestant, three are Confucian influenced, one is predominantly Hindu, and only one (Ireland) is historically Catholic. Of the ten lowest-ranking societies...eight are historically Catholic; none are historically Protestant (Inglehart 2000, 91).

In explaining the value difference between Catholic and Protestant countries, it is important to keep the historical perspective and impact the churches had on society in mind. "Protestant and Catholic societies seem to display distinctive values today mainly because of the historical impact their respective churches had on the societies as a whole, rather than through the contemporary influence of the churches" (2000, 91).

Inglehart (2000, 96) concludes his paper with an emphasis on the importance of culture in the development of democracy, as the transition in Eastern Europe vividly showed:

The evidence suggests that culture plays a much more crucial role in democracy than the literature of the past two decades would indicate. The syndrome of trust, tolerance, well-being, and participatory values tapped by the survival/self-expression dimension seems particularly crucial. In the long run, democracy is not attained simply by making institutional changes or through elite-level maneuvering. Its survival also depends on the values and beliefs of ordinary citizens.

Inglehart's paper suggests that culture plays a significant role in democracy, that the values and beliefs of people are of crucial importance, and that Protestant and Catholic countries have different values "because of the historical impact their respective churches" had on culture. In the case of Croatia, this suggests that we need to understand the values and beliefs of people that were influenced by the Roman Catholic Church in the past, and by Communism in the 45 years of its reign with its atheistic ideology and value system. Understanding some of these past influences on Croatian culture provides some explanation of the gap and dualism between faith and work in Croatia today.

**Josip Baloban (ed.) – *In Search of Identity***

Croatia joined the European Value Study (EVS) for the first time in 1999. A book edited by Josip Baloban summarizes the results of the EVS research and compares the values in Croatia with other European countries. A team of scholars from different fields (sociology, theology, philosophy and psychology) led by Josip Baloban from the Catholic Theological Seminary conducted the research. "Egalitarian syndrome," is often used as an analytical concept in sociology and is promoted by known Croatian sociologist, Josip Županov.<sup>5</sup> Egalitarianism, as a sociopolitical understanding, longed for total equality among people and promoted the redistribution of goods and wealth equally among people - characteristic of a Socialist system and ideology. The deeply rooted concepts of a classless, welfare society with free education and health care are still present in the memory of many people. Egalitarianism in Socialist countries did not allow the development of entrepreneurship, private enterprise and "making money" was not positively valued or encouraged. Those who were small (micro) business owners often felt like enemies of the state.

It is important to note here that the former Socialist Yugoslavia emerged out of industrially undeveloped, high agrarian societies before World War II. Industrialization in the former Yugoslavia had a particularly Socialist (government planned) flavor. Practically, entrepreneurship and a market economy with its institutions, instruments, models, and the tradition of a free market economy (Capitalism) were unknown. The Communist party, with state-owned companies and a planned economy, provided full employment and safety for most people.

5 Josip Županov (1923-2004) was a very influential sociologist in Croatia. Recently, the concept of "egalitarian syndrome" and Županov's work have been criticized in that he has not supported his theoretical concept with research. Josip Županov's thesis about the egalitarian syndrome as an obstacle to development is very influential across the social sciences in Croatia. This paper analyzes the theoretical and empirical basis of Županov's work on radical egalitarianism from the late 1960s (Dolenc 2015).

Josip Baloban (2005, 11-17) describes three distinct periods in the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the Yugoslavian (Communist) government. The first period is from the end of World War II (1945) till the end of the Vatican II (1965), the second period is from 1966 when diplomatic relationship between Yugoslavia and the Vatican were established till the election in 1990, and the third period is after 1990. Croatia signed two international contracts (1996 and 1998) with the Vatican. It appears that religion remained a steady part of Croatian culture.

The question about religion was not asked in the censuses between 1953 and 1991 so there is no valid comparison for that time period.<sup>6</sup> Comparable research in the city of Zagreb in the 60s and 70s still shows a strong confessional identification (96 percent declared themselves religious in 1968 and 94 percent in 1972).<sup>7</sup> In the 80s, this percentage went down (85 percent in 1982 and 66 percent in 1987). Other comparable research from Zagreb, as the capital city, showed a higher number of people who, on a personal level, declared themselves not religious in the 70s (35 percent non-religious) and 80s (40-44 percent non-religious). Similar research done (1984/85) in other parts of Croatia confirmed this higher percentage of non-religious people (42 percent non-religious and 36 percent religious).

Having in mind the context and time in which this rare religious research was done, it is significant for our thesis to see the high number of people who did declare their religious identity even during Communism. Was it only symbolically connected with national identity? This statistic from the past begs further research as to how much dualism existed between Sunday and Monday. We lack comparable research from the past, but what the new EVS research shows is that there is still “a tension between Croatian high religiosity and the low influence of the religion on attitudes and behavior of people today” (Baloban 2005, 79).

Are we “Christians” on Sunday and “Atheists” on Monday? How can we bridge this faith and work gap? Josip Baloban used the EVS research and gave a pastoral theological view.

### **Josip Baloban – *Values in Croatia from a European Perspective: A Pastoral-Theological View***

We will concentrate only on a few significant questions of his research paper. One of the research questions was, “How important is work in life?” Croatia

6 The source of the information and statistics about religion in the past is taken from the second chapter by Gordan Črpić, and Siniša Zrinščak, “Između identiteta i svakodnevnog života: Religioznost u hrvatskom društvu iz europske komparativne perspektive.” In Josip Baloban, ed. (2005, 45-83).

7 Research done by Dinka Marinović-Jerolimov in 1993, quoted in J. Baloban ed. (2005, 53).

scored the lowest in comparison with old EU members, new EU members and candidate countries. In Croatia, only 46.4 percent think of work as *very* important. Of old EU members 57.5 percent said work is *very* important in their life. Of new EU member states 56.4 percent think that work is *very* important, and in candidate countries 66.7 percent think that work is very important. The level of trust is the lowest in EU. For our paper, it is significant to see that they found trust in the church (the Roman Catholic Church) is the highest (53.4 percent) in Croatia, but in comparison with the level of trust in 1997 – 84.1 percent and in 1999 – 62.8 percent, we can see that even the church is rapidly losing trust! Research findings showed one more characteristic of Croatia. The rites (rituals - baptism, wedding and funerals) are very highly regarded, higher than in other EU countries. Baloban explains this loss of trust in the Roman Catholic Church with many different reasons: media influence, social insensitivity, inner reasons, introversion and church centrism, power, and money. Croatia is a high church-attending country. People in Croatia are very serious about the ceremonies (rites), but low on work, free time, and friendships. In his pastoral-theological analysis, Baloban (2012, 973) reflects on the fact that many members of the Roman Catholic Church

“reduce their identity and Christianity only to be understood as national, traditional and folklore. Today they become ‘elective’ Christians, meaning they take only certain elements, defined subjectively and individualistically, and neglect holistic creeds, liturgy and the whole of the church teachings.”

This creates pastoral problems. Concerning results about the work culture, Josip Baloban (2012, 975) asks how it is that after twenty-five years of its independence, “Croatia still did not create an ethical culture of work”? This is the question this work asks as well. There is a need for new models of evangelization. We need a new enculturation of the Gospel – new pastoral challenges ask for new models. Baloban concludes his research paper with the call and need for living our faith in everyday life and work. We found this paper insightful because it is based on comparative research results from the European Value Study. However, Josip Baloban does not address a biblical view of work in his research paper. We would say that this oversight is very important and is missing in the analysis.

### **Mariano Grondona – A Cultural Typology of Economic Development**

Mariano Grondona (professor of government at the Law Faculty of the National University of Buenos Aires, Argentina) developed twenty contrasting cultural factors between cultures that are favorable and those that are resistant to development. We will mention only one that talks about a negative attitude to work because it illustrates certain aspects of Croatian culture which are more progress and development resistant. We saw from the research paper “Vrednote

u Hrvatskoj u europskoj perspektivi” (Balaban 2012), that work is not so highly valued in comparison with other European countries. Grondona (2000, 50) talks about the low value and attitude towards work in progress resistant cultures:

Work is not highly valued in progress resistant societies, reflecting a philosophical current that goes back to the Greeks. The entrepreneur is suspect but the manual laborer somewhat less so, since he must work to survive. At the top of the prestige ladder are the intellectuals, the artists, the politicians, the religious leaders, the military leaders. A similar prestige scale characterized Christendom until the Reformation. However, as Max Weber observed, the Reformation, and particularly the Calvinist interpretation of it, inverted the prestige scale, enshrining this work ethic. It is this same inverted value system that importantly explains the prosperity of Latin America and other Third World areas.

In our research, we saw that the negative attitude toward work, including laziness, nepotism and irresponsibility is high and one of the main causes of problems in Croatia. Of particular interest is the “inverted value system and prestige scale” that changed the “work ethic” after the Reformation. Can this explain the prosperity and progress resistant Croatia of today? It seems to me that there are some similarities between Latin American (predominantly Roman Catholic) countries and (predominantly Roman Catholic) Croatia.

**Geert Hofstede - *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind: Intercultural Cooperation and its Importance for Survival***

The groundbreaking work on culture and the most widely cited is Geert Hofstede’s study of the “dimensions of culture,” derived mainly from his extensive organizational anthropology research.<sup>8</sup> Using Hofstede’s “dimensions of culture,”<sup>9</sup> Croatia could be defined as:

*A large power distance culture: There is more perceived corruption; scandals are usually covered up.* Because Croatia is a large power distance culture, educating leaders might be a good first step to solve the problems as it works in a top

8 Michael L. Jones (2015) concludes in his critical article, “Hofstede - Culturally questionable?” after examining arguments in support of Hofstede as well as against his work: “While the level of controversy surrounding this work is still high, it remains a valuable piece of work on culture for both scholars and practitioners.” Accessed February 22, 2015. <http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1389&context=commpapers>;

9 Hofstede found four sets of values: 1. Individualism-Collectivism (IDV - individualism index), 2. Power distance (PDI - power distance index), 3. Masculinity-Femininity (MAS - masculinity index), 4. Uncertainty avoidance (UAI - uncertainty avoidance index). A later study concentrating on Asian culture introduced a fifth value, 5. ‘Confucian Dynamism’ (LTO - Long/short term orientation). In the revised third edition, a sixth dimension (researched by Michael Minkov) is added, 6. Indulgence versus restraint (IVR).

down pattern. Legitimate power needs to be used to exercise authority. People should be told, much more than in low power distance cultures, what to do differently and not left alone to figure it out. Also, the larger power distance countries work on a foundation of respect for authority figures (politicians, leaders, priests, and teachers). Using senior staff and leaders to communicate change is a better strategy;

*A collectivist culture: Ideologies of equality prevail over ideologies of individual freedom.* Croatia is in 44th place compared to the USA being the number one individualist country. Hofstede (2010, 128) made an interesting observation about economics. "Economics has remained an individualistic science, and most of its leading contributors have come from strongly individualistic nations, such as Britain and United States." Some theories (especially economic) that are invented in individualistic cultures claiming global validity often fail in more collectivistic cultures. One example of this failure was the thought that Western economic theories and models would easily solve the transition from Communism to Capitalism in Eastern Europe. Many of these theories did not count on cultural differences. We should critically review and examine theories who claim global validity, keeping in mind intercultural communication differences. This applies to different (leadership, church growth and evangelism, etc.) theories and models developed in highly individualistic cultures that need to be critically evaluated in more collectivistic cultures.

*A feminine culture:* Although Croatia is a more feminine culture; the Roman Catholic Church stresses the male prerogative. Countries with a Catholic tradition tend to maintain more masculine values, and those with Protestant traditions more feminine values. Communist or Socialist countries tend to be more feminine in nature. This is another paradox of Croatian culture being more feminine with a predominant Catholic tradition.

*A strong uncertainty avoidance society: Outside observers perceive more corruption.* "Religious conversion does not cause a total change in cultural values. The value complexes described by the dimensions of power distance, individualism or collectivism, masculinity or femininity and uncertainty avoidance seem to have survived religious conversions" (Hofstede 2010, 227). This is an important realization for discipleship and confirms the importance of cultural influence.

*Longer term orientation:* Wide social and economic differences are undesirable; leisure time is not important; investment in real estate.

*Restrained society:* More pessimism; smiling as suspect; a perception of helplessness: what happens to me is not my own doing.

Although Hofstede's work is considered a classic, there has been other re-

search which adds or detracts from his theories.<sup>10</sup> Hofstede asks some critical questions. How universal are some theories developed in the pure individualistic countries and cultures? Understanding different dimensions and cultural differences is very important. Contextualization, intercultural communications and leadership are becoming more and more significant themes in our globalized pluralistic world. Hofstede's research helps us understand the specific dimensions of Croatia's culture.

## **The Impact of Communism on Worldview and Work**

As has been stated before, forty five years of Communism deeply influenced Croatian society and worldview. It is extremely important to understand the subtle and not so subtle influences on the minds and hearts of those under a Communist regime.

### **James W. Sire - *The Universe Next Door: A Guide Book to Worldviews***

*The Universe Next Door* has been translated into the Croatian language (2001) and is one of the few books that address the topic of worldview. Sire (2001, 21) describes how different worldviews (*Theism, Deism, Naturalism, which includes Marxism, Nihilism, Existentialism, Eastern Pantheistic Monism, The New Age and Postmodernism*) answer seven worldview<sup>11</sup> questions. The seven questions are:

1. What is the prime reality – the really real?
2. What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?

10 Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner (2012), in their book *Riding the Waves of Culture*, do not agree with Hofstede's more static approach to culture in which one cultural category excludes its opposite (Hofstede's cultural categories are mutually exclusive), and believe that "cultures dance from one preferred end to the opposite and back." GLOBE Project is the result of global research conducted by a group of academic scholars lead by Professor Robert House, with hundreds of interviews across sixty-two countries they tested some of Hofstede's dimensions. Newer work on culture, The Culture Map has been done by Erin Mayer (2014), professor at INSEAD, one of the leading business schools in Europe. In his book, *Leading Across Cultures – Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church*, James E. Plueddemann (2009) theologically reflects on the cross-cultural leadership development in the global church.

11 An excellent history of the concept of worldview was provided by David K. Naugle (2002) in his book *Worldview*. In understanding the significance of worldview, I have benefited by the works of Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey (1999) *How Now Should We Live?* and *Total Truth* (Pearcey 2005). Brian J. Welsh and J. Richard Middleton (1984), in their book *The Transforming Vision*, give a helpful description of dualism and the biblical worldview. Darrow L. Miller (2001), in his book *Disciplining Nations – The Power of Truth to Transform Cultures*, talks about three basic worldviews helpful in development work. "God intends for cultures to be redeemed. Disciplining nations means 'laying' kingdom principles and a biblical worldview as the founding order or ethics of a people."

3. What is a human being?
4. What happens to a person at death?
5. Why is it possible to know anything at all?
6. How do we know what is right and wrong?
7. What is the meaning of human history?

These questions provide fruitful discussion and challenge thinking about this important topic, an important part of any culture. What is the major worldview challenge today? Some scholars believe that the major conflict of our day is *theism* versus *naturalism* (Colson and Pearcey 1999, 20). Naturalism is important for our discussion because: 1) Marxism is “one of the most historically significant forms of naturalism” that impacted Croatia and Socialist countries of former *Eastern Europe* for more than 45 years (more than 70 years in Russia); and 2) Naturalism dominates universities, colleges and high schools in the capitalist West and provides the framework for most scientific study today (Sire 1997, 65). After working with students in the area of business ethics for over ten years, I think one of the major challenges that students have is a mixed or eclectic worldview which is not congruent with what they claim to believe. Most people do not even know what their worldview is. This is understandable because, as we have seen, Croatia is, by numbers, a “Christian country” and yet influenced by a naturalistic worldview which does not make sense, except if you understand the history of enforced Marxism as the dominant ideology in the schools for more than 45 years. However, even though it explains why this contradiction may be, it does not solve the real confusion within which adds to our current problems.

### **Juraj Kušnierik and Milan Čičel - *Shadows of the Past***

Communism influenced Croatian culture and left significant marks on the value system. For many of us who grew up and lived in Communism behind the fallen Berlin wall, there is still a shadow. Juraj Kušnierik and Milan Čičel (1995, 20), in their research paper, provide a helpful summary of some of the consequences that Communism had on the business culture in post-Communist societies of Eastern Europe:<sup>12</sup>

**Fear of social problems.** The social situation is perceived as something unalterable. People often say; “There is nothing we can do to change the situation.” Responsibility for one’s own life is rare.

**Lack of creativity in economic activities.** The post Communist societies of Central and Eastern Europe are still not mobile or creative enough to properly

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12 I am quoting longer parts of their analysis because it illustrates a similar situation in Croatia and shows the similarity of the impact of Communism in Eastern Europe with some cultural differences present (Kušnierik and Čičel, 1995, 20).

handle the complexities of a free-market economy.

**High risk avoidance.** The majority of the population would prefer safer, although less effective, ways of economic activity before those that are riskier but more profitable.

**Strong remnants of a collectivist culture.** Individualism is still treated as something strange, almost evil. Trade unions are quite influential, although strikes are rare (with Poland as an important exception).

**Hierarchical thinking.** Many companies, especially the larger, (formerly) state-owned companies cling to outmoded hierarchical models of management. Also, people in the lower levels of a management hierarchy tend to be passive, feeling they cannot influence anything or very little.

**Biased ethical values.** Work, although officially glorified under Communism, is still understood as a necessary evil. There are big problems with discipline, quality control, financial mismanagement, etc. Employers, whether state or private, are perceived as potential enemies who exploit their employees. That is why cheating them is not seen as such a bad thing. Customers are not “always right”. This is particularly evident when dealing with the bureaucratic monsters or state administration and big state-owned companies. Customers or clients are treated like intruders who disturb the peace and comfort of the employees. And finally, the State is still recognized as an economic enemy, taking unjustified taxes from its subjects. That is why tax evasion is generally justified in public opinion.

This description of the impact of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe helps in better understanding Croatian culture, particularly regarding work.

### **Seymour Martin Lipset and Gabriel Salman Lenz – *Corruption, Culture, and Markets***

Corruption is one of the main problems in Croatia. A paper by Seymour Martin Lipset (Hazel Professor of Public Policy at George Mason University) and Gabriel Salman Lenz (researcher at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars), analyzes the link between corruption and culture. Hard evidence and research have documented a negative influence and corruption's effect on economic development and significant reduction of GNP growth rate. “Paolo Mauro's regression analysis found that a 2.4 decline in the corruption index (scaled from 1-10) is associated with a four percentage point increase in the per capita growth rate” (Lipset and Lenz 2000, 115). Research shows that corruption has a negative impact on income inequality (Gini coefficient), per capita income and investment. And reduced levels of investments in Croatia can be attributed to a high percentage of corruption which is a significant issue in the present situation.

The World Value Surveys provide today's social scientists with large samples

of information, particularly on values. This paper is based on the survey which was carried out in forty-three countries containing 70 percent of the world's population. Lipset and Lenz try to explain the relationship between corruption and culture using sociological approaches: one, developed by Emile Durkheim and reformulated by Robert K. Merton, and a second, looking at the analysis of the role of family developed by political scientist Edward Banfield. "Merton's theory implies that cultures that stress economic success as an important goal but, nevertheless, strongly restrict access to opportunities will have higher levels of corruption" (2000, 119). The second framework coined "Amoral Familism," derived from Plato and developed by Banfield is of great interest for our work.

Edward Banfield, studying southern Italy, carried the analysis further with the concept of "amoral familism": a culture that is deficient in communitarian values but fosters familial ties. He wrote: "In a society of amoral familists, no one will further the interest of the group or community except as it is to his private advantage to do so." There is little loyalty to the larger community or acceptance of behavioral norms that require support of others. Hence, familism is amoral, gives rise to corruption, and fosters deviance from norms of universalism and merit. Anything goes that advances the interests of one's self and family (Lipset and Lenz 2000, 119-120).

Such familism gives rise to nepotism; everything goes that helps me and my family or my friends including bribes, corruption, etc. The mafia is an extreme example of amoral familism, that Banfield studied in southern Italy. This "clan" mentality is applicable here in Croatia in the normal practice of giving favors or hiring by connection. In their analysis, Lipset and Lenz (2000, 120) "showed that cultural variables help explain and predict levels of corruption. But what explains culture?" This question is of importance for our work and the reason why we started with culture. Lipset and Lenz (2000, 120) claim that religion offers some explanations.

However, the social science consensus that religion is an important determinant of variations in larger secular cultures offers some helpful suggestions. Countries dominated by Protestants are less corrupt than others....Protestants, particularly sectarians, believe that individuals are personally responsible for avoiding sin, whereas other Christian denominations, particularly the Roman Catholic Church, place more emphasis on the inherent weakness of human beings, their inability to escape sin and error, and the need for the church to be forgiving and protecting. The Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox Churches tend to be more accepting of human weakness because the clergy have the authority to relieve the individual of some sense of responsibility.

This is a very interesting observation about "personal responsibility" by Protestants, and the role of the church clergy in Roman Catholic tradition that "have

the authority to relieve the individual of some sense of responsibility.” The description of “amoral familism” is one of the possible explanations of the greater tendency towards corruption in Catholic countries. It also provides a broader view for understanding the corruption and nepotism in Croatian culture. If we look at the list of the five most corrupt European countries, from the Transparency International in 2014,<sup>13</sup> behind Croatia are Romania, Italy, Greece and Bulgaria (all Orthodox and Roman Catholic countries). The role and influence of religion on culture is significant.

The authors made a comment about the impact of Communism in Eastern Europe, another significant influence on Croatian culture:

The former communist countries, except for Hungary and Czech Republic, all rank below the median. They share, to various degrees, an amalgam of familism, statist communitarianism, hierarchical religious cultures (Catholicism and Orthodoxy), and party particularism, which produced a high level of corruption under communism. They are, for the most part, poor (Lipset and Lenz 2000, 124).

In order to understand what impacted Croatian culture as it is today, we need to look at the impact of Catholicism (for centuries) as the dominant religion and Communism as the dominant ideology for many years (1945-1990).

### **Summary**

What did we learn from all these authors? We learned that religious traditions have an enduring impact on contemporary value systems. In predominantly Roman Catholic countries, the value of trust is much lower than in Protestant countries, based on the World Value Survey. The European Value Survey shows that work, trust, free time and friendship are not considered *very* important in Croatia compared with other European countries. On the other side, rites and rituals like baptism, weddings and funerals are very high—higher than in other EU countries. As Josip Baloban writes in his research paper, it seems that many members of the Roman Catholic Church reduce their identity and Christianity often to be understood as national, traditional and folklore. They become “elective” Christians taking only certain elements of their faith seriously which creates pastoral problems. From Hofstede’s dimensions of culture, we see that Croatia is: a large power distance culture; a collectivistic culture; a feminine culture; a strong uncertainty avoidance culture; long term orientation culture and a restrained society culture. We learned that Marxism is one of the most historically significant forms of naturalism and that this worldview was influencing the

13 On the Transparency International list for 2016, Hungary came behind Croatia, another predominantly Roman Catholic country.

value system of Communist countries like Croatia for many years. Some of the consequences of Communism on business culture are: fear of social problems, lack of creativity in economic activities, high risk avoidance, hierarchical thinking, and biased ethical values. Shadows of the (Communist) past are still lingering in Croatia.

Why such an extended view of the culture? As one living in a culture different from the culture of the great majority of existing (leadership, ethics, evangelism, church planting, business, etc.) programs and materials, it is clear that some programs and some strategies do not work or communicate, or do not have the desired results in Croatia as they might in America or Germany or other cultures of the world. Context and culture are important in order to understand and define the present reality and to contextualize communication. Understanding culture and adapting to culture (being intercultural) has been important since ancient, biblical times. Probably the best example is the incarnation of Christ as the main “cross-cultural” historic event. One of the best biblical cross-cultural communicators is the apostle Paul in his intercultural missionary work which we will look at later.

## **Religious Influence on Croatian Culture**

We saw previously that “religious traditions seem to have had an enduring impact on the contemporary value systems of...societies,” (Inglehart 2000, 86) and that “Protestant and Catholic societies seem to display distinctive values today, mainly because of the historical impact their respective churches had on the societies as a whole, rather than through the contemporary influence of the churches” (Inglehart 2000, 91). In the next section, we will look at some aspects of the distinctive values between Protestant and Catholic cultures, particularly their different emphases on Bible reading, which is important for this work. Included is a short historical overview of the Reformation in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century Croatia.

### **Max Weber – *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism***

The effects of religion, specifically the distinction and historical impact of the church on society, leads us to the work of Max Weber (2002), one of the founding fathers of modern sociology. In his classic (and most controversial) work, “The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,” Weber observed that the members of religious groups that formed out of the Reformation had a strong sense of personal responsibility in their work which was needed in the beginning of capitalism. The reason was religious – a personal relationship with God which is a core value in Protestantism. Luther’s translation of the word “Beruf” (calling) contains a religious conception – the conception of a God-given task. It put professional,

secular work on the same level as the spiritual work of the clergy. Weber (2002, 41) concludes that this “moral justification of worldly activity was one of the most important results of the Reformation.” Weber’s thesis is controversial and disputed by some scholars, and it is interesting how he touched something that still resonates today in the writings of many scholars. Weber’s seminal work is an important contribution to this discussion.

One of Weber’s critics is Michael Novak, a respected Catholic philosopher (George Frederick Jewett Chair in religion and public policy, American Enterprise Institute 1983-2009). In his book *The Catholic Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Michael Novak (1993, 8-9) criticizes Weber’s thesis:

To put it simply, Weber detected something new, a novel Geist or spirit or cultural inspiration, some new complex of social attitudes and habits. He may have erred in calling it Protestant. But he did not err in identifying a moral and cultural dimension internal to capitalism...he identified something new in economic history and glimpsed its moral and religious dimensions...he suggested in advance why Marxism, both as an explanatory theory and as a vision of paradise, was doomed to fail: its resolute materialism excluded the human spirit.

David Landes (2000, 2) (economic historian, Coolidge Professor of History and Professor of Economics, Emeritus, at Harvard University) gives tribute to Max Weber. “Max Weber was right. If we learn anything from the history of economic development, it is that culture makes almost all the difference.” In his paper, Landes gives a global historical overview of economic development, showing how culture makes almost all the difference from China, Japan, Russia to Latin America and its “dependency theory.” Landes (2000, 5) quotes Juan Bautista Alberdi, from Argentina, who wrote in 1852 (fifty years before Weber),

Respect the altar of every belief. Spanish America, limited to Catholicism to the exclusion of any other religion, resembles a solitary and silent convent of nuns. ... To exclude different religions in South America is to exclude the English, the Germans, the Swiss, the North Americans, which is to say the very people this continent most needs. To bring them without their religion is to bring them without the agent that makes them what they are.

We want to highlight one, in my opinion, important remark that Landes makes that is often overlooked in this discussion. Landes (2000, 12) points to the:

...stress on instructions and literacy, for girls as well as boys. This was a by-product of Bible reading. Good Protestants were expected to read the Holy Scriptures for themselves. (By way of contrast, Catholics were catechized but did not have to read, and they were explicitly discouraged from reading the Bible.) The result: greater literacy from generation to generation. *Literate mothers matter.*

### **Edward Zimberg – *Faith, Morals and Money***

Edward Zimberg, a Jewish ethicist, has reflections on Scripture and the differences between Catholic and Protestant ethicists which are very helpful. Following is a rather longer quote from Zimberg's (2001, 45-46) discussion because it is to the point:

James Gustafson, in a book entitled *Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics*, has tried to explain the Protestant emphasis on scripture. 'According to most Protestants,' he says, 'God "published" the law because humanity is shrouded in such darkness that we hardly begin to grasp natural law (through our reasoning powers.)' Human reasoning, in this view, is so likely to be filtered through individual personal experiences and prejudices – along with basically sinful nature – that it is necessary to turn primarily to scriptural revelation of God's word as the source of ethical understanding. Ironically, Catholics take the same argument about the influence of subjective factors on human reasoning and reach an opposite conclusion. In their view, the very choice of scriptural passages on which to focus is likely to reflect the predispositions of the person reading scripture. Therefore, they argue, it is more objective to reason about natural law *before* turning to scripture.... Protestants have claimed not only that the basic information necessary to lead a good Christian life is all in the Bible, but that most people imbued with the Holy Spirit have the capacity to read it and understand its meaning for their lives. In the Protestant view the Catholic *magisterium* places a barrier between the people and God. These methodological and ideological differences between Catholics and Protestants are reflected in the ways they each approach the subject of economic ethics.

This discussion is of great importance for this work because it highlights these "methodological and ideological differences between Catholics and Protestants" in regard to the Bible as the source of ethical understanding. As we saw earlier in the quote by David Landes (2000, 12) about literacy, "Protestants were expected to read the Holy Scriptures for themselves. (By way of contrast, Catholics were catechized but did not have to read, and they were explicitly discouraged from reading the Bible.)" An interesting observation from Elias Canetti (1960, 155), Nobel Prize laureate, illustrates the relationship between the laity and the priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church:

Communication *between* the worshippers is hindered in several ways. They do not preach to each other; the word of the simple believer has no sanctity whatsoever. Everything he expects, everything which is to free him from the manifold burdens weighing on him, comes to him from a higher authority. He only understands what is explained to him. The sacred word is tendered to him carefully weighed and wrapped up; precisely because of its sanctity it is *protected* from him. Even his sins belong to the priest to whom he must confess them. Communicating them to other ordinary believers brings him no

relief; nor is he allowed to keep them to himself. In all profounder questions of morality he stands alone, confronted by the whole priesthood. In exchange for the moderately contended life which they procure for him he delivers himself entirely into their hands.

It would be too much for this work to describe the theology of the Roman Catholic Church in Croatia in all its historic and theological complexity. The ecumenical and theological dialogue has been going on for years. There are many books that analyze the Roman Catholic Church and her theology from an Evangelical position<sup>14</sup> and vice versa. Those authors helped me to get a better perspective and understanding of the complex and often controversial relationship between Roman Catholics and Evangelicals. Reflecting on religious influences on culture motivated research as to what was going on in Croatia at the time of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. The year 2017 marks 500 years (1517-2017) since the Reformation. A short historical journey will help us better understand Croatia during the time of Reformation.

- 14 I will mention only a few authors and books that address this complex topic from an Evangelical perspective: Greg Allison and Chris Castaldo (2016), *The Unfinished Reformation: What Unites and Divides Catholics and Protestants After 500 Years*, Chris Castaldo (2015), *Talking with Catholics about the Gospel: A Guide for Evangelicals*. Castaldo takes a great approach and writes with respect as a former Catholic. Another balanced discussion about agreements and differences between Roman Catholics and Evangelicals is by Norman L. Geisler and Ralph E. MacKenzie (1995): *Roman Catholics and Evangelicals: Agreements and Differences*. John Armstrong ed. (1994), *Roman Catholicism: Evangelical Protestants Analyze what Divides and Unites Us*. Gregg R. Allison (2014), *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice: An Evangelical Assessment*. Allison's book is unique in its focus on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. In his work, Allison uses parts of the PhD dissertation of Leonardo De Chirico: *Evangelical Theological Perspectives on Post-Vatican II Roman Catholicism*. "As De Chirico pleads: 'What is needed, instead /of an exclusively atomistic approach to assessing Catholic theology, is the appropriation of a distinctively systemic view to use in looking at every single issue, be it considered foundational or peripheral but always expressing the system as a whole...Every part of the system is in some way causally connected to and operatively dependent on the theology of the system to the extent that the attempt to grasp the centre opens the way to an understanding of the whole.'" Leonardo De Chirico (2015), *Papacy- A Christian's Pocket Guide to Papacy: It's Origin and Role in the 21st Century*. Robert L. Plummer, ed. (2012), *Journeys of Faith*. The book by Francis J. Beckwith (2009), *Return to Rome*, spurred my interest in this complex topic. And for this work, it was important to better understand Roman Catholic theology and issues of agreement and disagreement that shaped Croatian culture throughout history.

## Croatia During the Time of Reformation<sup>15</sup>

We will not go too much into the details of history, but will, with brush strokes, paint those elements that are important for understanding the culture of Croatia in contrast to the Reformation of the 16th century. Ten years after Martin Luther (1483-1546) was born, in the 1493 battle of the Krbava field in the Lika region of Croatia, the Croatian army lost to the Ottoman Empire. This battle was the end of the Croatian Kingdom, and opened the door for the Ottoman Empire to enter further into Europe. Croatia not only lost many people as casualties of war, but many moved and emigrated, and it was the start of the demographic deterioration of Croatia. Territorial sovereignty was lost and different nationalities, fleeing from the Turks, immigrated to Croatia, which would cause problems and even war in the future. In 1526, another important battle against the Ottoman Empire, led by Suleiman the Magnificent was fought in Mohač, where, again the Croatian-Hungarian forces lost, bringing the end of the independent Hungarian Kingdom. Croatia joined the Hapsburg Monarchy in 1527 and remained part of it until 1918. Three hundred and ninety-one years of being part of another monarchy shapes the culture and leadership of a nation. During this time, there were one hundred years of the Croatian-Ottoman wars (1493-1593), beginning with the battle of Krbava field in 1493 and ending with the battle for Sisak in 1593. During the 15th and 16th centuries, Croatian human and territorial losses were huge. "Between 1450<sup>16</sup> and 1606 around 150 to 200 thousand people left Croatia" (Jambrek 1999, 67). Pavao Ritter Vitezović (1652-1713), historian and poet, called it "Two centuries of Croatia in mourning" (Vitezović). Pope Leo X, in his letter in 1519, called Croatia the "Antemurale Christianitatis," - the bulwark of Christianity. At one point in the 16th century, Croatia's free territory was a mere 16,800 km<sup>2</sup> and was called "religuiæ reliquiarum olim inclyti regni Croatiae" (Religious relics once renowned Kingdom of Croatia). These are only selected historical facts that can give a picture of Croatia from the 15<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup>

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15 I learned about Croatian history from the following books. Franjo Bučar (1910), *Povijest hrvatske protestantske književnosti*. Stanko Jambrek (1999), *Hrvatski protestantski pokret XVI. i XVII. stoljeća*. Peter Kuzmič (1983), *Vuk-Daničićovo Sveto Pismo i Biblijska društva*. Jasmin Milič (2006), *Kalvinizam u Hrvata: s posebnim osvrtom na reformiranu župu Tordinci 1862-1918*. Matija Mesić (1996), *Hrvati na izmaku srednjega vijeka*. Anđelko Mijatović (1999), *Zrinsko-Frankopanska urota*. Sudland (1990), L.V. *Južnoslavensko pitanje*. Ferdo Šišić (2004), *Povijest Hrvata: pregled povijesti hrvatskog naroda 600.-1918*. Milan Šufflay (1999), *Hrvatska u svijetlu svjetske historije i politike: Dvanaest eseja*. Ivan Klaić (1996), *Ljudi moje ravnice: zapisi o povijesti i zbilji Gornjih Bogićevaca i okolnih slavonskih mjesta*.

16 By some estimates, during the Croatian-Ottoman wars and until the 18th century, around 1.6 million people were either emigrated, killed, or taken hostage.

centuries, the same time when the Reformation happened and impacted most of Europe and the new world.

There are not many authors who have written about Protestantism in Croatia, but a few books help to understand the influence of the Reformation in Croatia: the history of Croatian Protestantism in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries was described by Stanko Jambrek (1999, 2013); Franjo Bučar (1910) researched the history of Croatian Protestant literature; the history of Calvinism in Croatia is described in the work of Jasmin Milić (2006); and Peter Kuzmič, (1983) in part of his dissertation, writes about the influence of the Reformation on the biblical literacy of Slovenes, Croatians and Serbians. The most famous Croatian Protestant is Matija Vlačić Ilirik 1520-1575 (Mathias Flacius Illyricus). The *Croatian Military Frontier* (Vojna krajina) attracted soldiers from all over Europe, many of them Protestants. Turks in the occupied areas of Slavonia preferred Protestants over Catholics. Many priests in the area accepted Protestantism. The later anti-Reformation was severe. In 1606, the Croatian Parliament declared that Roman Catholicism was the only official religion in Croatia. The consequence of this declaration for anyone who held a political office, or was sympathetic toward Protestantism at that time, is obvious. In some parts of Croatia, like Međimurje, Protestantism was protected and influenced the region for almost 200 years (Jambrek 1999, 100). An interesting observation, in line with Max Weber's thesis, is that Međimurje is one of the most developed regions of Croatia.

From this very short historical journey into the 16th and 17th centuries, we can see the complex historical reality that existed in Croatia during the time of the Reformation in Europe. It was literally the dividing border between the Ottoman Empire and Europe, the border between Islam and Christianity, the border between Catholic Croatia and Orthodox Serbia, the border between Catholicism and Protestantism, and later, it was the border between Communism and Catholicism. Borders separate and protect people from others, but at the same time they connect and introduce one another. Željko Mardešić (1997, 481-486), who wrote under the pseudonym *Jakov Jukić*, is a Roman Catholic sociologist of religion who wrote about the Croatian "borders", and his sharp sociological analysis is inspiring and useful for this thesis. Developing his reflection on "borders," he starts with major conflicts with Islam, Orthodoxy and Communism. The conflict with Islam had already started with the Crusades, and through all the centuries, created among Christians a strange militant attitude. Something that was a theoretical or theological discussion somewhere in the ivory tower became a bloody war on the border. The border between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, established already in 1054, was more theological. Although the war that erupted in Yugoslavia in the 90s was not religious, it was certainly influenced by this "religious border" between Serbian Orthodoxy and Croatian Catholicism and became another

“bloody war on the border.” The third “border” that Mardešić described, is the Catholic-Communist border, another “religious” (Riklin 2010) border. There are very few other countries in the world with so many significant borders in their history. As we can see in this short historical journey, Croatia had different challenges on its borders at the time of Reformation in Europe.

## The Protestant-Evangelical Paradigm

Hans Küng, a Roman Catholic theologian, played a major role in the writing of the documents of Vatican II. In his book, *The Catholic Church – A Short History*, he notes how Martin Luther (1483-1546), Augustinian monk, furthered the paradigm change when he posted his ninety-five theses in Wittenberg in 1517,<sup>17</sup>

From the perspective of the present day we can understand the Reformation better as a paradigm change: a change in the overall constellation of theology, church, and society. No less than the Copernican revolution in the change from a geocentric to a heliocentric picture of the world, Luther's Reformation was an epoch-making change from the medieval Roman Catholic paradigm to the Protestant-Evangelical paradigm: in theology and the church it was a move away from the all too human ecclesiocentricity of the powerful church to the christocentricity of the gospel. Above all Luther's Reformation emphasized the freedom of Christians (Küng 2001, 126-127).

In my opinion, such a (new) paradigm change toward the christocentricity of the gospel is what we need in Croatia today. There are other voices inside the Roman Catholic Church who desire a change.<sup>18</sup> There are less than 1 percent of Prote-

17 “In 1517 he (Pope Leo X, from 1513-1521, italics ours) failed to see the significance of an epoch-making event which was to usher in the end of the universal claim of the pope in the West as well. As professor of biblical theology in Wittenberg, an unknown Augustinian monk who had been in Rome a few months previously and who saw himself as a loyal Catholic published ninety-five theses against the trade in indulgences aimed at financing the gigantic new St. Peter's, which was now built. His name was Martin Luther.” Quoted in Küng (2001, 120).

18 I will mention only one, the voice of Jon Sobrino, Roman Catholic liberation theologian. Iglesia Descalza (2010). Accessed January 4, 2016, <http://iglesiadescalza.blogspot.hr/2010/12/church-usually-distances-itself-from.html>. Interview (12/19/2010) by Asteko Elkarrizketa with liberation theologian, Jon Sobrino (English translation by Rebel Girl). Theologian Sobrino gave an interesting answer to one of the interview questions that illustrates, in my opinion, the point I would like to make.

INTERVIEWER: “Recently, at a conference of Christian thinkers, you said paraphrasing the theologian Jose Mair Diez Alegria, that ‘the Church has betrayed Jesus...this Church is not what Jesus wanted.’ Where is the Catholic Church hierarchy leading it?”

SOBRINO: “I didn't paraphrase Diez Alegria, but rather quoted him literally. He said that

stants in Croatia. This includes Lutheran and Reformed churches which have a longer presence in Croatia. In addition, there are many different Evangelical<sup>19</sup> churches. The two dominant Evangelical denominations are Baptist and Pentecostal. There are other smaller Evangelical denominations represented, such as The Church of Christ, The Church of God, The Brethren Church, and nondenominational and growing charismatic churches. With this comes a minority mindset. Therefore, the need to break the “sect” stereotype is an immediate and important step. We bring up Evangelical-Protestants, not because of their influence in Croatia, but because we see their presence to be a positive factor in bringing an ethical business culture in Croatia. For one thing, especially in light of this thesis, there is the fact that some of the programs and materials that promote faith and work are the product of Evangelicals. In a culture like the Croatian one, where Protestants are seen as divisive sects, the acceptance of programs and materials from this source are often suspect. Here, as well, we need a redefinition of terms. For many Roman Catholics, the word “Protestant” or “Evangelical” often means only liberal expressions of some Protestant denomination that creates a stereotype of all Evangelical-Protestants and puts them in the same theological liberal sectarian box. To join a different church is sometimes treated as betraying your own history and national identity, and that means cutting your ties with your family,

‘overall, the Catholic Church has betrayed Jesus,’ and I think it is an important reflection. Obviously, he is not meaning all the Church. I think he is saying that Jesus of Nazareth is disturbing, and so the Church betrays Him. Jose Antonio Pagola says: what is most needed today is ‘to mobilize ourselves and join forces urgently to focus the Church more truly and rapidly on the person of Jesus and His plan of the kingdom of God.’ According to Christian belief, the kingdom of God is the will of God for this world that there be life for all, starting with the poor. And Pagola ended with these words: ‘Many things will have to be done in the Catholic Church, but none is more crucial than this conversion.’ I love the use of the word ‘conversion’ – it is a radical change. I see nothing more important than returning to this Jesus because we tend to separate from Him, not always, not everyone, not in all ways, but ... To put it simply: when one hears Christian men and women, priests, bishops and non bishops, one rarely hears them talking about Jesus of Nazareth, telling what He said and what He did ... We are losing the essence of Jesus, that’s what I meant at the conference.”

- 19 I will use the National Associations of Evangelicals’ definition: “Evangelicals are a worldwide, vibrant, transdenominational and diverse group, including believers found in many churches, denominations and nations. Historian David Bebbington also provides a helpful summary of evangelical distinctive, identifying four primary characteristics of evangelicalism: 1. Conversionism: the belief that lives need to be transformed through a “born-again” experience and a life long process of following Jesus. 2. Activism: the expression and demonstration of the gospel in missionary and social reform efforts. 3. Biblicism: a high regard for and obedience to the Bible as the ultimate authority. 4. Crucicentrism: a stress on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as making possible the redemption of humanity. These distinctive and theological convictions define us — not political, social or cultural trends.” National Associations of Evangelicals, accessed January 10, 2015, <http://nae.net/what-is-an-evangelical/>.

friends and culture. In a collectivistic culture, these are serious problems that come with a lot of pressure.

## **An Understanding of a Theology of Work**

Unfortunately, the situation concerning the communication and integration of faith and work is not much different within the Evangelical-Protestant churches. Dualism is present, and the gap between Sunday and Monday is high. In conversation with business owners, they often expressed complaints of not being understood by their pastors. Those who employ other Christians are sometimes disappointed with the work habits and behavior of those believers who work for them.

The role of churches is critical and should be prophetic in times like these. There is a need for raising more awareness and a biblical understanding of faith and work. Faith is considered a private matter and pushed out of the public sphere. Although church attendance was and (still) is high in Croatia, the problem is that the church attendance and religious declarations are not correlated with the integration of faith into everyday work and life. The gap between private and public, Sunday and Monday, is too high. There are many stories coming from believers in the marketplace that illustrate their challenges in their daily work. William Diehl, former sales manager for Bethlehem Steel in Pennsylvania, is one of them:

In the almost thirty years of my professional career, my church has never once suggested that there be any type of accounting of my on-the-job ministry to others. My church has never once offered to improve those skills which could make me a better minister, nor has it ever asked if I needed any kind of support in what I was doing. There has never been an inquiry into the types of ethical decisions I must face, or whether I seek to communicate the faith to my coworkers. I have never been in a congregation where there was any type of public affirmation of a ministry in my career. In short, I must conclude that my church really doesn't have the least interest whether or how I minister in my daily work (Banks 1993, 59).

Many believers who are working in the marketplace in Croatia are facing similar challenges. There is not much going on for them in their local churches that would educate, equip and encourage them to integrate their faith with their everyday work. And the current economic situation with high corruption does not help. There is a huge need in this area for communicating a biblical view of work, a biblical theology of work. Dorothy Sayers' prophetic words ring true: "In nothing has the church so lost Her hold on reality as in Her failure to understand and respect the secular vocation. ... But is it astonishing? How can anyone rema-

in interested in a religion that seems to have no concern with nine tenths of his life?” (Sayers, 1999,10). Diehl’s and Sayers’ words are great reminders of the importance of local churches for marketplace theology. We need local churches that will equip saints for the work of ministry; a church that works. The local church should play an important, prophetic and equipping role. We want to emphasize here the indispensable role of local churches in the teaching and preaching of the importance of the integration of faith and work.

We recognize the need for special tools and for the training of pastors and priests in this area. In developing such materials/programs, the Bible is the common ground and, regarding theology, we learn that “we are witnessing a remarkable ecumenical convergence in the practical theology of work. Theology, both Protestant<sup>20</sup> and Catholic,<sup>21</sup> gives to human work a central role in our understanding of human life in relation to both God and the world” (Hardy 1990, 76). Pope John Paul II wrote that “Work represents a fundamental aspect of man’s existence” (Hardy 1990, 71). His encyclical with its focus on work makes a significant contribution to the Catholic theology of work. Hardy (1990, 68) writes about this encyclical: “With the publication of Pope John Paul II’s *Laborem Exercens* in

20 To name a few books about workplace theology from an Evangelical perspective: David W. Miller (2007), *God at Work: The History and Promise for the Faith at Work Movement*, Miroslav Volf (1991a), *Budućnost rada – rad budućnosti: pojam rada u Karla Marxa i njegovo teološko vrednovanje*, Miroslav Volf (1991), *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work*, Darrell Cosden (2004), *A Theology of Work: Work and the New Creation*, Amy L. Sherman (2011), *Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good*, Mark Greene (2014), *Fruitfulness on the Frontline: Making a Difference Where You Are*, Robert Banks and R. Paul Stevens, eds. (1997), *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity: An A-to-Z Guide to Following Christ in Every Aspect of Life*, Steven Garber (2014), *Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good*, Kenman L. Wong and Scott B. Rae (2011), *Business for the Common Good: A Christian Vision for the Marketplace*. Timothy Keller with Katherine Leary Alsdorf (2012), *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God’s Work*, Tom Nelson (2011), *Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work*.

21 Hrčak Portal of Scientific Journals of Croatia lists some Roman Catholic theologians and authors who are writing about the theology (spirituality) of work: Nikola Hohnjec (1988), Stjepan Baloban (2005, 2006), Nela Gašpar (2006), Krešo Šimić (2006), Jure Zečević (2007). We will mention only a few books from Catholic theologians and authors that contributed to this thesis: Valković, Marijan, ed. (1991), *Sto godina katoličkoga socijalnog nauka*, Baloban, Stjepan, Gordan Črpić and Dubravka Petrović Štefanac. Eds. (2014), *Kultura rada u Hrvatskoj: peti hrvatski socijalni tjedan*, Petar Tomašić (2010), *Nezaposlenost: u tranzicijskoj Hrvatskoj pod socijalno-etičkim vidom*, Tonči Matulić (2009), *Metamorfoze kulture: Teološko prepoznavanje znakova vremena u ozračju znanstveno-tehničke civilizacije*, Jure Krišto (2004), *Hrvatski katolički pokret*, Chenu, M.-D. 2008. *Teologija rada*, Michal J. Naughton (2015), “Beyond Career to Calling: The Vocation of the Christian Business Leader,” Helen J. Alford and Michael J. Naughton (2006), *Managing as if Faith Mattered: Christian Social Principles in the Modern Organization*.

1981, the official Catholic theology of work virtually coincides with the traditional Protestant position at every major point.” Miroslav Volf (1991, 5) wrote,

*Laborem Exercens* is one of the most remarkable ecclesiastical documents on the question of work ever written. It received widespread acceptance (except among extremists on both ends of the ideological spectrum) and spurred renewed study of the question of work by individual theologians and various Roman Catholic national Bishops' Conferences.

Therefore, a biblical theology of work is another common ground between Catholic and Protestant theology. In the face of so many (theological and other) issues and questions that divide Christianity, it is important to step out firmly on common ground and to remember that Jesus is not divided. Fortunately, there is only one foundation! “For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 3:11, ESV). Robert Weber (2003, 66) wrote about this verse:

Faith did not begin with the church, with worship, with Scripture, with theology, with spirituality, with education, with evangelism or social action. All these aspects of Christianity, important as they were, were servants of this central theme of faith: Christ became one of us in order to destroy the power of evil and restore us and the world to God.

## **Conclusion**

As we saw in previously mentioned works, even great advice and theory that works in a very individualistic country and culture like the USA must be critically evaluated and contextualized for a different culture and context. We started this chapter with some of the contextualizing questions: What are the cultural factors that influence how people view work and leadership? What local cultural factors and global powers influence our understanding of and practice of engagement in the marketplace in Croatia? It is hard to describe the entire complex historical heritage that marked Croatia's culture, but understanding it should guide our contextualization. We saw how religion had an enduring impact throughout history on the culture in Croatia. Besides religion, Croatia was impacted by Communism that left its own imprint on the value system of today. And although religion was and still is an enduring part of the ethical values in Croatia, we argue that a rightly understood and clearly communicated integration of biblical faith and work can contribute to the solution of problems in Croatia and is a missing element in this discussion.

The second paper will present our research results and introduce some practical attempts at seeking common ground, that connecting place, to begin building the bridge of faith and work in Croatia.

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Dražen Glavaš

**Kršćanin nedjeljom, ateist ponedjeljkom  
Kako premostiti jaz između vjere i rada u hrvatskoj kulturi  
I. dio**

Sažetak

Hrvatska je većinski kršćanska zemlja (kršćani čine više od 90% stanovništva) pa ipak je jedna od najkorumpiranijih zemalja u EU. Složenost hrvatske kulture i povijesti doprinosi problemu korupcije, liderstva i negativnog stava prema radu. Kroz pilot-projekte uvidjeli smo da integriranje vjere i rada, uz jasno komuniciranje pripadajućeg biblijskog okvira, može pridonijeti rješavanju problema. Istraživanja su potvrdila da kontekst, kultura i biblijska nepismenost predstavljaju ključne čimbenike koje treba dosljedno uzimati u obzir. Ova disertacija-projekt donosi prijedloge projekata koji su vjerski usmjereni i namjerno stavljeni u kontekst premošćivanja vrijednosnog jaza, a doprinose jačanju etičke kulture u Hrvatskoj.