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Social Distances and Stratification: Social Space in the Czech Republic

Jiří Šafr, Julia Häuberer (eds.)

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Abstract

This volume pursues how the symbolic boundaries contribute to social hierarchies in the stratification space. First, relational notion of inequalities is introduced: a culturalistic approach to class analysis and concepts of social distance. The next three chapters study subjective distance, i.e. interactional willingness related to 22 occupations as researched through the population survey Social Distances 2007. The third chapter focuses on how the mechanisms of closeness (like-me) and looking up (prestige) work to form distance. Prestige is by far the more prevalent; the like-me mechanism only applies slightly among professionals and unskilled workers. Class feelings are expressed only minimally, mostly by the working class. Next chapter examines the existence of subjectively experienced classes. There is a dominant status continuum. Further, four clusters of subjectively perceived classes were found: high professionals, traditionally female lower professionals, semi-skilled manual and routine non-manual workers, and unskilled workers with low prestige. The fifth chapter deals with objective social distance in terms of actual patterns of association in egocentric networks (respondent's three best friends). Here, the homophily (like-me) is very strong. Friendship associations among 25 occupational categories are ordered primarily along a status continuum, with a distinct gap between white and blue collar.

The volume next explores stratification beliefs and perceptions of inequalities. The sixth chapter is concerned with people's images of social classes and the attribution of traits to various strata. People with lower status understand class in terms of economic factors, whereas those with higher status define it in terms of cultural factors. The following chapters pursue results from a qualitative study focused on the perception of inequalities. The seventh chapter introduces a description of what the concept of class evokes and what criteria people may employ in understanding social class. Narrators mostly reject the term 'class' as such, due to its strong Marxian overtones. The eighth chapter examines lay conceptions – ethno-theories of stratification focused on social categories understood as 'those above' and 'those below'. In assigning a position in the symbolic space, two dimensions are decisive: the material and power hierarchy and a person's symbolic position within society (recognition). In general terms, both studies reveal that corporate class-consciousness (i.e., closed-group solidarity) is not present. Contemporary Czech society may be better described in terms of competitive status feeling, with values of competitiveness on the basis of individual merit. Yet, this is cast into doubt by a widespread impression of undeserved wealth that emerged during the post-communist transition in some striking cases.

Keywords

social stratification, social distance, social interaction, social class, symbolic social space, group identity, social categorization

Sociální distance a stratifikace: sociální prostor v České republice

Jiří Šafr, Julia Häuberer (eds.)

Abstrakt

Studie zkoumá, jak symbolické hranice přispívají ke vzniku sociálních hierarchií ve stratifikačním prostoru. Nejprve je uvedena teoretická koncepce relačního pojetí nerovností: kulturalistický přístup k třídní analýze a koncepty sociálních distancí. Následující tři kapitoly se zabývají subjektivní sociální distancí jako ochotou k interakci s 22 profesními kategoriemi, která byla sledována v reprezentativním šetření Sociální distance 2007. Třetí kapitola sleduje, jak sociální distance utváří mechanismy podobnosti (like-me) a „vzhlížení" (prestiž). Efekt referenční prestiže převažuje, podobnost se projevuje jen velmi slabě mezi vysokými odborníky a nekvalifikovanými dělníky. Pouze dělníci vyjadřují velmi slabé třídní postoje – preference vlastní skupiny. Dále je zkoumána existence subjektivně vnímaných tříd. Převažuje statusové kontinuum, v němž byly identifikovány čtyři klastry profesí – subjektivně vnímané třídy: vysocí odborníci, odborné ženské profese, manuální a rutinně nemanuální pracovníci a nekvalifikované povolání s nízkou prestiží. Pátá kapitola se zabývá objektivními sociálními distancemi z hlediska skutečných vzorců asociací v egocentrických sítích (tři nejlepší přátelé respondenta). Zde je mechanismus homophily (like-me) velmi silný. Přátelské vazby mezi lidmi zařazenými do 25 profesních kategorií jsou uspořádány primárně podél statusového kontinua se zřetelnou hranicí mezi manuálními a nemanuálními profesemi.

Druhá část se věnuje představám o stratifikaci a percepcím nerovností. Šestá kapitola pojednává o významech sociální třídy a připisování vlastností společenským vrstvám. Lidé s nízkým statusem chápou třídu zejména z hlediska ekonomických faktorů, zatímco ti s vysokým statusem prostřednictvím kulturních faktorů. Další kapitoly analyzují data z kvalitativního výzkumu, který se zaměřil na percepce nerovností. Sedmá kapitola uvádí, co evokuje pojem třída a jaká kritéria při chápání tohoto pojmu lidé používají. Respondenti vesměs pojem „třída" odmítají vzhledem k jeho marxistické minulosti. Osmá kapitola sleduje laické koncepce a etnoteorie stratifikace. Zkoumá, které sociální kategorie jsou považovány za společensky „nahoře" a „dole". Pro určování pozice v symbolickém prostoru jsou podstatné dvě dimenze: materiální/mocenské hierarchie a symbolického postavení ve společnosti (uznání). Celkově vzato, oba výzkumy ukazují, že u nás dnes nelze hovořit o existenci korporátní formy třídního vědomí. Česká společnost se vyznačuje spíše tzv. kompetitivním statusovým vědomím, v němž jsou hodnoty soutěživosti na základě individuálního úsilí vlastní všem. Univerzální fungování výkonových kritérií je nicméně narušeno rozšířenou představou nezaslouženého zbohatnutí, které se v některých očividných případech objevilo během postkomunistické transformace.

Klíčová slova

sociální stratifikace, sociální distance, sociální interakce, sociální třída, symbolický sociální prostor, skupinová identita, sociální kategorizace

Soziale Distanzen und Stratifikation: der soziale Raum in der Tschechischen Republik

Jiří Šafr, Julia Häuberer (eds.)

Abstrakt

Die vorliegende soziologische Studie untersucht den Einfluss von symbolischen Grenzen auf die Entstehung von sozialen Hierarchien im sozialen Raum. Ausgangspunkt sind Ansätze zur Erklärung von Ungleichheiten durch soziale Beziehungen, d.h. der kulturtheoretische Ansatz der Klassenanalyse und Konzepte sozialer Distanz. Im ersten Teil der Studie werden subjektive Distanzen als Interaktionsbereitschaft bezüglich 22 Berufskategorien verstanden, die im Rahmen des repräsentativen Surveys Sociální distance 2007 (Soziale Distanzen 2007) erhoben wurden. Das dritte Kapitel untersucht, wie Mechanismen der Affinität (like-me) bzw. des „Aufschauens" (Prestige) soziale Distanzen formen. Dabei zeigt sich, dass der Effekt des Referenz-Prestiges vorherrscht, während das „like-me"-Prinzip nur einen schwachen Einfluss auf die soziale Distanz zwischen hochqualifizierten Fachkräften und unqualifizierten Arbeitern aufweist. Ein Klassenbewusstsein äußert sich in geringem Maße lediglich bei Arbeitern, d.h. in der Bevorzugung der eigenen Gruppe. Die Analyse der Existenz subjektiv wahrgenommener Klassen im vierten Kapitel zeigt ein Statuskontinuum auf, in dem vier Berufscluster bzw. subjektiv wahrgenommene Klassen identifiziert werden: hochqualifizierte Fachkräfte, frauentypische Berufe (pink collars), manuelle und nichtmanuelle Berufe mit Routinetätigkeit sowie unqualifizierte Arbeitskräfte mit geringem Prestige.

Das fünfte Kapitel befasst sich mit objektiver sozialer Distanz hinsichtlich tatsächlicher Interaktionsmuster in egozentrierten Netzwerken (drei beste Freunde des Respondenten). Hier ist der Mechanismus des „like-me" sehr stark ausgeprägt. Die Komposition der Freundschaftsnetzwerke unterteilt in 25 Berufskategorien verläuft primär entlang eines Statuskontinuums und weist eine deutliche Grenze zwischen Handwerkern (blue collars) und Angestellten (white collars) auf.

Der zweite Teil der Studie ist den Vorstellungen der Befragten über die Stratifikation und der Perzeption von Ungleichheiten gewidmet. Im sechsten Kapitel werden die Bedeutung sozialer Klassen und die Zuschreibung von Eigenschaften zu Angehörigen gesellschaftlicher Schichten betrachtet. Menschen mit niedrigem Status begreifen Klasse insbesondere hinsichtlich ökonomischer Faktoren, während Menschen mit höherem Status diese über kulturelle Faktoren definieren. Zur tieferen Analyse werden in den folgenden Kapiteln Daten einer qualitativen Erhebung zur Wahrnehmung von Ungleichheiten hinzugezogen. Das siebte Kapitel fragt welche Assoziationen der Begriff Klasse beim Respondenten hervorruft und welche Kriterien zum Verständnis dieses Begriffs verwendet werden. Die Antwort ist eindeutig, angesichts seiner marxistischen Vergangenheit wird der Begriff „Klasse" von den Befragten abgelehnt.

Im achten Kapitel werden Laienkonzeptionen, bzw. Ethnotheorien der Stratifizierung aufgezeigt. Es wird untersucht, welche sozialen Kategorien in der Gesellschaft als „oben“ und „unten“ stehend angesehen werden. Für die Bestimmung der Position im symbolischen Raum sind zwei Dimensionen von grundlegender Bedeutung: die materielle Hierarchie und Machthierarchie sowie die symbolische Stellung in der Gesellschaft (Anerkennung). Zusammenfassend zeigen beide Erhebungen, dass man heutzutage im tschechischen Umfeld nicht von der Existenz eines korporativen Klassenbewusstseins, bzw. geschlossener Gruppensolidarität sprechen kann. Die tschechische Gesellschaft zeichnet sich eher durch ein sog. kompetitives Statusbewusstsein aus, in dem Werte des gesellschaftlichen Wettbewerbs basierend auf individueller Leistung vorherrschen sind. Die universelle Gültigkeit dieser Leistungskriterien wird jedoch durch die weit verbreitete Auffassung gestört, dass im Rahmen der postkommunistischen Transformation in augenscheinlich unrechtmäßigen Fällen Reichtum erworben wurde.

Schlüsselwörter

soziale Stratifikation, soziale Distanz, soziale Interaktion, soziale Klasse, symbolischer Raum, sozialer Raum, Gruppenidentität, soziale Kategorisierung

1. Social Distance as a Relational Approach to Social Stratification: A Theoretical Introduction

Jiří Šafr

Social inequalities originate not only in the material world but also at the social, interpersonal, and cultural levels. The stratification system of society can be viewed in two different ways. First, the classic approach understands stratification as a system of differentiated access to rare and socially valued resources in the form of status symbols. Stratification is usually analyzed through status indicators like education, prestige, various economic characteristics (income, property, and poverty), and various combinations thereof. Second, the relational or, more precisely, the social-distance-interactional approach studies stratification as a system of social distance norms. Such norms determine equal-status contacts, and these in turn define and reproduce inequalities in a society [Beshers, Laumann and Bradshaw 1964; Laumann 1966]. The ways in which hierarchies and inequalities are routinely reproduced within social interactions are studied. Association through marriage and friendship represents the decisive factor determining social structure [Bottero and Prandy 2003]. Social distances reveal the relational aspect of inequalities. Instead of pre-defining group hierarchies based on, for example, a fixed class scheme derived from a single dimension, patterns of human relations are observed and the nature of stratification is inferred from them. The experience actors acquire in the labour market is still the main focus of stratification analyses (namely class approaches). However, 'mutual classification of actors in a particular society takes place on a far broader cultural field than of differentiating attributes and praxis which can be relatively independent on experience in the labour market (i.e. relationship to money and work, consumption behaviour, patterns of family life, various ways of spending leisure time, status of acquaintances, cultural taste etc.). In this view classes are not formed merely around an economic relationship.' [Marada 2003: 145] Occupation thus remains the main source of social identity in the stratification ladder in modern society, albeit weakened certainly by the disintegration of class-based lifestyle in the individualization process and the rising importance of the life course. In the interactional social distance standpoint, however, occupation is considered a proxy for an individual's position in the symbolic space not an unambiguously classifying attribute of class membership (as it is in the conventional class approach).

Cultural Approach to Class Analysis

In a very general way, it is possible to identify two approaches in class analysis. It is necessary to emphasize that here we are speaking about the focus of the research – various processes of class structurations – and not about the definition of classes *per se*. First, there is a more traditional, conventional approach which emphasizes the material-economic aspects of social stratification and

is based on a definition of class membership according to a person's position in the labour market and in the workplace (employment relations, relation to the means of production). This approach studies the consequences of different class positions for life chances (mobility, income, risk of unemployment). However, it rather neglects the fact that status is expressed and reproduced through implicit evaluations in everyday social interactions, and that in a post-modern society inequalities are reproduced to a large degree via cultural practices. Second, there is a cultural approach to class analysis which is based on a Weberian status perspective of stratification, with its symbolic boundaries between status groups,[1] and on Bourdieu's 'classes' – empirical clusters of people with similar lifestyles. Instead of viewing classes as real collectivities, the focus is on the reproduction of hierarchies and inequalities through culture [Bottero and Irwin 2003]. Here class analysis is primarily approached from the wider perspective of cultural practices and lifestyle differentiation rather than merely from the perspective of the consequences of the position of occupational categories in the labour market. Still, in constructing such social classes as analytical categories occupational positions of individuals are the starting point.

Indeed, in this approach, classes can be seen as Weberian status groups–*Stände*–that are determined subjectively based on other people's evaluations of prestige and esteem rather than objectively according to a person's economic position in the (labour) market–social class [Weber (1921/22) 1980].[2] Weber's concept of status culture emphasizes the role of member interaction and cultural resources in the construction of the internal solidarity of a given status group and its ability to maintain a distinction from other groups. Representatives of class positions conceptualised in this way display converging economic characteristics (labour market position, property) as well as similar practices (manners, values, taste, etc.). Likewise, analytical categories – 'classes on paper' – represent a group of actors that occupy similar positions within a space of social positions [Bourdieu (1979) 1984]. Members draw on similar resources and display similar interests and habits in material and cultural consumption, self-presentation, classification of others and way of life.

This notion of social classes, whether derived from market position and work situation or from the associational congruence of occupational categories, resembles the notion of permeable social strata (as opposed to purely Marxian, subjectively conscious economic classes characterized by cohesiveness). In order to speak of the existence of social classes, analytical categories need to be identified as demographic identities (i.e. barriers and closure expressed in intergenerational stability, marital homogamy and association patterns) that we can then think of as real collectivities. This does not contradict the coexistence of some social classes (as demographic identities) with social strata in a particular society, nor does it presuppose the exclusive hierarchy of classes. Traditionally, classes as demographic identities were analyzed by looking at structuration processes, i.e. at social mobility (closeness) and the structure of association (marital homogamy and friendship ties). The cultural approach shifts to studying the processes of boundary construction through symbolic resources and practices (these processes will be the focus of an analysis of qualitative interviews in

1 *Status* is defined as the 'structure of relations of perceived (and widely accepted) social superiority, equality and inferiority among individuals' [Chan and Goldthorpe 2007: 514]. People maintain their status via lifestyle choices only. Here associations in terms of marriage and friendship establish basic equipollent interaction between people (due to the homophily principle).'

2 Weber [(1921/22) 1980] defines *social classes* as based on income source and a high level of social closure. Property, origin, and occupation are the defining characteristics.

Chapter 8).[3] Attention to class consciousness–within the tradition of Marxist 'false consciousness'––waned in favour of class identity construction (mainly through cultural tastes and consumption practices) because, in a post-modernist perspective, identity became increasingly complex (gender, ethnicity, etc.). Thus, in the mainstream class conceptualization (sometimes called neo-Weberian) – in which the most important component of life chance contributing to actor's class location is derived from relations in the labour market – classes do not represent 'real' socio-economic groupings as collectivities (communities) recognized and subjectively experienced by their members (i.e. classes 'for themselves' with strong class consciousness and with potential for collective action) but are conceived as pure analytical categories (classes 'on paper') [cf. Chan and Goldthorpe 2007].

There are two general analytic approaches to defining and constructing social classes. First, the deductive approach defines class *a priori* based on a pre-defined classification scheme. The theory tells us how to classify occupations into classes, and only then do we study the differences between life chances or lifestyles. Second, the *inductive* approach is based on the above-mentioned Weberian concept of status groups. Inequalities in resources and lifestyles themselves define groups, which can outline social classes based on certain general conditions (low relative distance, homogeneity). The latter approach corresponds to the relational principle of stratification and defines status groups or classes heuristically by analyzing interactions. The social space can be viewed as a stratification map of mutual positions between occupations based on life chances, lifestyles, and associations (friendship, kinship) [e.g., Laumann 1966; Bourdieu (1979) 1984; Chan and Goldthorpe 2004; Weeden and Grusky 2005]. 'Although social classes, as groupings of persons and families with well-defined, publicly agreed-upon corporate identities, may not exist, they may exist as more differentiated latent structures (latent in the sense of not being broadly recognized in the population).' [Laumann 1966: 143] This standpoint, sometimes called the micro-class approach, involves scaling a larger number of occupational categories.

In the analyses of data from the quantitative survey presented in this study we use mostly analytical categories of the EGP class classification and the continuous International Socio-economic Index of Occupational Status (ISEI) and the Standard International Occupational Prestige Scale (SIOPS; all derived from ISCO88 occupational coding), which are based on an *a priori* concept, and subjective social class identification, which conforms more with the idea of status (see Table A.1.1 in Appendix). However, this does not mean that our objective is to describe social structure solely in terms of predefined class/status categories (which is the standpoint of the conventional approach). Our main focus here is to map social stratification from reactions to the social distance scale, researching various stratification beliefs (we do, however, analyze how they are conditioned by analytical categories like class proposed by sociologists), and to present lay concepts of social space as expressed in qualitative survey narratives. In the final part of Chapter 5, in an assessment of the symbolic space of occupational positions on the basis of friendship association, we attempt to employ the inductive approach to social class when investigating interactional patterns of occupations.

3 The focus in the present study is on social interaction, stratification beliefs, and perceptions of social categories. Construction of symbolic boundaries through differentiation in cultural consumption and lifestyle among social classes, which was also the focus of our research project, is discussed elsewhere [see Šafr 2006, 2008a].

The relational paradigm of stratification

In modern society the process of social stratification proceeds mainly at the level of private socio-cultural interpretations: as a process of mutual classification, the subjects of which are the actors – who classify and are classified–themselves [Marada 2003: 144–145]. A growing stream of contemporary stratification research – generally within the framework of the above-mentioned cultural approach to class analysis – studies how various patterns of consumption and cultural practices define the symbolic boundaries between groups [e.g. Lamont and Fournier 1992; Lamont 1992]. Generally, the majority of the approaches that apply the social-distance-interactional model of relations and positions within the social space can be defined as the 'relational paradigm of stratification', which represents an alternative to the conventional stratification paradigm with its exclusive emphasis on labour market position and economic rewards [Bottero 2005].[4]

A relational perspective on inequalities, i.e. the study of relations between people and groups in specific localities, was however fundamental to early cultural-anthropological research on social stratification in local communities. Warner's concept of stratification as reputation emphasizes the dual principles of *symbolic placement*–people refer to positions within the community's social space based on structure, area, and social characteristics, and *status reputation*–people assess the social positions of individuals or families by comparing their actions to other people's actions and whether they are moral, aesthetic or social activities or participation, and faith, or ethnic membership [Warner et al. 1949].

In order to understand the difference between the conventional and relational paradigms, we need to be aware of their diverging views on social structure. Authors pursuing the relational approach do not merely view structure as a determinant of association and instead emphasize that the differences in friendship ties and lifestyles themselves create the stratification order. Social stratification is born in routine everyday activities, patterns of values, and choices made in the lives of ordinary people. Class is no longer interesting as a type of entirely socio-economic collectivity. Instead, the relational approach studies the construction of class boundaries based on a socially determined association and the construction of group boundaries through self-distinction and self-differentiation. In today's late modern society, the process of class formation occurs through highly individualized distinctions and interactions that are embedded in local contexts.

Social distance: definitions and assumptions

The relational perspective of social inequalities is expressed in the concept of social distances in which the nature of stratification is determined by interaction between people. Hierarchically formed groups are not defined *a priori* (for example, by means of a class scheme) but the starting point here is the assumption that inequalities are anchored in social networks and the distance in the social space is determined by different degrees of association (marriage, friendship) in the case of stratification among different vocational categories. The interaction approach to social distance views

4 There is an underlying fundamental difference between the substantialist (static) and relational views of social action and structure. In the *substantialist* perspective, substances like 'static entities' (things) are the basic units of analysis, while *relational* thinking looks at the dynamic of processes and relations between such entities [Emirbayer 1997].

stratification as a multidimensional space of social relations and positions being a result of invisible effects of economic, cultural, and social resources in our everyday life [Bottero and Prandy 2003].

The social distance perspective on stratification views social structure as a multi-dimensional social space made up of people in different positions and structured by real-world relations and interactions between people (see below for the interactional concept of social distance). Values and norms, i.e. culture, are always of underlying importance in generating distances. This approach is based on the idea that economic and social relations are intertwined. Different relations determine the distances within a social space. These are influenced by social networks and shared cultural taste and lifestyles that serve to identify social similarity [Bottero 2005].

Homophily – the principle of differential association

The principle of differential association represents an invisible force behind the construction of similarities and differences in the social space. Social similarity is identified through social networks and shared cultural tastes/lifestyles. Homophily–simplifiedly expressed in the proverb 'Birds of a feather flock together'–stands for people with similar social positions (status, class) are more likely to meet and associate with one another [McPherson et al. 2001]. Marital partners, friends, and acquaintances are usually selected from within the same group. In order to protect their resources, people can also actively exclude some groups from their social circle, for instance, through prejudice or snobbery. While mutual non-association is often an unconscious process, people with certain (social, economic, cultural) resources exist in different social circles and have different lifestyles. The principle of differential association significantly contributes to the reproduction of inequalities. The disadvantaged tend to associate with the disadvantaged, the privileged with the privileged. For example, college students with a higher social standing operate in a 'better' marriage market. On the other hand there is a general tendency observed in modern industrial societies of persons with a lower social status to direct their choices (their socio-preference orientation) more towards individuals with higher (or the same) status than towards those with a lower social status [Petrusek 1969]. However, this tendency is not fully reciprocated from those above. We shall address this question further in terms of the upward-interaction-preference hypothesis.

Social distance and interaction

The concept of social distance has a long history in sociology. Georg Simmel introduced the term. In his view social distance is a basic principle that structures human coexistence and creates a social space. He distinguished two types of distances between people: social distance defined by culture (we share it with other people) and relative to groups; and personal distance, which is individually constructed for specific people [Simmel (1908) 1992]. His theory, emphasizing interaction between people, also gave rise to the definition applied in empirical research since the Chicago school [Park 1924; Bogardus 1925], according to which the rate of understanding and intimacy generally characterizes personal and social relations.

In sociology and socio-psychology the approaches to social distances can be divided into two basic groups [McFarland and Brown 1973]. The first approach deals with similarity and is sometimes

labelled the structural approach. Small social distance is a condition when two individuals or groups share some characteristic, such as a profession, income, education, ethnic origin, lifestyle, opinions, or attitudes. The second, the interaction approach to social distance, originated in the concepts of Simmel and Bogardus. It reflects the amount of affinity between people. Low social distance exists when the individuals or groups are characterized by a higher probability of social interaction; for example, people living close to each other, meeting frequently, getting married, or having friends or relatives from different groups. We can find high rates of social distance among groups for which social interaction is not very likely. In that way social distances point to the difference between one's own group and a reference group [Allport (1954) 2004].

It is possible to distinguish between an objective and a subjective interactional concept of social distances based on different methodological measurements [Laumann 1966]. In the objective approach we measure variations in people's getting together from the point of view of stratification. *Objective social distance* is specified as the actually observed differential association of social categories (i.e. persons of different status). This means the coincidence of professions (in fact absence of their association) between friends or spouses – marital homogamy, while in the subjective approach we determine sentiments about social groups (e.g. nationalities or professions) – what level of relational intimacy with them would the respondents allow?[5]

Subjective social distance in the stratification space

Social distances are created on the basis of a social categorization process, which is a tool that helps us in our attempt to understand the complexity of the world around us. By forming and using social categories we generalize the qualities (attributes) of others with the help of a shared qualification system describing group qualities [Allport (1954) 2004]. The categorizations lead us to form prejudices, which on the one hand can be hostile in character – the most noticeable examples tend to be negative ethno-national prejudices – or on the other hand can become the loving face that is shown when we prioritize certain groups, favour them, and sometimes want to belong to them. Subjective social distance derives from membership in one's own group (in-group) and the classification of other groups (out-group) into specific categories [Poole 1927]. Subjective social distance measures interpersonal and group relationships and changes to them by means of the stereotypes in these relations.[6] It attempts to use emotional reactions as a tool to understand human behaviour [Bogardus 1947]. Subjective distance reflects the amount of perception and intimacy, which defines existing social relations and relations that are hypothetical and have not yet happened [Bogardus 1925].

E. Bogardus developed a well-known scale to measure social distances between ethnic and national groups. As early as the 1950s in American sociology the first experiments appeared using this method in research on social stratification [Westie and Westie 1957]. The pioneer of this approach was Edward O. Laumann, who introduced an entire new theoretical concept of social stratification as an interaction system [Laumann 1966]. He defined *subjective social distances* as the attitude of an ego towards another person (alter) with certain status attributes (e.g. occupation) generally indicating the character of the interactions the ego would undergo with the object under

5 Subjective social distances will be the focus of analyses in chapters 2–4; actual friendship patterns as objective social distances are dealt with in Chapter 5.

6 What attributes the narrators refer to for in-group and out-group are described in detail in Chapter 8 by K. Vojtíšková.

consideration. The nature of this interaction can be placed along a scale of socially defined intimacy [ibid.: 29]. At the beginning of the 1960s he carried out a survey examining subjective social distances using a revised Bogardus Scale and measured objective social distance determined by position in the social network (the occupations of friends, relatives, and neighbours).* Later he extended this approach to studying social structure to ethnic and religious groupings [Laumann 1973]. Regarding subjective social distances to occupations Laumann addressed two research questions that are also dealt with below in Chapters 2 to 5.

The first issue involves a reflection of the stratification space: does it have the character of a continuum, i.e. people perceive the stratification order of professions as a continuum, or is it possible to find certain groupings that delineate apparent class boundaries [cf. Laumann 1966: Chapter 4]? According to the *status-continuum hypothesis*, it is possible to organize shared mental categories along a single line. This image is in accordance with the American concept of socio-economic status/prestige as relatively straight gradual stratification. The alternative view is represented by the hypothesis of *subjectively experienced class structure*, in which, from the perspective of social distance similarities, it is possible to find groups of professions that respond to a traditional (socio-economic) understanding of class groupings. Analyzing subjective distances and comparing the values of socio-economic status between the groups of professions determined by intervals on the distance scale, Laumann concluded that the hypothesis needs to be refined since there are more or less differentiated occupational groupings. However, they were not highly crystallized but relatively differentiated along a general continuum of prestige. 'Class-like features best characterize the situation at the extremes of the occupational hierarchy, while a more fluid, differentiated situation obtains for the middle levels of the hierarchy.' [ibid.: 143]. These profession groups as subjectively experienced class structure, though they show low real interaction among themselves (i.e. low objective distance determined by having the same kinds of friends, relatives and neighbours), are fluid and have relatively permeable borders.

In conclusion, Laumann argues that the stratification in American cities during the first half of the 1960s cannot be seen as a closed class system made up of groups with clearly identifiable identities shared by everyone involved, the only exception here being the highest and lowest status groups, which do feature a certain degree of closure. However, he admits the existence of a more differentiated latent structure not necessarily recognized by the public. We will ask the same question in Chapter 4: Is it possible to ascertain the layout of subjectively experienced classes on the basis of hypothetical interaction with occupational categories?

The second issue is how the subjective social distance originates with respect to a person's position in the stratification system. Laumann has argued that there are two distinct mechanisms behind a person's willingness to interact with someone from particular social category [Laumann 1966: Chapter 3]. The first mechanism follows the logic of the 'like-me' principle, according to which people prefer to establish intimate contacts with persons of equal status (in a status continuum), i.e. with people from the same class (in a stratified system). Therefore, we would expect to see people with similar professions or who come from the same social class to have the lowest sense of

* The same principle was applied within the first extensive social stratification survey conducted in Czechoslovakia in 1967 [see Machonin 1970]. In addition to a spouse's status origin, a respondent's best personal friend and the head of a "family friend's" household, i.e., an acquaintance, were inquired about (occupation, education, income, ethnicity and residential proximity) [Petrusek 1969].

subjective social distance towards each other. Here we can speak of a general process of inter-group bias that presupposes a tendency among people to take a better view of their own group compared to other groups [Allport (1954) 2004].

The second mechanism adopts the logic of the 'prestige effect'. Here a person exhibits the least subjective social distance to a person who has the highest social or occupational status. People consider higher status groupings as a reference group that they would be willing to join. This is expressed in their mobility aspirations. In short, both explanatory hypotheses of subjective social distance propose very different observable effects. Because both effects are conflicting and the upward-interaction preference applies only when desired aims are important, Laumann assumed that the prestige hypothesis is expressed more by subjective social distance and the 'like-me' effect by objective social distance [Laumann 1966: 39-40]. Empirical findings in the mid-1960s in American society revealed that both effects have a different impact in different social classes. Overall, the prestige mechanism of attractiveness is a more important mechanism in subjective social distance [Laumann 1966: Chapter 3; Laumann and Senter 1976]. However, in observations of real associations between different groups of occupation – the objective social distance – homophily or the 'like-me' principle prevails [Laumann 1966: Chap. 6; Laumann and Guttman 1966]. Similar findings regarding sociopreferential orientation in associations with friends – resulting in interactional closeness, particularly between the 'edge' social strata – were obtained in Czechoslovak society at the end of the 1960s [Petrusek 1969]. We discuss this issue in further detail in Chapter 5.

Given these assumptions, it is evident why the principle of differential association should be expected to structure social stratification. In Chapter 3 we will look at the extent to which the above-mentioned mechanisms determine social distance in Czech society today and in Chapter 5 we will analyse objective distances in terms of friendship patterns.

Class / status feelings: competitive and corporate consciousness

Social distance (to occupational categories primarily) can be considered an essential feature of class distinction. It expresses a sentiment that captures the relations of a person toward the members of his/her own as well as other classes. When related to class attitudes, 'it should not be confused with personal liking or aversion; the concept rather refers to that bar to free intercourse between individuals that arises from their belonging to groups rated as superior or inferior in status' [Mac Iver and Page 1952: 358]. Consequently, two essential kinds of class / strata sentiment can be distinguished on a socio-psychological basis [ibid.]: *corporate consciousness* in which an individual identifies her personal welfare with that of her class and a *competitive class feeling* which is a 'class view wherein one has an awareness, albeit vague and inaccurate at times, of his place in the class structure, but where he is always ready and willing to leave his class for higher, greener pastures' [Lauman 1966: 48]. Corporate class consciousness is a feature of closed or caste-divided social structures in a modern society. As a class-based solidarity and power-based image of society it is typical of the extreme ends of the social ladder (upper and lower classes/strata) – they make a straightforward distinction between 'us' and 'them' – since they want to preserve or alter their given position. In competitive class feeling as a more personal form of class (or, as we shall see below, we should say status) feeling individuals are aware of inequalities in socio-economic status and share the belief that their position is the result of their own personal effort (individual merit) and resources in competition with other

people. Vertical mobility disrupts corporate class consciousness, 'the lower-class members do not feel strongly the permanence of status that creates solidarity and stimulates class organization' [Mac Iver and Page 1952: 360]. The same can be argued in the case of a status heterogeneous environment, i.e. a person in diverse social networks and marital heterogamy. As a consequence of the distinction of economic class and status group (honorific categories of social position), Laumann and Senter [1976: 1309-1311] drew on Weber's notion and distinguished in greater detail four types of consciousness of social inequality and stratification in theory:[7] competitive class one (awareness of inequalities but with the belief that the position is determined by personal effort), corporate class one (a Marxian kind of consciousness: life changes are dependent on a group, classes are self-conscious entities), corporate status one (socially exclusive group, caste of honour), and competitive status one (meritocratic system, celebrity system where one can lose or gain 'face'). In this study we shall refer to the last one as status feeling. These forms of stratification perception are of course not mutually exclusive and people are usually members of various status groups. These beliefs have a broad impact on status- or class-linked behaviour (association, leisure time preferences, cultural taste, political behaviour, etc.).

Social Distances in the Stratification System of the Czech Republic project

In this introductory chapter I have attempted to outline a broad overview of the theoretical and methodological rationale underlying the empirical research and analyses in the chapters below. The book presents the main results of the project 'Social Distances in the Stratification System of the Czech Republic'.[8] The three main objectives of the project are (1) to adopt the subjective social distance method, (2) to apply it to map the distance in the stratification space without using a prior classification, and (3) to examine perceptions of social inequalities. For this purpose we carried out two studies: first, input qualitative research that focused mainly on understanding the symbolic space as experienced by narrators, and second a quantitative representative survey of the adult Czech population researching interactional social distances – the willingness to interact with target occupations (subjective social distance), images of occupations and stereotypes of various social categories, and actual associations in egocentric social networks (objective social distance). The surveys will be introduced in the corresponding chapters.

Structure of the book

In this volume we seek to explore the symbolic boundaries that contribute to social hierarchies in the symbolic stratification space. Generally speaking, the question of class-/ status-identity formation is addressed through social interaction. In the next three chapters we shall study interactional willingness to given occupational stimuli as researched into by the population representative survey 'Social Distances 2007'. After introducing the method of subjective social distance we attempt to

7 The unit of reference of people's orientations towards a class or status order is determining is: if a person prefers a primary group (family, friends) he/she is likely to be orientated up the hierarchy of status positions (competitive consciousness), if it is a secondary group (his/her own stratum) he/she is likely to adopt the collective status-group or the class maintenance of honorific standing or economic reward (corporate consciousness) awarded to an entire stratum, for example, unions or professional organizations.

8 For more information about the project visit <http://www.socdistance.wz.cz>.

show how two distinct mechanisms – closeness (like-me) and 'looking up' (prestige) – form social distances, and then we approach the question of subjectively experienced class boundaries. These findings are then supplemented with observed patterns of association in egocentric social networks in Chapter 5. The next section is devoted to stratification beliefs, namely in Chapter 6 people's images of occupations and society and subjective understanding of social classes and strata, trait attribution. The next two chapters examine this issue in detail when using the wealth of narrative data from the qualitative study of social distances undertaken in 2007. Here the social categories experienced by interviewees (or at least the ability of narrators from different social backgrounds to speak about them with an interviewer) are the focus. First, Chapter 7 introduces a description of what the concept of class evokes and what criteria for understanding social class people may employ and how they identify with those criteria. Second, the final chapter extends the stratification concept to representations of the top and bottom parts of society regardless of any a priori concepts. Here, the professional sphere is not necessarily the cornerstone for assigning various social categories positions in the hierarchical symbolic space. An analysis of lay constructions of social categories addresses the question of who is 'below' and who 'above' and what criteria differentiate them.

2. Subjective Social Distance: Interaction Willingness and Occupational Stimuli

Julia Häuberer, Jiří Šafr

Data: Social Distance 2007 survey

The major part of this study uses data from the 'Social Distances in the CR' survey conducted in December 2007. The main goal of the research was to study the relational facet of social stratification and specifically the associational patterns and the interactional willingness response to occupational stimuli. The sample (N=1197) is representative of the adult population (aged 18-87) in the Czech Republic.[9] The survey examined attitudes towards stratification and images of occupations. In this and the next two chapters we analyze various aspects and outcomes of subjective social distances using the Bogardus/Laumann social distance scale on a selected sample of occupations.

The social distance psychometric scaling method was developed by Emory S. Bogardus [1925] to explore attitudes towards different nationalities. In general, a social distance, or the Bogardus Scale, uses a series of statements in an attempt to establish how willing a person is to associate with members of groups that are different. However, as McFarland and Brown [1973] pointed out, Bogardus termed the method 'distance', i.e. remoteness, but considering the instructions to respondents we should instead speak about of a 'sympathetic understanding scale'. A modified Bogardus Scale was first used by Frank Westie to study the relationship between social class and prejudice towards minorities [Westie and Westie 1957] and that was developed further by Edward Laumann to explore the perceptions individuals have towards people with different types of jobs [Laumann 1966] and towards different ethno-religious groups [Laumann 1973].[10]

This method was the basis of the social distance scale used in the Social Distance 2007 survey. However there are two important differences. First, the version of the social distance scale designed by Laumann for assessing distances between professions employed an agreement Likert scale for each type of interaction. However, Laumann, using Guttman simplex analysis, revealed the "existence of an underlying unidimensional scale with kinship and friendship at one end and common residence at the other" [Laumann 1966: 36]. Since we were limited by the time available for interviewing, shortened

9 The data collection was carried out by FOCUS agency. First, 142 municipalities were randomly selected across the country using the random walk method. More information about the survey can be obtained at <http://www.socdistance.wz.cz>.

10 Previously the Bogardus social distance scale was used in the Czech Republic for measuring attitudes to the Roma population [see Ryšavý 2003].

versions with Guttman scale – in which social relationships are arranged on a continuum of relative intimacy of access to a person, and agreement with any one item implies agreement with the higher-order items – a version of the scale with ordinal answers was applied instead. Thus a respondent chooses between propositions hierarchically expressing different levels of intimacy to the stimuli, which is the original procedure devised by Bogardus [1925]. Two reasons led us to do this: first, this approach has already been used in other Czech surveys (e.g. Social Cohesion 2006), and second, it prevents the 'block' response that can occur using the Likert scale format of interviewing (i.e. circling the same answer for all items describing interaction within a given occupation).[11] The ordinality of the scale was also examined in several qualitative interviews, which antedate the representative survey (see Chapters 7 and 8). We intended to cover social distance in its full breadth, and therefore, we extended the scale with one explicitly negative answer, 'I want nothing to do with him/her'.

Second, another difference from the original versions of the social distance scales of the 1950s-60s was the fact that the Social Distance 2007 survey not only interviewed both men and women but in the list of occupations assessed both genders were quoted. This was due to the fact that the Czech language usually distinguishes between male and female forms of occupations. The reason to incorporate both genders is quite straightforward. The stratification system of advanced countries has changed in the past forty years. Generally, the number of women in the labour market has risen and consequently some professions have ceased to be the domain of men. Gender differences in terms of both occupational stimuli and the respondent's sex will be discussed below. In the text we mostly use the more typical gender form for the occupational label to make it clear to the reader.

In the Social Distance 2007 survey the respondents were asked the following question for each of 22 occupational categories: 'I will now read you the names of different professions. Please tell me for each of them whether you would like him or her as …'. The response options were: (1) husband or wife, (2) daughter-in-law or son-in-law, (3) close friend, (4) somebody who visits you often, (5) member in your sports club or interest group, (6) neighbour, (7) I do not want to have anything to do with him/her. The respondent had to choose the answer expressing the level of intimacy with the given occupational category. Unsurprisingly, a '1' is interpreted as indicating low social distance while a '7' indicates high social distance.

The sample of 22 occupations was inspired by the Cambridge and Belmont, Massachusetts 1963 study [Laumann 1966] and by research on occupational cognition [Coxon at al. 1986]. It also takes into consideration, on the one hand, a proportional representation of occupations on the grounds of socio-economic status and prestige (the main occupational categories of ISCO are about equally included) and, on the other hand, occupations that are well known and represented in the labour market.

Hierarchy of occupations

Table 2.1 presents the basic data in which the 22 occupations are listed in the order of mean social distance scores. The resulting rank reflects their common interactional popularity, which is highly

11 Laumann [1966: 37] reports that in the Cambridge and Belmont 1963 survey 24% of respondents used 'block' responses.

correlated with other stratification measures. It is important to note that this is the most widespread order, since it was obtained regardless of respondents' own social standing. Hypothetically, if the like-me hypothesis (see Chapters 1 and 3) was fully valid and all respondents held the same occupation, then this occupation would score the top position with the lowest distance (for this reason in Chapter 4, where we search for perceptions of subjective social class contours, we control for the respondent's social class).

Table 2.1. Descriptive statistics of the subjective social distances to target occupations, means, standard deviations, and ISEI, SIOPS and Usefulness values

	Median	Mean				Std. Dev.	ISEI	SIOPS	USEF†
	All	All*	All	Men	Wom.				
Physician (doctor)	2	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.5	1.6	88	77	9.3
Lawyer	2	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.8	1.7	85	69	7.9
Owner/manager, small store	2	3.0	3.0	2.8	3.1	1.9	49	47	6.6
Nurse	3	3.0	3.0	2.8	3.2	1.6	51	53	8.6
Top executive-large business	3	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	2.0	70	60	7.3
Draftsman (engineer)	3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.3	2.0	69	54	7.3
Programmer/IT specialist	3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.4	1.9	71	51	7.2
Auto-mechanic	3	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.5	1.6	34	42	6.9
Accountant/wages clerk	3	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.8	1.8	51	45	6.5
Teacher-elementary school	3	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.7	1.9	66	57	8.4
University professor	4	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.7	1.9	77	78	8.4
Secretary	4	3.9	3.9	3.7	4.0	1.9	51	44	5.8
Joiner	4	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9	1.7	33	38	6.6
Policeman	4	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	1.9	50	40	7.5
Waiter	4	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.3	1.7	34	22	5.9
Shop assistant in supermarket	4	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	1.7	25	23	6.3
Truck driver	4	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.3	1.7	34	33	6.4
Factory foreman	4	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.4	1.8	42	46	6.2
Worker in a factory	4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	1.7	24	30	6.4
Unskilled construction worker	5	5.0	5.0	4.9	5.1	1.6	21	15	5.2
Cleaner	5	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.6	16	21	5.5
Street sweeper	6	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	1.6	23	13	5.1

Source: Social Distance 2007; N= 1197, N= 799 (listwise), weighted data.
Note: * Unweighted data, † societal usefulness scale (ratings by respondents on a 10-point scale with a maximum rating of 10)
Occupational stimuli ordered in terms of their average social distance scores
Correlation (Sperman's Rho) between the average level of the scales and the SIOPS RC = 0.83; the ISEI RC = 0.82 and the usefulness scale RC = 0.80.

Table 2.1 shows the target occupations ordered according to the mean values. All target occupations feature a prevalence of positive willingness towards interaction; the highest average reaction is the category of 'neighbour'. It is apparent that the means of the scales constitute a distinct continuum that runs from the occupations located highest in the stratification hierarchy and with highly rated skills and prestige (doctor, lawyer) to the lowest-rated manual unskilled jobs (cleaner, street sweeper). This is also documented by the correlation between the scale and two international stratification scales of international socio-economic status (ISEI), prestige (SIOPS), and usefulness to society, which we consider analogous to the concept of prestige (it will be described below). Both social distance and societal usefulness were evaluated by respondents in different item batteries. We must remark though that the concept of social distance constitutes a slightly different point of view on stratification than occupational prestige or socio-economic status. These stratification measures are of course related to each other, but each comes from a different theoretical background. Whereas in the case of prestige it is approval, esteem, social honour, or a common usefulness (or as some authors aptly say, 'only what the sociologist measures as occupational prestige'); in the case of socio-economic status it is a profession's capacity to convert educational capital (educational credentials) into economic capital (income); in the concept of subjective social distances it is the degree of acceptable interaction of ego (respondent) with the social categories of professions. It is determined by prestige as well as prejudice.

The upper half of Table 2.1 contains the non-manual professions of white-collar workers and the lower half contains the manual professions of blue-collar workers. Yet, we can find certain exceptions that attain a higher position than one would expect with respect to their socio-economic status and SIOPS prestige: on the one hand, lower than expected is the social distance towards auto mechanics (they are not generally favoured as a wife/husband, but one-third of the respondents could imagine having a mechanic as a close friend), waiters, and store owners/managers. On the other hand, compared to occupational prestige, university professors, factory foremen, and elementary school teachers rank lower on the social distance scale.

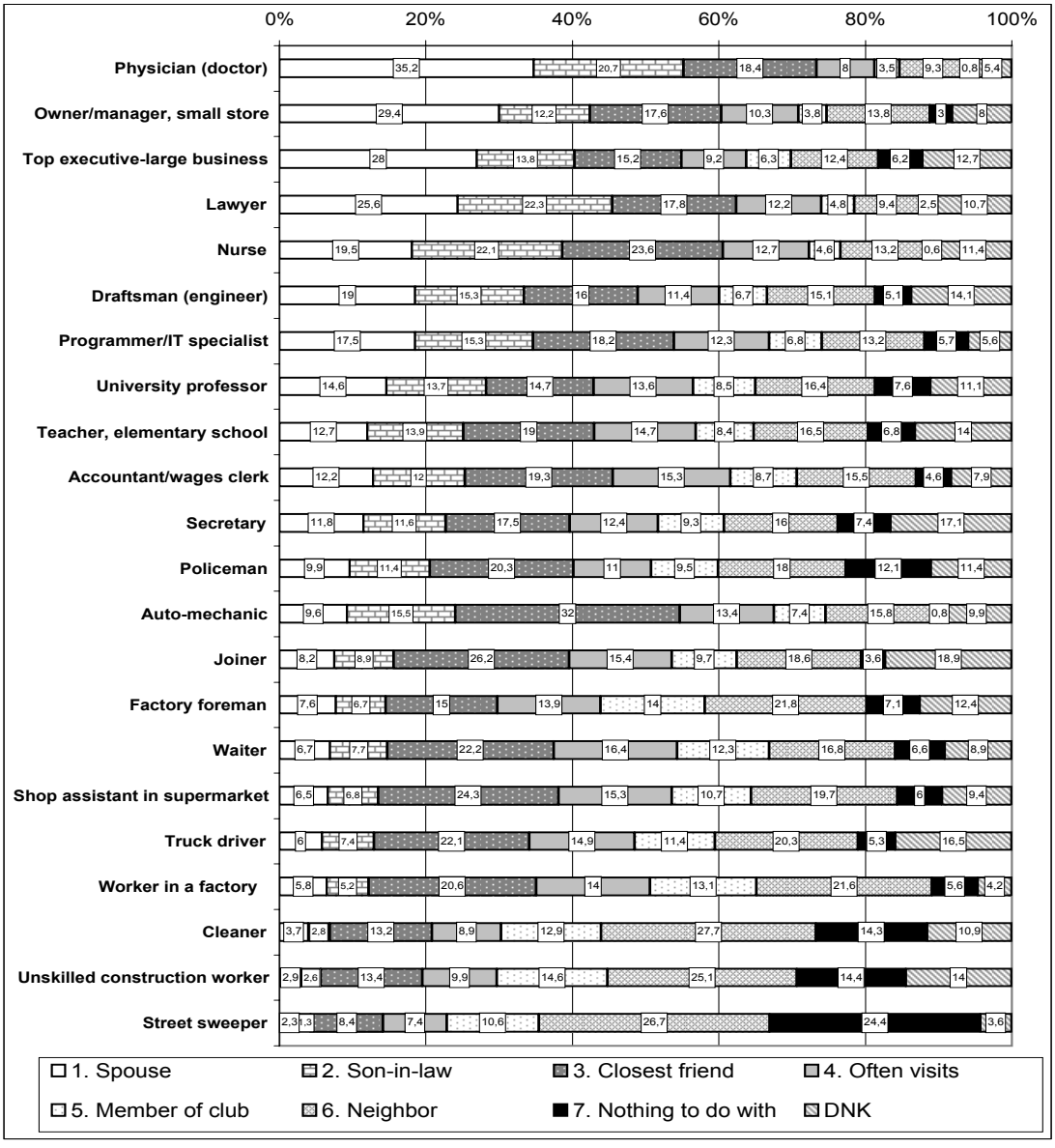
Simply on the basis of the mean value we can split the target occupations into three groups: first, professions, which are viewed most favourably, (from doctor to programmer), described by the average category of 'close friend'; second, a group that is positively evaluated (auto mechanic to factory foreman) and is composed of a mixture of professions mainly occupied by women, high qualified manual crafts, and some unskilled blue-collar and white-collar professions.[12] This wide-ranging group is evaluated on average in terms of 'frequent visits'. The third group is comprised of rather distantly perceived, low-prestige, working-class occupations (from unqualified construction workers to sweepers), which is still perceived positively, but the hypothetical reaction is on average remote, somewhere in between a club member and a neighbour (a similar picture can be drawn if the median is employed).

The scale that respondents used to rate the occupational stimuli carries a certain social meaning. In contrast to occupational prestige research, it does not simply indicate a degree of agreement with common stratification ranking but describes possible interactional relations that express the degree of intimacy the respondent would be willing to experience (see Figure 2.1). That is why it is also interesting to regard the distribution of the two most distinctive categories of 'marriage' and the literally negative response 'I want nothing to do with him/her'. The least favoured occupations – the ones most respondents wanted nothing to do with – are unskilled construction workers, cleaners (up to 15%), and street sweepers, receiving more than a quarter of all negative answers. We should add that a high proportion of extremely

12 In this overall descriptive part we use weighted data. The subsequent analyses are based on unweighted data.

negative ratings went to policeman (11%). Conversely, the lowest level of social distance expressed towards an occupational occupant as a possible marital partner was shown towards doctors (35% of answers), followed by an owner/manager of a small business, a top executive in a large business, and a lawyer (more than one-quarter of responses). However, we should note that in the case of willingness to marry a person of a given occupation there are certain gender differences, which we will discuss below.

Figure 2.1. Social distance to 22 occupational stimuli, row percentages



Source: Social Distance 2007; N= 1197.

Does subjective social distance just measure prestige? Social usefulness and social-interactional distance

Using the same list of occupations, the survey also examined how people evaluate the general usefulness of individual professions for society.[13] Comparing the two sets of scales, from the point of view of social usefulness policeman, teacher, and university professor are ranked higher, whereas in interpersonal interaction respondents would feel more intimate with the owner/manager of a shop or a secretary (see the last column in Table 2.1). Overall the ranking in both concepts is analogous (RC = 0.8) to the ranking of SIOPS and ISEI, but the presence of some discrepancies indicates that from the substantial point of view each concept presents somewhat different measures of subjective appraisal of social stratification. This is well documented in the case of a policeman, an occupation that is highly valued for its usefulness to society, but one towards which people feel somewhat distant when assessing it as a hypothetical interaction.

In order to look in more detail for the differences between social distance and general social usefulness, factor analyses were performed on both sets of scales to reveal latent dimensions of occupational appraisal (see Table 2.2). In both cases two latent dimensions connected to general prestige were detected: blue-collar occupations and white-collar occupations – in social distance the first and third factors, in usefulness the first and second ones, though the remaining dimensions are somehow different.[14] In the case of social-interactional distance people assess a group of *professional female-dominated occupations*, such as nurse, accountant, and secretary; we could call them 'pink-collar' occupations (this group will be discussed more in Chapter 4). As regards usefulness to society, respondents distinguish occupations that are *crucial for health, education, and security* (doctor, nurse, teacher, and policeman). Occupations that are rated high as socially useful are ones of which it is expected they are performed in extraordinary circumstances, when people are in life-threatening situations or are defenceless or in danger. In the case of an elementary school teacher, we can think of a profession with the educational mission which also significantly influences a person's whole life and thus stands for 'societal goodness' (cf. Chapter 8). This indicates that the meaning of usefulness is related more to the occupational prestige [cf. Kapr 1969]. These results – the limited difference in significance – point to the validity of both the social-distance and social-usefulness concepts of occupational hierarchy.

13 The question was: 'From the following list of occupations, try to evaluate how useful they are to society'; (answers on a 10-point scale with a maximum value of 10).

14 In social distance, in case of policeman the loadings in PCA are not unambiguous. We shall see in Chapter 4 that this target profession is perceived somewhere on the border between blue- and white-collar occupational groups.

Table 2.2. Factor solutions for social distance and for social usefulness, principal component analysis, rotated component matrix

	Social distance			Usefulness to society		
	1. Blue collars	2. White--collar female	3. High Professional occupations	1. Low manual occupations	2. High--ranking professionals	3. Life--helping occupations
Unskilled construction worker	**0.84**	0.04	0.08	**0.87**	0.15	0.09
Worker in a factory	**0.78**	0.18	0.06	**0.80**	0.19	0.23
Street sweeper	**0.78**	0.00	0.09	**0.87**	0.10	0.10
Cleaner	**0.77**	0.07	0.07	**0.92**	0.08	0.11
Truck driver	**0.74**	0.19	0.09	**0.77**	0.34	0.17
Shop assistant in supermarket	**0.72**	0.29	0.00	**0.79**	0.24	0.17
Factory foreman	**0.69**	0.21	0.29	**0.65**	0.48	0.05
Joiner	**0.65**	0.19	0.25	**0.71**	0.30	0.28
Waiter	**0.64**	0.28	0.08	**0.76**	0.37	0.05
Auto-mechanic	**0.57**	0.24	0.23	**0.69**	0.38	0.27
Policeman	0.39	0.33	0.14	0.41	0.29	**0.53**
Nurse	0.23	**0.72**	0.07	0.28	0.05	**0.79**
Accountant/ wages clerk	0.36	**0.72**	0.16	0.64	0.52	0.19
Secretary	0.35	**0.63**	0.26	0.62	0.60	0.01
Doctor (Physician)	-0.07	**0.62**	0.44	-0.04	0.16	**0.82**
Teacher – elementary school	0.24	**0.55**	0.34	0.24	0.31	**0.74**
Owner/manager – small store	0.19	**0.55**	0.30	0.45	**0.69**	0.12
Programmer/IT specialist	0.20	0.22	**0.84**	0.34	**0.70**	0.19
Draftsman (engineer)	0.22	0.21	**0.83**	0.21	**0.67**	0.30
University professor	0.18	0.21	**0.79**	0.03	**0.61**	0.58
Lawyer	-0.04	0.52	**0.56**	0.11	**0.63**	0.49
Top executive – large business	0.12	0.48	**0.55**	0.24	**0.80**	0.18
Variance explained:	39.39%	13.77%	5.13%	51.71%	12.05%	6.15%
	total 58.29 %			total 69.91 %		

Source: Social Distance 2007; N = 797 (Listwise).
Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis, Rotation Varimax with Kaise r Normalization; for reasons of comparability in case of the Social distance 3 factors solution was used (i.e. Eigenvalues over 1,1). Bold numbers indicate belonging to the specific factor of the items.

Non-response

Before examining the gender differences of social distance reactions, we will briefly address the issue of non-response. Various occupations received the biggest number of invalid responses (over 10%; ordered by the proportion of missing values): joiner, driver, secretary, draftsman, teacher, con-

struction worker, top executive, foreman, nurse, policemen, professor, cleaner and lawyer. Perhaps a more interesting result is that the closest and the most distant occupations (doctor and street sweeper) feature the lowest percentage of 'don't know' answers. There is no apparent general trend in the missing answers: 'don't knows' (DNK) are spread virtually throughout the stratification continuum and they are not influenced by the gender distinctiveness of an occupation in the eyes of respondents of either gender (except for lawyer, waiter and driver, in which cases DNK answers are typical for women). However, the failure to respond to some occupational categories is in a way related to education and social class (here EGP 3).[15] It is possible to observe this among university-educated individuals relating to manual or routine non-manual occupations: waiter, factory worker, driver, cleaner, construction worker, and foreman, and the white-collar occupation of an owner/manager of a small store. Regarding social class, factory worker was the only target occupation that received more DNK answers from respondents belonging to professional upper class than expected. On the other hand, DNK answers relating to professor and programmer are most typical for individuals who completed vocational education and/or are from the working class, who also take less decided attitude to doctor, lawyer, teacher, and draftsman. It seems that there is a twofold mechanism behind non-response: the farther from an individual's own social status the target occupation is and in general the lower its status (explicitly working class occupations). This is most likely another strand of the general mechanism of homophily (like-me) which will be studied in detail in the next chapter. In further analyses we will apply only the cases when the respondents answered all items in the question battery of social distances to occupations (listwise method).

Do men and women express uniform social distances to occupations?

We began by asking whether the values from the scale of social distance to occupations are somehow gender conditioned, doing so partly by considering whether a respondent is a man or a woman, and partly by assessing particular occupations that are typical for men and women and consequently the gendered name for an occupation could not influence the resulting validity of the scales.

The mean values of the social distance men and women feel towards given occupations are shown separately in Table 2.1 and Figure 2.2. The comparison shows that in some cases a traditional perception of occupations that are typically men's and typically women's does prevail. This indirectly indicates the validity of the used tool: the respondents did not assess the occupations mechanically and uniformly irrespective of the factual meaning of the scale, i.e. specifically marriage. A slight difference in the values of social distance between men and women can be found in occupations that are gender-specific – the majority of people working in them are women. This applies to the professions of nurse, secretary, accountant, waitress, and perhaps also owner/manager of a small store (T- test, sig, $p < 0.05$). In addition, women, unlike men, feel less social distance towards the occupations of waiter, driver, and construction worker.

The gender conditionality of the categorization process (generalization) is noticeable if we observe the differences between responses to the category of closeness 'I would marry him/her' and the rest of the responses (see Figure 2.2).[16] First to mention, compared to men, the female respondents express

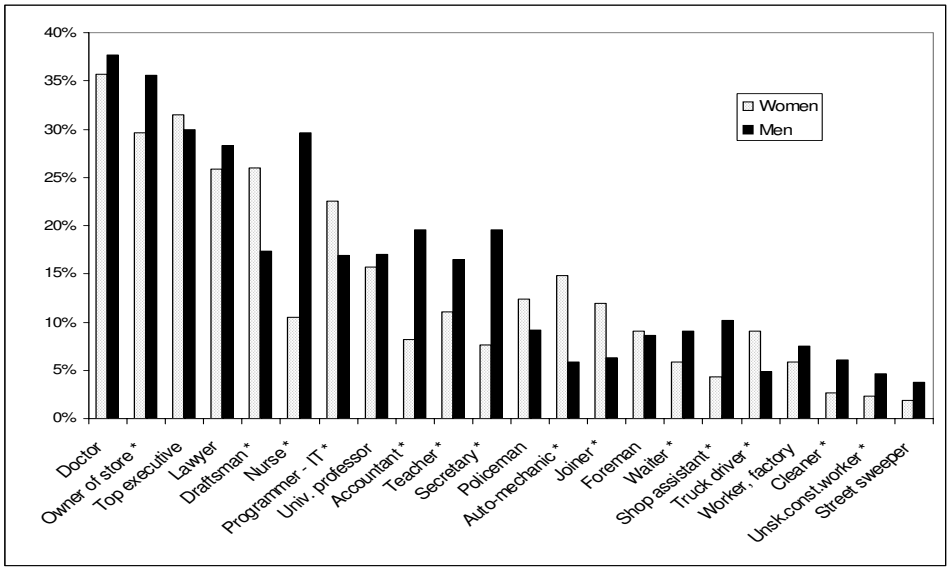
15 Chi-Square tests; all results significant at $p < 0,05$.

16 To analyze also the other extreme of social distance – the rejection or exclusion of occupational groups – we

a greater distance, i.e. less willingness to marry those in the occupational stimuli. 'Love bias' with positive character is partly apparent in case of pronouncedly gender specific professions. When men and women are compared in terms of marriage, men especially prefer the profession of the owner of a store and then typically female occupations, such as nurse, accountant, teacher, and secretary. On the other hand, women prefer draftsman, programmer, and, from the blue-collar occupations, auto-mechanic and joiner. In contrast to men, they are less willing to imagine as a marriage partner working-class occupational categories, such as a street sweeper, construction worker, cleaner, and shop assistant (truck driver is the only exception).

This is not surprising because one would expect a greater affinity to be shown towards occupations dominated by a specific gender that enjoy some shared positive image in society, thus reproducing (mostly positive) stereotypes and categorical thinking, e.g. 'men like to marry nurses' or 'women like to marry engineers (here draftsmen)'. Furthermore, though it can hardly be considered a trend, we can observe a slight tendency for marriage preferences to be stratified on the basis of the hypergamy principle: the practice of women looking for a spouse of higher/equal socio-economic status. Women prefer draftsmen and programmers, i.e. holders of prestigious white-collar occupations that are reputable and serious, and in light of working class prominent and in everyday life perhaps useful occupation of auto-mechanic and joiner (however, compared to high professional occupations we can not consider it as desire) whereas avoiding most low status, i.e. high distance, manual occupations.

Figure 2.2. Social distance to 22 occupations: willingness to marry, men and women, row percentages



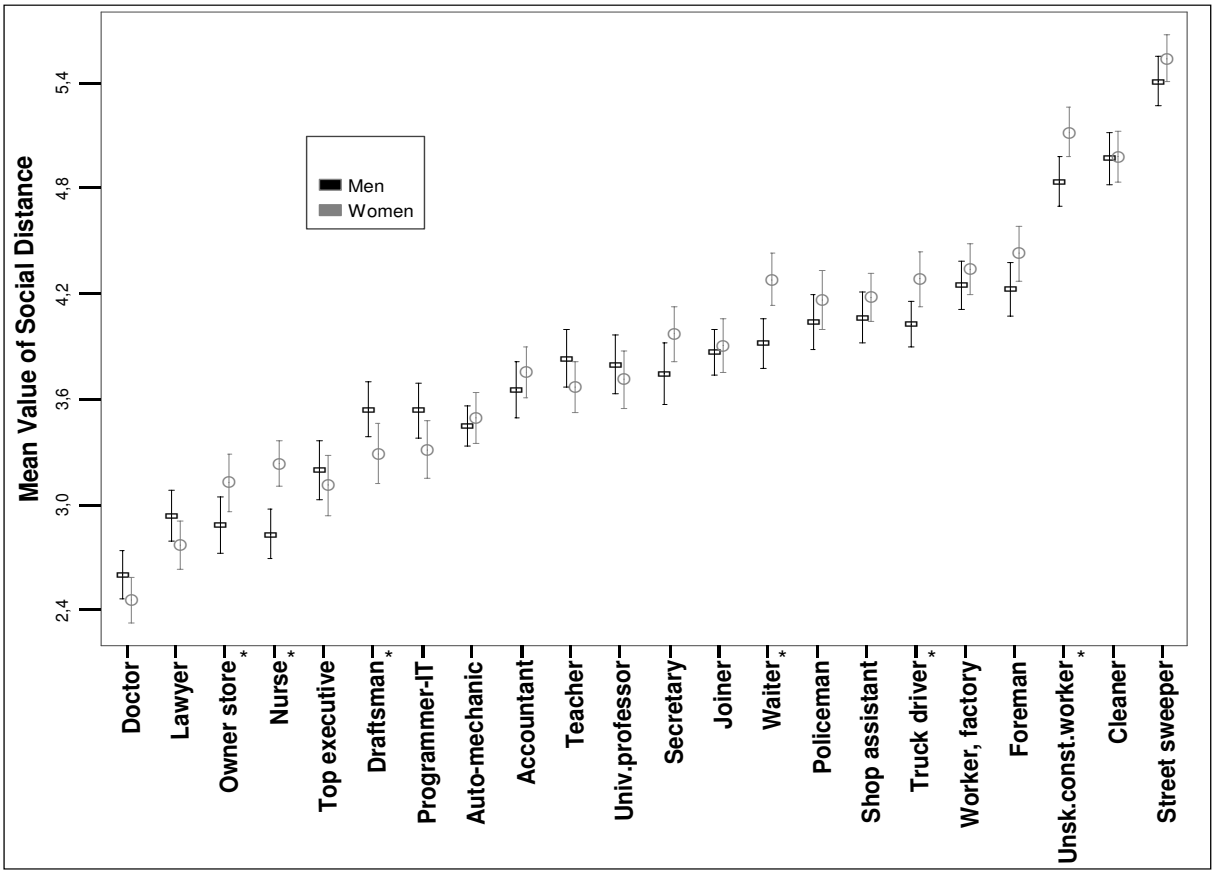
Source: Social Distance 2007, N= 799 (listwise).

Note: the scales recoded as a dichotomy: marriage vs. other responses (1 = spouse, 0 = else)

* the means difference between men and women is significant at $p < 0.05$ (t-test).

constructed dichotomous variables for social distances differentiating between 'I want nothing to do with him/her' (1) and all other categories (0). Comparing men and women, we can only find a significant difference between the rejection of teachers and of nurses. In both cases, men more strongly reject both professional stimuli.

Figure 2.3. Social distance to 22 occupations, men and women, means and 95 CI



Source: Social Distance 2007, N= 799 (listwise).
Note: * means the difference between men and women is significant at $p < 0.05$ (one-way anova): owner/manager of a store, nurse, draftsman, waiter, truck driver, unskilled construction worker.

An overall look at the ranking of occupations by average value of the whole 7-point scale in Figure 2.3 indicates that there are no substantial differences between genders since no difference exceeds a single category (the greatest means difference is in the case of nurse, and waiter is still less than half a category, i.e. 0.4) and the trend in assessing occupations is basically the same.[17] This indicates that the social distance scale is basically the same for both men and women. Despite slight deviations, namely that there are noticeable gender differences related to the marriage category – which logically conform to widespread stereotypes in our society – we find that the scales of subjective social distance to occupations are as such not significantly influenced by gender – neither by the gender of the respondent nor by the gender characteristic of the target occupation. In the following chapters women and men are therefore analyzed together.

17 Taking into account the order, nurse and secretary differ by three positions.

3. Class Differences in Subjective Social Distance in the Czech Republic: Like-me or Prestige Effect?[18]

Julia Häuberer, Jiří Šafr

In this chapter we will examine the question: is subjective social distance related to the high or low social status attributed to specific types of jobs? And if so, who are seen as reference groups for the respondents? According to theory, subjective social distance is formed via two distinct mechanisms [Laumann 1966: Chapter 3], which were described in more detail in the first chapter. The first one follows the logic of the 'like-me' principle – people are willing to interact (or in fact associate with in real everyday choices) with persons of equivalent status. The second force of interaction is the 'prestige effect' – the desire to create an intimate relationship with persons of higher status. We study this phenomenon from different angles: first as simple inter-class differences in the average level of social distance, then the socio-economic status of a specific target occupation is used as a predictor of the mean subjective social distance in different social classes. Here, we assess the question of which effect is stronger and in which part of the stratification. The issue will be shifted then, drawing on the fact that social distance represents a principal feature of class distinction, we will consider different interactional preferences for specific groups of occupation as an element of competitive or even a corporate form of status/class consciousness. Do people have preferences or images of an occupation that we could consider to be class awareness? This question will be answered in the final part of this chapter, where we move to the individual level of analysis employing the typology of social distance scale reactions.

Testing the 'like-me' principle and the 'prestige effect'

To test whether the 'like-me' principle or the 'prestige effect' best explains subjective social distance in Czech society, the respondents were grouped into five social classes, i.e. professionals, self-employed, routine non-manual workers or clerks, skilled workers, and unskilled workers, based on the EGP social class scheme [Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992], with some minor changes reflecting the specifics of the Czech social structure [see Machonin 2003]. We also used the respondents' self-categorization into three subjective social classes (a collapsed number of the five original classes) that is employed in the other chapters. For members of each of the five EGP social classes a mean social distance score on the Bogardus Scale was calculated for all twenty-two occupations.

18 An earlier version of this chapter was presented as a poster at the 34th Congress of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie 2008 'Unsichere Zeiten' in Jena, 6-10 October 2008.

Figure 3.1 shows the mean social distances across the five social classes and the prestige scores assigned to all twenty-two professions assessed by the respondents using a slightly modified version of the International Socio-Economic Index (ISEI) [Ganzeboom et al. 1992].[19] This index is a measure of the socio-economic status of an occupation estimated using international data combining both the level of income and of education.[20] In Figure 3.1 the job statuses have been ordered according to the mean social distances in different classes of respondents. The highest social distance mean in all classes is shared by street sweepers, the lowest by physicians. Generally, responses of closeness to all target occupations prevail because the highest average value corresponds to 'neighbour' (see Chapter 2).

As we saw in the previous chapter, the overall social distance to the occupational stimuli is strongly associated with the socio-economic status of the target occupation (correlation of the scale mean values with ISEI Sperman's Rho = 0.80), more or less regardless of the respondent's own social class. This demonstrates in a simplified way that the prestige effect has a stronger impact than the like-me principle. However, there are no significant differences between the lower status jobs (i.e. waiter to street sweeper) because the unskilled and routine non-manual social classes feel less social distance to these blue-collar professions. Such evidence suggests that the like-me principle has an important role in shaping the willingness of the lower social classes to interact amongst themselves (the same result can be observed when using the self-categorization into three subjective social classes [cf. Šafr and Häuberer 2008a]).

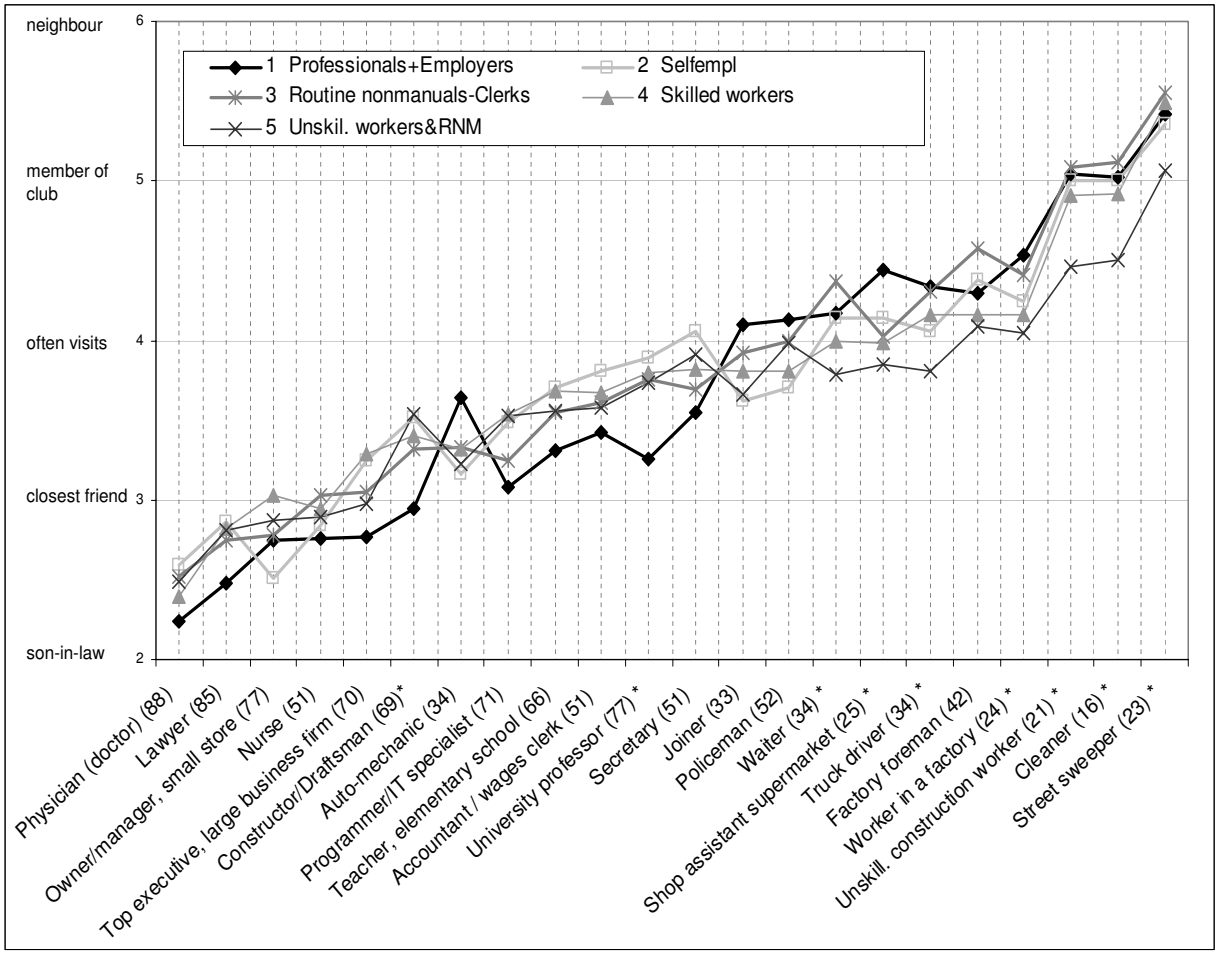
Another way of assessing the inter-class bias in interaction willingness is to look at the distribution of negative answers as expressed in category 7 of the Bogardus Scale – 'I want nothing to do with him/her'. We recoded data (as in case of marriage) as a dichotomy representing 'nothing to do with' versus other categories. Only few inter-class differences can be observed (t-test, sig $p > 0.05$): top executive and programmer. These two are strongly deprecated by respondents from the lowest class, unskilled workers, and on the other hand the exactly opposite pattern is observed in the case of unskilled construction workers, who are rejected by professionals/employers. However, these differences are very small and are only observed for a very small number of stimuli, so we cannot speak of a negatively defined 'like me' force – i.e. 'they are not like us' – in terms of the class-based interactional rejection contributing to the maintenance of a symbolic boundary.[21]

19 Owing to discrepancies in the ISEI values of some occupations in contemporary Czech society a nurse was coded as a 'medical assistant' (ISCO 3221) with ISEI = 51 and SIOPS = 53 (originally underestimated with the values ISEI 38 and SIOPS 44) and a shop assistant in a supermarket as a 'sales and services elementary occupation' (ISCO 9100) with ISEI = 25 and SIOPS = 23 (originally overestimated with the values ISEI 43 and SIOPS 32), which in our view corresponds with their current situation in the labour market.

20 It ranges from 16 (for a cleaner) to 90 (for a judge). In our sample of target occupations, the maximum value is held by a medical doctor (88) and the minimum by a cleaner (16).

21 We also observed inter-class differences between the less distant category represented by 'marriage', and there are more statistically significant differences between occupations than in the case of the negative responses ('nothing to do with'): lower professions (street sweeper, unskilled construction worker, truck driver, and worker in a factory) are preferred slightly more by the lower EGP classes IV and V and rejected by class I. There is specific reaction pattern towards top executives: it is favoured both by the class of professionals and the class of unskilled workers while skilled workers prefer it less. Nonetheless, it is impossible to speak of any distinct in-group class favouritism.

Figure 3.1. Mean difference between the EGP of social classes on the social distance scales



Source: Social Distance 2007, N= 717 (listwise).
Note: * means the difference among the classes significant at $p < 0.05$ (one-way anova), Occupations ordered in terms of their average social distance.

In order to assess the prestige versus the 'like-me' hypothesis, the differences for the lower social classes are the most decisive (we will see this also in further analysis using regression estimations). This is because in the case of respondents with upper-class standing both mechanisms can be in effect. In simple terms, members of these classes have nobody to look up to in the social hierarchy. They can, for example, be 'motivated by either hypothesis in reporting little social distance regarding physicians and great social distance regarding truck drivers' [Laumann and Senter 1976: 1323].

Estimating social distance based on the status of target occupations in five social classes

To assess the hypotheses under review, Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis was used to see if the ISEI score of a specific target occupation was a good predictor of the mean subjective social distance in the five EGP social classes separately. In contrast to the first graph (Figure 3.1), the regression line slopes decrease from the left, with the highest expressed distance and the lowest ISEI to the right. The negative regression coefficients indicate that with increasing ISEI the distance decreases, which is generally true for all classes. Looking at the unstandardized regressions[22] (see also the parameters in Table 3.1 and Figure 3.2) it is evident that, with the exception of the class of self-employed, the B coefficients for several classes show the same tendency, which is a significant negative impact of the ISEI of the target occupation on the mean value of social distance. It decreases from the class of professionals to unskilled workers (again with the exception of the self-employed). It is important to keep in mind when interpreting these statistics that the negative (B) coefficient values indicate that respondents exhibit low social distance to occupations with high prestige and, conversely, high social distance to occupations with low occupational status. That is, the negative B values prove the prestige hypothesis. All social classes show high social distance to low status target occupations and low social distance to high status target occupations. Two reasons can be found for the exception of the self-employed. First, the self-employed make up a very heterogeneous class in terms of educational background and professional origin before the fall of communist regime in 1989. This class is perhaps not yet socially embedded, following the status crystallization process during the post-communist period. It is comprised of people that earlier belonged to different classes, as entrepreneurship only started after the collapse of the communist regime after 1989. Consequently this class is typical of social status inconsistency [Machonin 2003]. Second, the number of respondents in this class is very small (N=37).

Also, it can be seen that the negative impact of the ISEI on social distance decreases slightly from the professional class to the unskilled worker class. This also indicates that that the 'like-me' effect is working. To illustrate these relations, Figure 3.2 shows the results obtained for the most distinct classes of professional and unskilled workers. As can be seen, the professional class shows a stronger falling regression straight than the unskilled worker class. The professional class exhibits a greater social distance to low-prestige professions (a higher mean value on the Bogardus Scale) than the members of the unskilled worker class do. The opposite applies for the high-prestige professions.

Although there are differences between the B values of different classes, we must admit that they are rather small. This means that further analysis must be conducted to evaluate whether these differences are substantial. This is done in the following section.

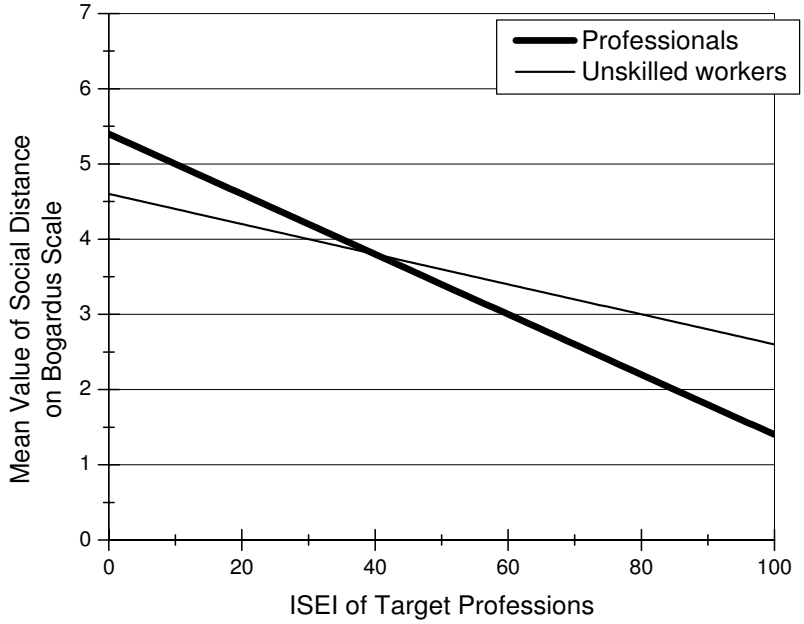
22 Referring to unstandardized coefficients is sufficient in the case at hand because for all included items the same scales were used, making standardization superfluous.

Table 3.1. Regression estimates of social distance with socio-economic status as a predictor, unstandardized coefficients

Professionals:	y = 5.4 - 0.036x
Self-employed:	y = 4.9 - 0.024x
Routine-clerk:	y = 5.2 - 0.030x
Skilled workers:	y = 5.0 - 0.025x
Unskilled workers:	y = 4.6 - 0.020x

Source: Social Distance 2007, N= 717 (listwise).

Figure 3.2. Regression of ISEI scores on mean values for the professional class and unskilled workers on the Bogardus Scale



Source: Social Distance 2007, N= 717 (listwise).

Which effect is at work in which social class?

Below, we assess whether the slopes of the regressions in separate EGP classes differ significantly, which indicates that the 'like-me' effect is valid and is not a misguided assumption reached from the preceding regression analysis. For the comparison of the slopes of the regressions of the different classes we employ a method mostly used to analyze time series: the General Linear Model. We apply an analysis of covariances (ANCOVA) using Type III sum of squares. Unfortunately, a comparison of all classes shows no significant differences between the slopes relating the mean Bogardus Scale

values to the ISEI of the specific target occupation (see Table 3.2 and Appendix A.3.2). Only the comparison of the two most distinctive occupational classes, professionals and unskilled works, provides an illustration of a reasonable statistical difference (see Table 3.2). The significant difference between the interaction of a respondent's class and the ISEI of a target occupation indicates that the H0 (both slopes are nearly the same) has to be rejected. This result proves the validity of the 'like-me' effect only in the most distinct social classes: high professionals vis-a-vis unskilled workers. A comparison of all other classes shows no significant 'like-me' effect.

Table 3.2. A comparison of regressions of ISEI scores on mean values on the social distance scale, GLM, tests of between-subject effects

	All five EGP classes					Professionals and unskilled workers (EGP I. and V.)				
Source	**Type III Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**	**Type III Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Corrected Model	36.27[a]	9	4.03	15.77	0.000	16.12[a]	3	5.37	24.97	0.000
Intercept	445.95	1	445.95	1745.42	0.000	176.97	1	176.97	822.26	0.000
ISEI	34.38	1	34.38	134.56	0.000	14.76	1	14.76	68.56	0.000
Class	1.46	4	0.37	1.43	0.230	1.28	1	1.28	5.96	0.019
Class * ISEI	1.52	4	0.38	1.48	0.213	1.33	1	1.33	6.16	0.017
Error	25.55	100	0.26			8.61	40	0.22		
Total	1608.74	110				621.98	44			
Corrected Total	61.82	109				24.73	43			

Source: Social Distance 2007, N= 717 (listwise).
Note: All five EGP classes: R Squared = 0.652 (Adjusted R Squared = 0.626)
EGP I. and V. only: R Squared = 0.587 (Adjusted R Squared = 0.550)
Dependent Variable: Mean of social distance to target profession.

Which effect is stronger in Czech society?

So far we have demonstrated that the prestige effect prevails over the 'like-me' effect. In the second part, we will proceed to the next two steps. To what extent are the 'like-me' and prestige hypotheses valid and to what extent each of them? And which effect is the prevailing one in each class?

Having learned from the previous analysis that the 'like-me' effect is very small, we address the question of how much stronger the prestige effect is in Czech society compared to the 'like-me' effect. For this we devised a new method in which we estimate the effect of prestige and 'like-me' mechanisms simultaneously.[23] First, we had to rearrange the data. The variables measuring the social

23 We acknowledge Ondřej Špaček for this idea and the corresponding computation.

distance to the 22 target professions were restructured into groups of related cases. A new variable representing a group of related variables – the variable group 'distance' – was created. This represents the overall measurements of all 22 social distances in one multiple variable. We obtained 26 334 cases (1197 x 22 entries). Now we focus on cases representing distances *per se* rather than respondents' attitudes to distances.

In the linear regression we then measure the effect of prestige and 'like-me' on the multiple variable Distance across all possible relations. The HLM – hierarchical linear modelling method – was applied because cases are not independent observations (each respondent gives 22 answers).[24] The equation is

$$\text{Distance} = \beta 1 \text{ target profession ISEI} + \beta 2 \, |\text{ISEI}_{\text{respondent}} - \text{ISEI}_{\text{target occupation}}| + e$$

The first term represents the prestige hypothesis, whereas the second one – the status distance between a respondent and a target occupation – the 'like-me'' hypothesis. The results for the whole sample are shown in the fist row in Table 3.3. The estimation of the multiple variable Distance is -0.36 * target occupation ISEI + 0.125 * $|\text{ISEI}_{\text{respondent}} - \text{ISEI}_{\text{target occupation}}|$. This means that in Czech society as a whole the effect of prestige is 2.9 times stronger than that of 'like-me'. The negative estimates in the case of the ISEI of the target occupation indicate that the higher the prestige the lower the social distance to the occupation.

Table 3.3. Estimation of multiple variable Distance by prestige and 'like-me' effects for the complete sample and in EGP5 social classes, HLM

		Estimated parameter (Beta)	Std. Error	df	t	Sig.
All classes	Prestige	-0.360	0.009	15771	-42.281	0.000
	Like me	0.125	0.009	15771	14.687	0.000
1 Professionals + Employers	Prestige	-0.377	0.015	4287	-25.753	0.000
	Like me	0.096	0.525	0	0.183	0.855
2 Self-employed	Prestige	-0.366	0.050	811	-7.279	0.000
	Like me	0.117	0.050	811	2.329	0.020
3 Routine non-manuals	Prestige	-0.352	0.022	1801	-15.823	0.000
– Clerks	Like me	0.111	0.022	1801	5.011	0.000
4 Skilled workers	Prestige	-0.422	0.027	3737	-15.600	0.000
	Like me	0.177	0.027	3737	6.534	0.000
5 Unskilled workers	Prestige	-0.378	0.038	5123	-9.877	0.000
& Routine non-manuals	Like me	0.167	0.038	5123	4.369	0.000

Source: Social Distance 2007, N= 15774 (groups of related cases).
Note: the variables were standardized to z scores.

24 We also ran the analysis using the standard OLS regression. The results were the same. We acknowledge both reviewers for the advice on using HLM.

The calculation of regressions in each social class separately shows that while the prestige effect is relatively stable among all the classes the 'like-me' effect somewhat increases in the lower classes (see Table 3.3). The class of professionals shows the highest variation in both forces (however the like-me effect is statistically insignificant): the prestige is 3.9 times stronger than the like-me effect. In the skilled and unskilled worker classes the prestige effect is, respectively, just 2.4 and 2.3 times stronger than the 'like-me' effect. This points to some relevance of the homophily force in interactional preferences, which may be an expression of solidarity-based consciousness in the lower classes. Yet, we must remember that the prestige principle prevails in all the classes. In the case of professionals, the highest class, this result is rather unexpected, because, hypothetically, the prestige effect is impossible for the highest class – only the 'like-me' mechanism should be able to operate because members of the highest class have nobody to look up to. However, as Laumann [1966: Chapter 3] explains, this is in fact an expression of their 'like-me' orientation, i.e. a result of the homophily principle.

Social distances in individual level data: what effect prevails for a specific target occupation?

Next we assess the somewhat altered question of to which of the 22 target occupations do the prestige effect and the 'like-me' principle apply. To determine this, we first estimate stratification-specific social distance (SSSD) and then compare it with subjective social distance to the target occupations. The SSSD is a calculation of the absolute value of the subtraction of the ISEI of a respondent from the ISEI of the target occupation.

$$SSSD = \text{abs. value} \left| ISEI_{\text{target profession}} - ISEI_{\text{respondent}} \right|$$

The correlations between the SSSD and the subjective social distance of respondents indicate significant relations in the cases of both high-prestige and low-prestige professions (see Table 3.4). For these occupations the 'like-me' effect applies – the higher the SSSD to a profession the higher the subjective social distance to them, and vice versa. For the middle-prestige professions, especially gendered occupations with a large share of women, such as teachers, accountants, secretaries, and nurses, subjective social distance is expressed regardless of the SSSD to it; respondents with both high and low SSSD to the gendered occupations have the same social distance to them. However, one must bear in mind that the significant correlations are all very small. Again, this indicates that the prestige hypothesis applies to both high- and low-prestige occupations.

Patterns of subjective social distances: different class/status consciousness?

So far we have demonstrated that the 22 sub-scales of occupational social distances create a general order that can be regarded as prestige or socio-economic status. This rank is shared by all classes in general; however there are class differences, not at the general level but in how much willingness different classes express to interact with a target occupation. In the following section, we focus on the patterns of social distance reactions, which encapsulate the component scales and their relationship to various stratification attitudes. Yet, it can be considered a proxy of class / status feelings (consciousness).

Table 3.4. Pearson correlation of the stratified social distance (SSSD) and subjective social distance to target occupations

	Pearson corr.	sign.	ISEI
Physician (doctor)	**0.08**	0.041	88
Lawyer	**0.09**	0.016	85
University professor	**0.08**	0.036	77
Programmer/IT specialist	**0.10**	0.006	71
Top executive – large business firm	0.07	0.078	70
Constructor/Draftsman	**0.11**	0.004	69
Teacher – elementary school	0.06	0.138	66
Accountant/wages clerk	0.02	0.572	51
Secretary	0.02	0.646	51
Nurse	0.00	0.981	51
Policeman	0.01	0.872	50
Owner/manager – small store	-0.02	0.540	49
Factory foreman	-0.01	0.792	42
Waiter	**0.11**	0.004	34
Truck driver	**0.11**	0.005	34
Auto-mechanic	**0.10**	0.009	34
Joiner	**0.10**	0.009	33
Shop assistant – supermarket	**0.15**	0.000	25
Worker in a factory	**0.14**	0.000	24
Street sweeper	**0.13**	0.001	23
Unskilled construction worker	**0.17**	0.000	21
Cleaner	**0.15**	0.000	16

Source: Social Distance 2007, N= 717 (listwise).
Note: the occupational stimuli are ranked according their ISEI, the bold numbers are significant at $p < 0.05$.

Competitive vs. corporate status consciousness/ feelings

As discussed in the first chapter, social distance conveys the essentials of class distinction. Thus, by measuring subjective social distance we can assess class consciousness on a socio-psychological basis [Laumann 1966: 48]. Class/status awareness is distinguished as *corporate*, i.e. the class-/status-based solidarity typical of the upper and lower classes, and as *competitive*, i.e. a personal form of class / status feeling in which people are aware of on the one hand inequalities in socio-economic status on the other hand they believe that their position depends on their own individual effort and the resources they have at their disposal.

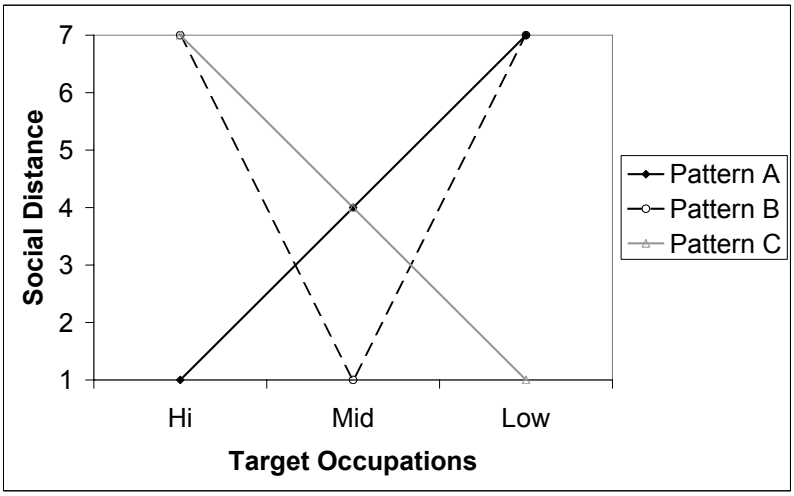
To locate the 'like-me' effect specifically and assess the hypothesis of competitive versus corporate class consciousness we adopted a procedure suggested by Laumann and Senter [1976] analyzing various possible patterns of social distances. Here we use the foregoing three dimensions

of the social distance revealed by PCA (see Table 2.2) with the two non-manual professions scales: Blue collars / White collar (mostly female) / High professional occupations. The ideal types, based on the status consciousness typology, are presented in Figure 3.3a. Contrary to Laumann and Senter we did not use classification based on the average social distance scores but on the k-means clustering technique to assign a response pattern to each respondent. The reason for this operationalisation is obvious: since the prestige effect prevails, 'the bulk of the sample must fall in the competitively class-conscious category' [Laumann 1966: 48]. Using estimates for centroids, our approach is rather relative in principle, because initial clusters centres were not assigned any value in absolute terms (i.e. 1 as the lowest, 4 as the average, and 7 as the highest distance) but in terms of mean values of each subscale. The used the logic is that the proximity was measured from the average value of the target occupational group: the least distance is represented by the mean value minus one category; the most distance plus one category (see Figure 3.3b). It is noticeable that pattern C includes in fact partly the prestige effect (less distance to high professional occupations than the theory would suggest). We believe that this approach reflects the actual patterns of social distance reactions and helps avoid the problem of an insufficient number of cases representing some types (namely, the third one). Nevertheless, the construction by, its very nature, reflects the fact that class awareness, at least in terms of subjective distance expressed to occupations, is nowise tense in Czech society. The distribution of patterns of reaction can be found in Table 3.5 in the last column.

In general, 'people who are upward oriented in their interaction might be regarded as competitively class conscious, whereas those who were equal oriented might be regarded as corporately class conscious' [Laumann 1966: 48]. As delineated by Laumann and Senter [1976: 1325-1327]: Pattern A (51.9%) shows the highest social distance attitude to blue-collar occupations, moderate distance to middle white-collar occupations, and lowest distance to upper white-collar occupations. Pattern B (17.4%) shows higher social distance to both upper-status and lower-status occupations but lower distance towards middle white-collar occupations. In pattern C (30.7%) there is low distance to blue-collar occupations, moderate distance to middle white-collar occupations, and high distance to upper white-collar professions. As we can see in Figure 3.3b, in the actually observed values the slope of distance in the last-mentioned pattern is compared to the theoretical value somewhat smaller owing to the prevalence of the prestige mechanism. In other words, the majority of respondents, regardless of their background, look up to white-collar professions (see Figure 3.1). From a theoretical point of view, according to Laumann and Senters, pattern A, the first one, represents competitive and corporate status consciousness of higher classes; pattern B is typical of the middle class, as a form of their corporate status consciousness. The last pattern, C, typifies the corporate status (perhaps class) consciousness of the lower classes.[25]

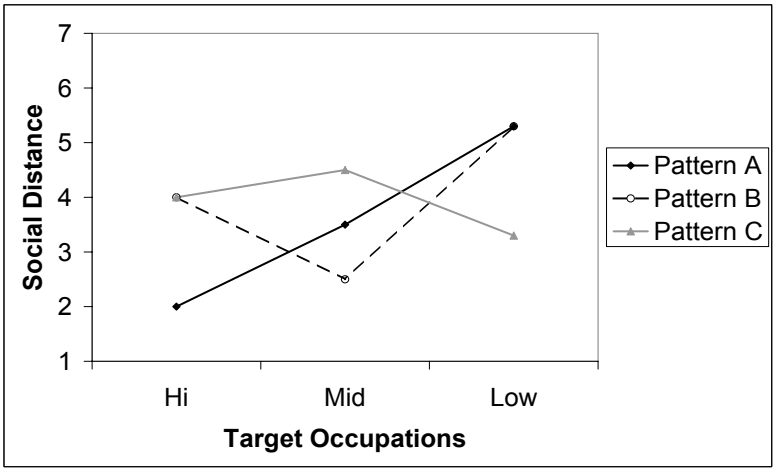
25 In fact, Laumann and Senters' analysis revealed one more pattern, which they called 'error'. This pattern is hard to describe: lower social distance to both upper-status and lower-status targets, but greater distance to middle white-collar professions [Laumann and Senter 1976: 1326]. This pattern was distributed randomly across classes. Our analysis, which uses a different approach, did not detect this kind of model of social distance reactions.

Figure 3.3a. Theoretical patterns of response to social distance



Source: adapted from [Laumann, Senter 1976].

Figure 3.3b. Actual patterns of response to social distance, initial clusters centres in k-means cluster analysis



Source: Social Distance 2007, N= 717.

The relation of the three patterns to respondents' social class (for this task the five were collapsed into three corresponding EGP classes: service, intermediate, and working class) can be found in Table 3.5. From this cross-tabulation it is evident that there is just a mild affinity between the typology of reactions to occupational stimuli and social classes. Yet, pattern A is distinctive for the service class whereas pattern C characterizes the working class. Pattern B, with the least distance to middle white-collar occupations, is not peculiar to any social class.

Table 3.5. Patterns of response to social distance by social class EGP 3, column percentages and adjusted residuals

Pattern	Service class	Intermediate class	Working class	Total
A – Upper classes closeness	59.9	53.5	46.4	51.9%
	2.4	0.6	**-2.6**	(372)
B – Middle classes closeness	14.5	19.7	17.4	17.4%
	-1.1	1.1	0.0	(125)
C – Lower classes closeness	25.6	26.8	36.3	30.7%
	-1.7	-1.6	**2.9**	(220)
Total	(172)	(228)	(317)	(717)
100%	100%	100%	100%	

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 717.
Note: Pearson Chi-Square 11.457 (df 4) sig. 0.022
Note: abs(z): >= 1.96, in bold.

Besides the differences across classes, another way of examining the social distance that produces class consciousness is to estimate the effect of the patterns of social distance responses to various social and political views [Laumann and Senter 1976: 1328-1330]. To understand the process in which social distance produces class feelings, we looked for an association between social distance patterns and the respondent's view of the distribution of strata in society (diagrams describe different images of the shape of society)[26] and their economic ideology in terms of attitudes towards employers.[27]

In Table 3.6 the adjusted residuals suggest that pattern A – upper-class closeness is more typical if the situation in society is viewed as an 'apple', i.e. with a large middle class or the very rarely represented image of also a large upper class (diagrams D+E). On the contrary the view of society is avoided by lower class closeness social distance (pattern C). Moreover, social distance response patterns are associated with attitudes towards employers (see Table 3.7). It is typical of people with working-class closeness reactions (pattern C) to express some hostility towards employers whom they view as unfair. Although the links between the social distance response pattern and people's attitudes to stratification are somewhat weak, they reveal a systematic trend. Even if we do not think of class sentiments in terms of class consciousness (then we would expect more pronounced results) we can observe instead the existence of status consciousness. This consistency is typical chiefly of working-class people.

26 The question was: 'These five diagrams show different kinds of society. Please read the descriptions and look at the diagrams. Which you think best describes our society today?'
27 The question was: 'Nowadays employees are usually treated fair and square by their employers'. Responses on a four-point agreement scale were owing to the low observed frequencies collapsed into dichotomy categories.

Table 3.6. Patterns of response to social distance by the perceived real image of society, column percentages and adjusted residuals

	Patterns of response to social distance			
	A – Upper-class closeness	B – Middle-class closeness	C – Lower-class closeness	Total
A 	21.7	20.5	25.1	22.5
	-0.5	-0.6	1.1	
B 	35.6	29.5	39.9	35.8
	-0.1	-1.7	1.5	
C 	15.7	23.5	19.7	18.2
	-1.9	1.7	0.7	
D+E 	27.0	26.5	15.2	23.4
	2.4	0.9	**-3.4**	
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 751.
Note: Pearson Chi-Square 16.324 (df 6) sig. 0.012. CN = 0.146
Note: abs(z): >= 1.96, in bold.

Table 3.7. Patterns of response to social distance by attitude towards employers – 'they are fair and square', column towards employers, column percentages and adjusted residuals

	Patterns of response to social distance			
	A – Upper-class closeness	B – Middle-class closeness	C – Lower-class closeness	Total
1 Agree	49.4	50.0	38.4	46.4
	1.6	0.9	**-2.5**	
2 Disagree	50.6	50.0	61.6	53.6
	-1.6	-0.9	**2.5**	
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Source: Social Distance 2007, N= 629.
Note: Pearson Chi-Square 6.359 (df 2) sig. 0.042. CN = 0.100
Note: abs(z): >= 1.96, in bold.

Finally, in this connection, we estimate the conditional probability of the three social classes that follow the social distance patterns in the multinomial logistic regression, where we controlled for

several other variables, including personality trait extroversion, gender, and effects that one might expect to influence interaction attitudes, such as associational status congruence in the friendship network and job mobility in the past five years [cf. Laumann 1966].[28] The results shown in Table 3.8 confirm knowledge so far. Pattern A is associated with the upper service class (an odds ratio almost twice as high as that of the working class) and is enhanced by extroversion. On the other hand, the second pattern, B, with low distance to middle white-collar occupations, is poorly anchored in the social structure. Although theoretically proposed, job mobility and network status congruence appear to be unimportant predictors of social distance patterns.

To sum up these findings, first we must conclude that, measured in absolute terms, Czech society contains few sentiments that could be considered to be intense class consciousness particularly in terms of corporate feelings. However, using relative adjusted measures (empirically derived clusters), a somewhat weak status solidarity can be observed at the edges – in the upper service class and the lower working class – while class sentiment is absent from the 'middle' intermediate classes.

Table 3.8. Multinomial logistic regression on social distance patterns

	Pattern A – Upper-class closeness					Pattern B – Middle-class closeness				
	B	Std. Error	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	Std. Error	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Intercept										
Extroversion	0.156	0.055	7.999	0.005	**1.169**	0.043	0.073	0.346	0.557	1.044
Service class	0.629	0.289	4.740	0.029	**1.876**	0.216	0.408	0.281	0.596	1.241
Intermediate Class	0.333	0.253	1.726	0.189	1.395	0.545	0.331	2.706	0.100	1.725
Female	0.360	0.212	2.868	0.090	1.433	-0.068	0.289	0.055	0.814	0.934
Job mobility	-0.010	0.203	0.002	0.960	0.990	-0.270	0.272	0.987	0.321	0.763
Associational status congruence *	0.012	0.008	2.278	0.131	1.012	0.016	0.011	2.285	0.131	1.016

Pseudo R-Square: Nagelkerke 0.056; McFadden 0.025.
Source: Social Distances 2007, N = 472.
Note: Reference category: Pattern C – Lower-class closeness, Working class, Male, Job stability in last 5 years
* Associational status congruence with friends' contacts measured as difference in mean value of ISEI in Position generator for Friends and respondent's ISEI.
Bold numbers are significant at level $p < 0.05$.

28 Laumann proposed the hypothesis that prevailing equal status contacts in a person's network, as well as upward intergenerational mobility, would increase his/her status discrimination, i.e., greater variability in social-distance reactions [Laumann 1966: Chapter 7].

Conclusion: the prevailing prestige effect in subjective distances

This chapter examined whether the prestige effect or the 'like-me' principle is at work in the creation of social distance in Czech society. Regression analyses of the prestige of the target occupation (ISEI codes) on the subjective social distance showed a prevailing prestige effect in all social classes (EGP). Further, the analysis of groups of related cases of social distance showed that the prestige effect is about three times stronger than the 'like-me' effect. Although we can detect the decreasing effect of the ISEI of a target occupation on the social distance towards it – which indicates the partial validity of the 'like-me' principle – we could not prove a significant difference between the regression slopes – except for the most distinctive social classes of professionals and unskilled workers. In the case of the class of high-ranking professionals it is however statistically insignificant. Speaking generally, in our judgment, social distance measures the general tendency to inter-group tolerance, which is boosted by educational achievement. For that reason we can observe that the 'like-me' effect is chiefly at work in the lowest class of unskilled and routine non-manual workers.

The results of our analyses show that social distance to occupations is ordered in a way that can be regarded as prestige. But the data also indicate some effect of the 'like-me' principle. This raised the question of what effect prevails in individual target occupations. If we invert the question and calculate the stratification-specific social distance (SSSD) – in which an individual's status difference to a target occupation affinity is considered – and compare it to the subjective social distance we find that in Czech society as a whole the 'like-me' principle has a slight effect in high- and low-prestige occupations. For professions with a middle level of prestige, especially the gendered occupations, the prestige effect prevails.

Social distance forms different kinds of class consciousness. Individuals preferring upward interaction can be considered competitively status (class) conscious; those who are equal-status oriented can be viewed as corporately class aware. Indeed, even the association is weak which points out to the relevance of rather status than class consciousness, we can observe class consciousness to some extent as expressed in consistency of reactions to social distance scale with attitudes to social stratification. This consistency is typical chiefly of working-class people. The final analysis of the three actual patterns of social distance reactions which represent a status consciousness typology showed that the 'like-me' principle applies mainly to the professional service class and the working class. This in fact means that in Czech society these stratification antipodes can be regarded as modestly status (rather then class) conscious. We address the issue of class sentiments further in Chapters 6 and 7 where the perception of social classes and class identification will be discussed.

Summing up, on the one hand we found proof for the limited functioning of the 'like-me' principle, which is prevailingly at work in the class of professionals and namely the class of unskilled workers. The 'like-me' tendency is also observed in case of high prestigious and low prestigious target profession. But this effect is in all cases very weak. The fact of the matter is that we found strong evidence for the prestige effect in all classes. This mechanism is much stronger than the 'like-me' one. This means that Czech citizens subjectively structure the society into close and distant persons based on the prestige of that person's occupation. Whether we can observe this mechanism in real associational behaviour (marriage, friendship) is a question for analysis of data on objective social distances. In Chapter 5 we shall see that when actual associational patterns are considered, homophily – 'like-me' – constitutes the principal mechanism in forming friendships.

4. The Symbolic Space of Professions – Subjectively Experienced Class Boundaries[29]

Jiří Šafr, Julia Häuberer

In this chapter, we seek to answer the following questions from perspective of interactional subjective social distance: Is there something like a subjective class barrier in people's minds? Are some occupations viewed as similar to each other? Are there any structures in the respondents' evaluation of occupations which we could consider subjectively perceived social classes? In analytical terms the question of the research is: Are there groupings of occupations within which the distance responses are somewhat similar but in relation to other groupings they differ significantly? As mentioned in the introductory chapter two hypotheses are proposed: the existence of a 'subjectively experienced class structure', in which occupations are grouped on the basis of very similar aggregate social distance responses, and the existence of a 'status continuum', where there are no such groupings, i.e. respondents are able to differentiate each of 22 occupations from each other along a finely graded prestige or status continuum [Laumann 1966: Chapter 4].

Means differences of pairs of target occupations among self-identified classes

We first compared the differences among subjective social classes in terms of their social distance to the target occupations in the manner proposed by Laumann [1966: Chapter 4]. The matrix of differences between mean values was computed. Using T-tests for paired observations, we compared the differences for each of 242 pairs of occupational stimuli in each of the three self-identified classes[30] (matrix 22 x 22 for 3 classes is in the Table A.4.1 in Appendix). If there are no differences between the mean values on the social distance scale, this means that the members of the classes estimate the target occupation as being the same distance to them as to the other class.

Before examining inter-class differences between the target pairs, we will consider the overall variation between respondents' classes (see Table 4.1). Comparing the upper and middle classes we found no significant differences except in the case of top managers: here the upper class has

29 The first version of this paper was presented at the international conference on Advanced Lazarsfeldian Methodology at Charles University in Prague in 20 September 2008 and a substantial part was published in Šafr and Häuberer [2008a].
30 Unlike the previous chapter where we employed the objectively measured social class EGP, in this chapter we use the self-identified classes to which respondents assigned themselves. The distribution of five classes is as follows: 1. upper 8%; 2. middle 46%; 3. lower-middle 26%; 4. working 7%; lower 4%. For relation of EGP5 and four self-identified classes see Table A.1.1 in Appendix (contingency coefficient CC = 0,43). For the sake of simplicity, in the analysis of means differences the classes were collapsed owing to skewed distribution into three broad categories: upper (8%), middle (46 %), lower (lower-middle/ working/ lower class) (47%).

a significantly smaller mean value at 2.39 than the middle class (2.90), indicating the social distance to the occupation is smaller for the upper class. The comparison of the middle and lower classes shows significant differences between the mean values of almost all occupations. Surprisingly, the differences between the upper and lower classes are smaller than between the middle and lower classes. Here only a few targets have a significantly different social distance mean.[31]

Table 4.1. Means of the social distance scales in self-identified classes of a respondent

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Upper	**2.73**	2.39	**2.26**	2.31	**3.23**	**2.87**	**3.69**	**3.65**	**3.60**	**4.29**	4.53
Middle	**2.90**	2.90	**2.34**	2.61	**3.52**	**2.90**	**3.52**	**3.69**	**3.97**	**4.06**	4.26
Lower	**2.85**	3.22	**2.50**	2.89	**3.61**	**2.86**	**3.61**	**3.79**	**4.02**	**3.94**	3.83
	L	**M**	**N**	**O**	**P**	**Q**	**R**	**S**	**T**	**U**	**V**
Upper	**4.03**	3.60	4.50	4.24	4.84	4.94	5.47	4.32	3.18	2.92	2.85
Middle	**3.91**	3.54	4.51	4.34	5.08	5.06	5.49	4.45	3.46	3.18	3.15
Lower	**3.72**	3.18	3.99	3.86	4.67	4.64	5.18	4.02	3.86	3.56	3.51

Source: Social Distance 2007 N= 799 (listwise).
Note: Bold numbers indicate differences significant at $p < 0.05$.

A – Owner/manager store, B – Top executive, C – Physician (doctor), D – Lawyer, E – Teacher, F – Nurse, G – Accountant, H – Secretary, I – Policeman, J – Waiter, K – Shop assistant, L – Joiner, M – Auto-mechanic, N – Worker in factory, O – Truck driver, P – Cleaner, Q – Unsk. Constr. worker, R – Street sweeper, S – Factory foreman, T – Univ. professor, U – Programmer, V – Draftsman

If there are class boundaries, the respondents' assessment of the social distance to given occupations should be the same for those occupations that belong to the same class or prestige position in the society. The comparison of means values among the pairs of target occupations in Table A 4.1 in Appendix shows that most perceptions of the distance to specific job positions are different. The upper class (48 pairs) and lower class (46) assess a high number of pairs with the same distance. In the case of the middle class only 19 pairs in common can be found. Focusing on upper- and middle-class respondents, a class boundary can be identified between white- and blue-collar target jobs, i.e. the pairs of occupations the respondent assesses as similarly distant follow the scheme of blue or white collar jobs. But mixtures of blue- and white-collar professions can also be found, for example, teachers and auto-mechanics are assessed the same. For the lower class the boundary between blue- and white-collar professions is not as pronounced. Respondents in this class show the same social distance to pairs consisting of both blue and white collar jobs. For example, the owner of a small store and an auto-mechanic are equally social distant to the respondents of the lower class. The following pairs of occupations mark out clear boundaries between the classes: owner of a shop – nurse; shop assistant – truck driver; factory worker – factory

31 The issue of inter-class differences in social distance reactions was discussed in the previous chapter in detail using the EGP as objectively measured social class.

foreman; truck driver – factory foreman; cleaner – unskilled worker; programmer – draftsman. All classes experience the same social distance to these professions. With the exception of truck driver, these pairs conform to the notion of white- and blue-collar jobs. This deviation can perhaps be explained by the fact that this job has the characteristics of both blue- and white-collar jobs.

We must admit that this such a small number of pairs of target occupations experienced as equally social distant to the members in the three subjective classes is not enough to provide us with convincing evidence of class boundaries. Therefore, further analysis assessing the whole structure of mutual distances in a matrix is necessary to reveal if and where class boundaries exist.

The structure of the similarity of occupations: subjectively experienced class structure

To examine complexly the structure of the similarity of the occupations under evaluation, a correlation matrix of distance scales was computed for each profession (see Table 4.2), in which we controlled for the influence of the class self-identification of respondents (non-parametric Spearman's correlation coefficients). The matrix displays the distances or, we should say, proximities between individual target occupations. For the purpose of assessing the complexity of the structure of distances between pairs of occupations we transferred the matrix to a two-dimensional space (entry matrix of similarities) partly using the method of multidimensional scaling and partly we searched for the optimal grouping of occupations using cluster analysis.

The multidimensional scaling technique locates the relative distances between pairs of objects (in our case professions) into the smallest number of dimensions possible, so then the group can be interpreted on the basis of similarities. In Figure 4.1 the subjective social distances form a symbolic space of occupations. We can see that their formation along the vertical axis Y fits with the general continuum of prestige and social status (doctor and lawyer on one side versus street sweeper and cleaner on the other). At first glance, the vertical distance is evident – we can clearly identify it as a subjective class border – between white-collar occupations on the upper part and blue-collar workers (manual profession). Second, the horizontal dimension cannot be unambiguously interpreted: it does not bear the aspect of a moral value image of occupational groups, which we would expect based on findings from the qualitative study (see Chapters 7 and 8 below); a somewhat ambiguous gender line can be observed with male professions on the left (a particular example is policeman) and female-dominated occupations on the right (nurse is the most notable).[32]

In order to obtain a detailed answer to the question of whether subjective social classes exist, we used hierarchical cluster analysis (the method of average linkage), which tries to find groups of internally homogeneous variables that are at the same time the least similar to variables from other clusters. The dendogram in Figure 4.2 shows the results of the cluster analysis. Starting from the most distant groupings, in the last step the occupations were divided into the groups of non-manual and

32 However, when the analyses were done for men and women separately, we got approximately the same results. Also, we carried out the analysis without controlling for the respondents' self-identified social class, and again the results were very similar, only rather less pronounced.

manual workers, from which the occupation of policeman was singled out in the next step. In the symbolic space of occupations the position of policeman is also the one most distant to the others.[33]

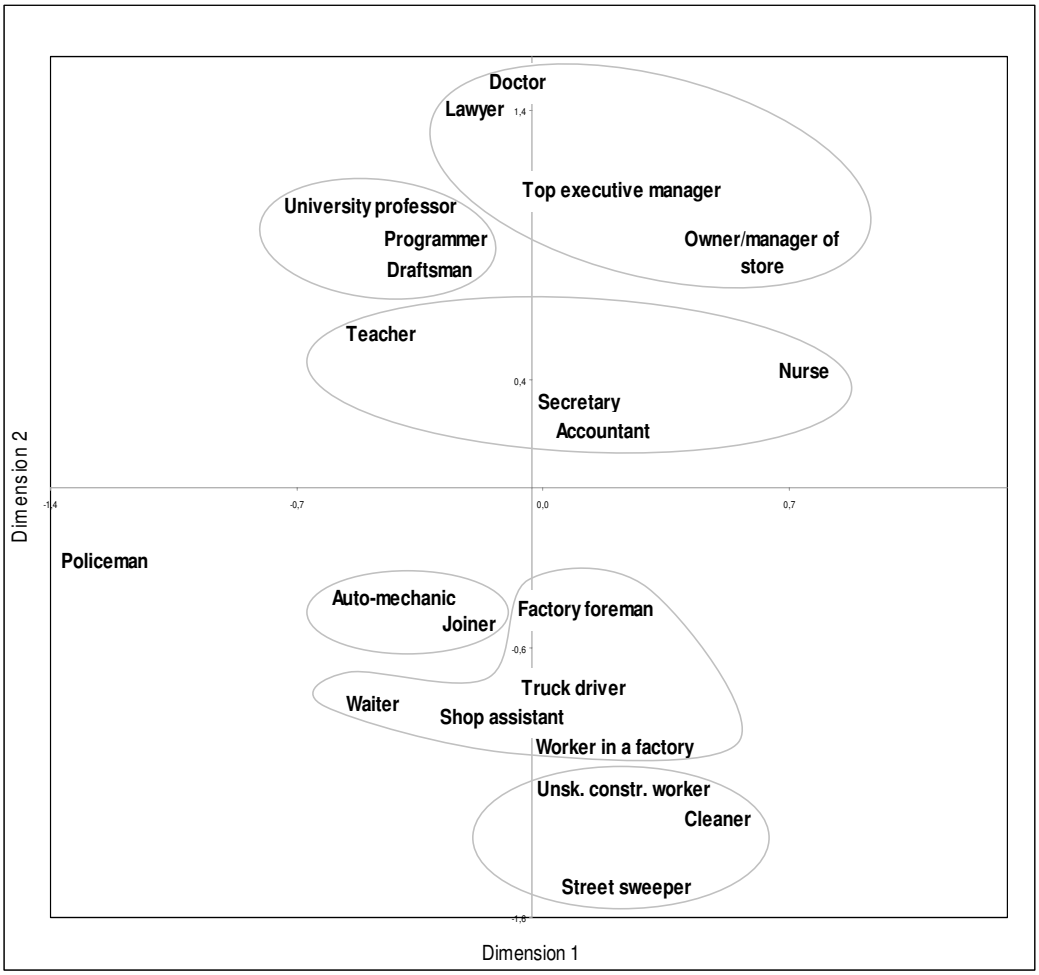
Table 4.2. Occupational stimuli: mutual distance. Correlations Spearman Rho, controlled for respondent's social class self-identification

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u
a **Owner/manager store**																					
b **Top executive**	0.61																				
c **Physician (doctor)**	0.38	0.53																			
d **Lawyer**	0.38	0.55	0.7																		
e **Teacher**	0.34	0.38	0.42	0.47																	
f **Nurse**	0.34	0.31	0.41	0.34	0.49																
g **Accountant**	0.46	0.42	0.39	0.38	0.49	0.58															
h **Secretary**	0.42	0.45	0.38	0.37	0.48	0.48	0.74														
i **Policeman**	0.25	0.25	0.21	0.22	0.33	0.25	0.35	0.32													
j **Waiter**	0.3	0.26	0.17	0.18	0.3	0.28	0.37	0.38	0.41												
k **Shop assistant**	0.36	0.2	0.16	0.14	0.3	0.31	0.41	0.39	0.34	0.59											
l **Joiner**	0.28	0.3	0.2	0.31	0.33	0.34	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.43	0.5										
m **Auto-mechanic**	0.29	0.32	0.27	0.27	0.3	0.32	0.34	0.35	0.32	0.42	0.45	0.65									
n **Worker in factory**	0.25	0.21	0.18	0.18	0.3	0.33	0.39	0.35	0.28	0.45	0.53	0.52	0.53								
o **Truck driver**	0.27	0.24	0.15	0.18	0.3	0.3	0.41	0.37	0.32	0.44	0.52	0.51	0.51	0.68							
p **Cleaner**	0.19	0.17	0.08	0.08	0.26	0.27	0.33	0.31	0.28	0.4	0.5	0.41	0.3	0.55	0.48						
q **Unsk. constr. worker**	0.19	0.18	0.07	0.09	0.23	0.25	0.34	0.32	0.26	0.46	0.52	0.45	0.38	0.58	0.53	0.72					
r **Street sweeper**	0.12	0.14	0.05	0.04	0.22	0.16	0.29	0.29	0.26	0.39	0.43	0.37	0.28	0.48	0.44	0.62	0.67				
s **Factory foreman**	0.34	0.3	0.22	0.24	0.33	0.33	0.46	0.43	0.3	0.46	0.53	0.5	0.44	0.56	0.52	0.49	0.56	0.5			
t **Univ. professor**	0.37	0.49	0.45	0.47	0.48	0.32	0.38	0.42	0.29	0.24	0.21	0.29	0.27	0.22	0.24	0.23	0.19	0.18	0.37		
u **Programmer/IT**	0.37	0.52	0.47	0.49	0.46	0.33	0.46	0.49	0.27	0.28	0.24	0.33	0.34	0.25	0.27	0.19	0.21	0.16	0.39	0.69	
v **Draftsman**	0.37	0.51	0.46	0.5	0.45	0.36	0.42	0.47	0.29	0.28	0.27	0.36	0.33	0.25	0.26	0.22	0.22	0.16	0.41	0.66	0.81

Source: Social Distance 2007 N= 799 (listwise).

33 When the cluster analysis was carried out without this occupation the result was the same. When clustering was implemented using the Ward method, the same clusters were revealed. The structure of the clusters was essentially the same. Furthermore, if we aggregate subjective distances to professions in particular social classes independently, only the order of connection differs.

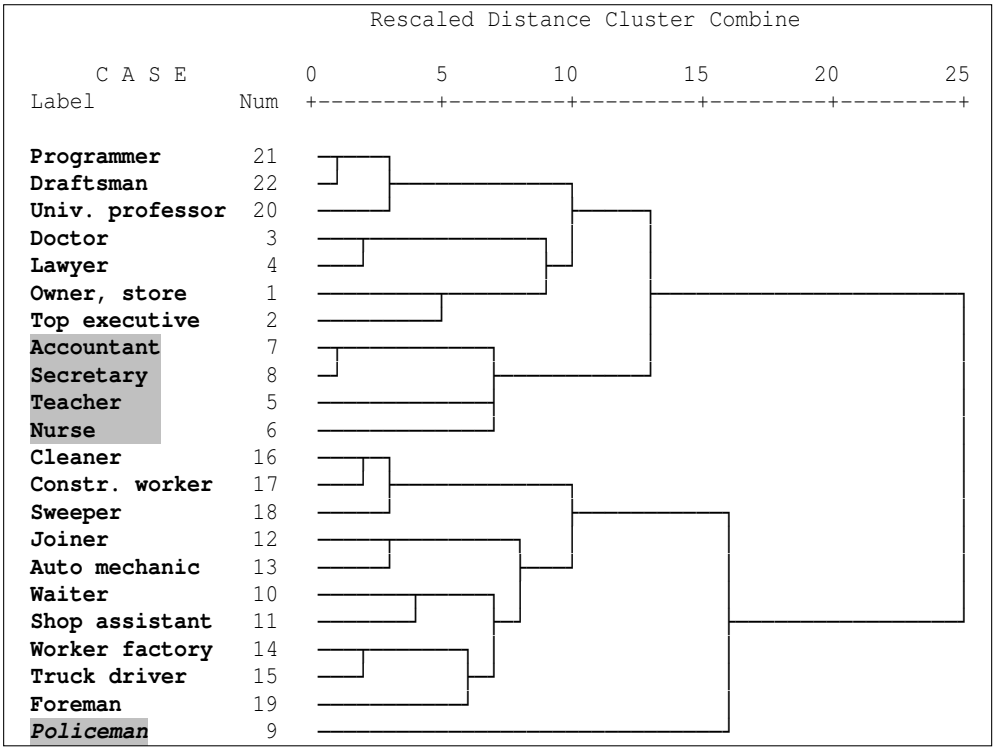
Figure 4.1. Symbolic space of professions. Non-metric multidimensional scaling



Source: Social Distance 2007 N= 799 (listwise).
Note: Input matrix of ordinal correlations (Spearman's Rho) with self-identified social class controlled for (measured by 5 categories), Initial location of points in space Torsca (principal components of rank-order data), final stress = 0.120
Groupings with 7 clusters marked out.

As a criterion to help determine the optimal number of clusters of occupational groups we can use the amalgamation plot (for an analogy of the screeplot from factor analyses, see Figure 4.3). The turning point, however, is not reasonably ambiguous, except for the first two clusters dividing occupations into manual and non-manual. The biggest difference between the steps, which reflects the structure of distances best, is at the 15th step, which refers to seven clusters.

Figure 4.2. Occupational groupings. Hierarchical cluster analysis, Dendrogram

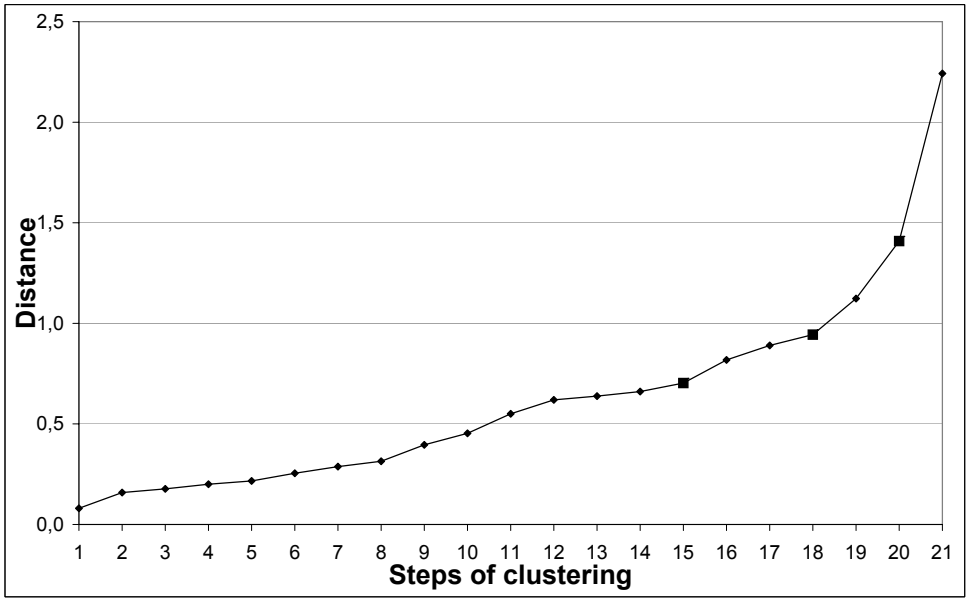


Source: Social Distance 2007 N= 799 (listwise).
Note: Average Linkage (Between Groups), Squared Euclidean distance, input matrix of ordinal correlations (Spearman's Rho) with subjective social class controlled for.

In Figure 4.1, all the connections revealed in the solution with seven clusters are marked in red. Most of them correspond with the expression of status groups or can even be considered to be clusters as they have the character of social classes, at least if we define class in terms of having a similar market position and identical prestige levels. However, in some cases we can talk rather about *situses*: groups of occupation determined by positions with a horizontal character that comprise occupations with a similar level of value (prestige), internally consistent and simultaneously externally distinct and given by character of the field (for example, science or trade) [Hatt 1950].[34]

34 The term *situs* refers to the multidimensionality of the stratification system. It reflects the horizontal dimension, whilst status represents the vertical one. P. Hatt speaks of 'groups of occupation' (occupational family) in which people are consistent in evaluating them. Those he understands as a specific subset of situs, for example, the situs of manual work comprises the following groups: the building trades (and their related individual professions: electrician, carpenter, plumber), skilled mechanics, outdoors jobs, and unskilled workers. It relates to the kind of occupational group wherein the status system can be considered a closed unit [Hatt 1950]. However, there is a slightly different concept of situs, where each situs category contains occupations with a range of statuses from lowest to highest value. For example, the situs of legal authorities contains a range occupations along the entire status continuum: supreme court judge, lawyer, police officer, and security guard [Morris and Murphy 1959].

Figure 4.3. Occupational groupings. Hierarchical cluster analysis, Agglomeration Distance Plot



Source: Social Distances 2007, N= 799 (listwise).

Here, a note needs to be added. To compare the extent to which the basic idea about class order matches the sociological concept of classes determined by position in the labour market and employment or ownership of manufactured products, we have in the item battery neither the necessary number of occupational categories nor an adequate selection of them. The majority of the compared professions represent employees' positions. Only the occupations of top executive and factory foreman hold positions in the employment hierarchy. There are also no occupations connected with business or the ownership of manufactured products.

In the list of occupations evaluated, there are two groups of highly prestigious professional occupations: mostly the technical type (draftsman, programmer, university professor) and a group made up partly of practically orientated experts, which are in frequent contact with public and have high symbolic capital (doctor, lawyer), and partly of professions distinguished by a hierarchy-driven position and economic capital (director, shop owner/manager).[35]

The above-mentioned clusters of professionals are fairly homogeneous in terms of the character of their work and socio-economic status, (the average values of stratification scales for occupational groups are given in Table 4.3). Therefore, in accordance with their position in the objective class scheme EGP, they can be considered as the situses of a subjectively perceived class of highly qualified

35 In a different solution to the cluster analysis using the Ward method (the strength of which is finding compact clusters), these two sub-groups were separated out in the same step.

professionals. Next, with respect to the relatively closed group of non-manual skilled professions predominated by women (teachers, secretaries, accountants, and nurses) can be labelled 'pink collars' and perhaps considered as another perceived social class, since the variance in socio-economic status and prestige of this grouping is quite low.

Table 4.3. Means of the social distance scale, ISEI and SIOPS for 7 clusters of occupations

	Soc. distance	ISEI	SIOPS
Higher professionals: others (doctor, manager, etc.)	2.9	72	61
Higher professionals: technical (draftsman etc.)	3.5	68	63
Female lower professionals (nurse etc.)	3.6	56	50
Qualified manual workers, crafts (joiner etc.)	3.7	32	40
Policeman	4.1	50	40
Semi-qualified manual and non-manual workers	4.2	35	31
Unqualified manual professions with low prestige	5.1	20	16

Source: Social Distance 2007 N= 799 (listwise).

Leaving aside police officers, which lie on the edge between white- and blue-collar workers, in the case of blue collars, the public view distinguishes, on the one hand, a group of skilled craft occupations that are valued close to non-manual occupations: auto mechanics, carpenters (the solution with eight clusters), and, on the other hand, a group of unskilled occupations: builders, cleaners, street sweepers. In between these two groups, in the symbolic interactive space people place close to each other those occupations that are more or less semi-skilled and are primarily manual work (with the exception of skilled factory foreman): truck drivers, shop assistants, waiters, and factory workers (see Figure 4.1). The multivalent character of these three clusters and especially the fact that the last mentioned is somewhat heterogeneous – it consists of occupations with different character indicates that it is not the prevailing view in Czech society that the working class is connected with production anymore (on the everyday conceptions of social class, see Chapter 7). The grouping of unskilled professions characterized by highest social distance, low prestige and status which referes to an uncertain position at the labour market (unskilled construction worker, cleaner and sweeper), can be unambiguously marked as subjectively perceived class grouping.

The groups of target occupations in the above-discussed seven-level cluster connection can be located in a stratification continuum that does not entire and unambiguously correspond to the traditional socio-economic view of divided classes. If we use just a five-cluster solution, in which the top professionals are merged into one group and the working class is merged with routine non-manuals in another group, then we can consider a class structure subjectively experienced by the public that has four classes (leaving aside the specific borderline position of police officers). These classes are: high professionals, lower professionals dominated by women, manual and routine non-manual workers, and unskilled manual occupations with low prestige.[36]

36 These groups are similar to four main clusters discovered by the research of cognitive concepts of occupations in the 1970s in Scotland: professionals, professions dealing with people, unskilled occupations, and trades [Coxon et al. 1986].

We must remember that these subjectively perceived classes are determined by the selection of occupations under evaluation. A different list of occupations used to measure social distance would probably produce a different map of occupational distances. Yet, we can assume that the results of our survey show the basic contours of the reflection of the stratification system.

Conclusion: the status continuum with indicative evidence of subjectively experienced class structure

In this chapter analyzing the willingness to interact with given occupational categories we examined whether there are mental categorization schemes of occupational groupings present in Czech public opinion that could define subjectively experienced class borders. First, as already outlined in the previous chapter, simply in terms of the means of social distance: the 'status continuum' is fully present in Czech society and generally shared by all classes (with some quantitatively minor but from the social stratification point view significant differences, which we discussed in the previous chapter in detail). However, with regard to subjectively perceived classes, the answer is twofold. In general terms it became apparent that Czechs are clearly aware of the manual and non-manual work division, i.e. there is a pronounced boundary between blue- and white-collar workers. Yet, if we were to search through the 22 examined occupational categories for distinctive and wholly consistently perceived class groupings (from the viewpoint of sociological theory determined by having a similar position in the labour market), the answer in not likely to be as straightforward. It is possible to consider the existence of seven perceived groups, where the highest and lowest can be considered unambiguously to be subjectively perceived classes: highly qualified experts and unskilled labourers, whilst some groupings are better regarded as situses, chiefly the sub-groups of high professional occupations (technical, in contact with people, managing). The group of manual workers is very heterogeneous. In people's perceptions a skilled foreman with supervisory authority and a shop assistant in a supermarket have approximately the same level of social distance. When these groups are merged, we get four subjectively perceived classes defined by the level of willingness to interact with their representatives: high professionals, lower professionals dominated by women (pink collars), skilled or semi-skilled manual combined with routine non-manual workers, and unskilled low-prestige occupations. This hierarchy of four groupings gives the basic outline of subjectively perceived class structure in Czech society, regardless of the social standing of individual people. This assessment is shared by both those 'at the top' and 'at the bottom'.

So far, we have used the social distance scale for a particular list of occupations in order to reconstruct the mental categorization patterns of occupational groupings that could be regarded as perceived classes. In the sixth chapter we will focus on the subjective aspects of social stratification, but mainly using a prepared conceptual understanding of social class and stratification attitudes, namely, images of society stratification.

5. Status Homogeneity and Heterogeneity in Social Contacts

Jiří Šafr

In this chapter, we will look into the differences in friendship patterns (strong ties) based on social status. Our question is: to what extent can we consider Czech society to be interactionally open and boundary-free? More precisely, to what extent are friendship ties based on status homogeneity in education, class, and socio-economic status? The degree of such homogeneity indicates the existence of social classes when they are defined as 'differentiated latent structures' formed by equal status contacts [Laumann 1966]. It is also another approach to assessing the validity of the 'like me' hypothesis in terms of objective social distance.

We all choose our friends, just as our friends choose us. While each of us is born into a family and family ties cannot be chosen, friendship choice seems to occur freely in leisure time and in an open space. Therefore, sociologists have traditionally studied the structural and contextual factors behind friendship ties. While these primary social relations are indeed independent of any institutional arrangements and reflect the free pursuit of social preferences, they are strongly related to certain value orientations of the social group whose membership one has or aspires to. The levels of status-based friendship heterogeneity and status-based marital heterogamy are, along with social mobility, considered to be important indicators of how open or closed a society is. Differential probability of contacts between two groups reflect social distance between the groups [Laumann 1966: Chapter 5] – here we have in mind strata or social classes.

In order to indicate social preference based on choice within strong ties we used the 'name generator' – the same method used to measure the egocentric network pioneered by E. O. Laumann [Laumann 1966, 1973].[37] Questions were asked about the gender, education, and occupational category of the respondent's three best friends and where they know each other from. All the respondents reported on their first best friend (only 4 people, i.e. 0.4%, do not have a friend). Almost everyone named a second (97.7%) and 93.0% also named a third friend. All of them were able to quote their friends' occupations. We used the five (sometimes three) social-occupational categories of the Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero class scheme (EGP) to indicate class position.[38]

37 The Social distance 2007 survey also employed the positional approach to measuring egocentric social network, called a Position Generator in which access to 18 occupational positions was inquired about (for the preliminary results see Šafr [2008b]).

38 Only occupationally inactive students were eliminated from the analysis, whereas people who were retired, on maternity leave, and unemployed were assigned the occupational status from their last job.

This chapter is organized as follows: First, unlike sources of friendship (foci) between different classes are examined together with their closeness effect. Then we focus on homogeneity of education and social class. Last, using a matrix of proximity among the main occupational groupings based on frequency of association, we map their social distance in a two-dimensional social space.

Where do our friends come from? The focused organization of friendship ties

First, we will briefly examine where our friends come from. Choosing friends is often constrained by the more or less overly homogeneous focused sets – social, psychological, legal, or physical objects, around which joined activities are organized – in which they mingle [Feld 1982]. These foci can be formal or informal settings of people's origin of association. The processes of focused choice bring individuals together, strengthening homophily, since people recruit their friends and acquaintances from the foci. At the same time 'the foci brings homogeneous sets of people together' [ibid.: 798]. Table 5.1 shows where the three best friends in an ego's network come from. The most important source of friendship is the workplace, both former and current workplaces.

Table 5.1. Focused sources of friendship. Where are the ego's three best friends from?

	All 3 friends	Friend 1	Friend 2	Friend 3
Otherwise	20.4	18.1	17.9	25.2
Neighbourhood	17.4	14.0	18.8	19.5
Former job	15.5	17.5	16.5	12.4
Elementary school	12.2	18.2	9.3	9.0
Other school	10.5	11.0	11.9	8.6
Current job	9.3	8.0	9.9	9.9
Leisure	9.3	6.5	10.5	10.8
Sport	5.5	6.7	5.2	4.7
	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 1088.

The workplace, school other than elementary, and leisure represent more socially closed foci featuring status similarity, where almost one-half of all strong ties originate (44.5% combined for the whole ego network). In the case of the Czech Republic, which had forty years of socialist housing policy bringing together people of different social background, we can still generally consider neighbourhood composition and consequently elementary school as a more status heterogeneous environment (29.6% of friendship source). However, processes of spatial concentration have been progressing slightly in the past decade, on the one hand bringing together wealthy people (chiefly in suburban areas around central metropolises), while on the other hand forsaking those disadvantaged in poor residential communities (for more on how people reflect this ongoing process, see Chapter 7). Naturally, there is no strict border between these foci: we meet people in the neighbourhood where we grew up and therefore attend the same school with, become friends with them,

and subsequently spend free time together, play sports, etc. Since residential stability is typical of Czech society, these foci comprise to a certain extent closed social circles.

The most frequent category, however, is 'otherwise', about which we can only hypothesize, following results from the large representative survey 'The Fishers Northern California' [see Feld 1982], that it is substantially comprised of acquaintances through family ties. Similarly, Laumann mentions that, using the same name generator method, 15% of respondents reported their closest friends to be from among their relatives [Laumann 1966: 64].

Many studies so far have shown that the sociable relationships are class determined. The sources of friendship of the working and middle classes differ; friendships originate in different foci. The patterns of sociability are chiefly different for the working class compared to the middle class: the former tend to have fewer friends,[39] they are fully embedded in the local neighbourhood, and kin ties are more important in their sociability. 'Sources of working class (non-kin) friends tend to be restricted to particular structured categories of the other, especially neighbour and workmates, while sources of middle class friendship are more varied.' [Allan 1977] To test this hypothesis we will partition the foci by social class. Owing to the low observed frequencies, here the social class is collapsed into three main categories of EGP (service class, intermediate classes, working class) and categories of foci leisure and sport were merged.

Table 5.2 with the adjusted residuals for the first-best-friend foci by class indeed shows a pattern that supports the hypothesis: people from the working class more often develop their friendships in their neighbourhood. Although this is just speculation, if we can claim that the category 'otherwise' is comprised mainly of the kin source of friendship, another important source of friendship is family. (This assertion is perhaps indirectly confirmed by the fact that it is only the first friend who is considered to be commonly drawn from family members.) However, in the case of the workplace, we cannot confirm the propensity of the working class to recruit their friends in these foci. Similarly, there is no trend for people with lower education (elementary or trained) gaining friends at work (Table 5.3), which was supported by findings of Řeháková [2003]. Once again, viewed through education, people who completed vocational training tend to recruit friends from neighbours and otherwise (markedly supposed as family). Whereas the intermediated classes (comprised of a wide category of self-employed along with non-manual clerks) feature no distinct pattern of friendship recruitment, it is typical for the service class (higher and lower professionals) to find their friends in post-elementary schools. Also, at least in the case of the third friend, they often associate with their co-workers. This supports the idea that the third friend is perhaps more of an acquaintance.

39 However, people from the working class often use other labels than 'friend' to refer to informal relationships (e.g. 'mate' or 'buddy'; in Czech 'kamarád') [see Allan 1977].

Table 5.2. Sources of friendships and the respondent's social class EGP3, 1st, 2nd, 3rd friend, adjusted residuals, column percentages and adjusted residuals

	Service class	Intermediate class	Working class
Elementary school	16.8	19.5	17.5
	(-0.5)	(0.9)	(-0.3)
Other school	15.0	10.5	8.4
	(2.7)	(-0.2)	**(-2.3)**
Former job	18.5	17.4	16.6
	(0.6)	(0.0)	(-0.6)
Current job	10.5	8.4	7.0
	(1.6)	(0.0)	(-1.4)
Neighbours	10.5	14.6	17.2
	(-2.4)	(0.0)	**(2.1)**
Otherwise	12.6	17.1	22.0
	(-2.8)	(-0.5)	**(3.0)**
Leisure/Sport	16.1	12.5	11.3
	(1.9)	(-0.2)	(-1.5)
Total	100 %	100 %	100%

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 1060.
Note: abs(z): >= 1.96, in bold.

Table 5.3. Sources of friendships – 1st friend and respondent's education, column percentages and adjusted residuals

	Elementary	Trained	Secondary	University
Elementary school	25.3	20.9	17.2	13.9
	(2.4)	(0.6)	(-1.7)	(-1.6)
Other school	10.4	8.7	14.2	23.8
	(-1.0)	**(-2.7)**	(1.5)	**(3.7)**
Former job	10.0	16.0	18.8	18.8
	(-2.9)	(0.0)	**(2.0)**	(0.8)
Current job	5.6	7.0	7.9	10.9
	(-1.2)	(-0.3)	(0.5)	(1.4)
Neighbours	14.5	15.5	12.6	8.9
	(0.4)	(1.4)	(-0.8)	(-1.5)
Otherwise	19.7	20.4	14.0	11.9
	(1.2)	(2.1)	(-2.2)	(-1.5)
Leisure/Sport	14.5	11.4	15.3	11.9
	(0.5)	(-1.5)	(1.4)	(-0.5)
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 1197.
Note: abs(z): >= 1.96, in bold.

The question we look at is which foci produce the greatest closeness? To arrive at an answer we looked for differences in the educational homogeneity of friendships by foci origin. Table 5.4 shows the results for the first friend. Homogeneity is strengthened in post-elementary schooling. This is not surprising because, as we will see further on, the risk of educational homogeneity is several times higher among people with a university education. Other sources of friendship (we speculate that mostly family-based) and leisure and sport activities contribute to heterogeneity. This also applies in the case of the second and third friends. However, as we will see later, it does not apply to the whole of Network 4.

Table 5.4. Educational homogeneity with 1st friend by origin of the friendship, column percentages and adjusted residuals

	Element. school	Other school	Former job	Current job	Neigh-bours	Other-wise	Leisure/ Sport
Heterogeneity	42.6	29.2	48.9	39.1	52.5	61.0	56.3
	(-1.9)	**(-4.8)**	(.3)	(-1.7)	(1.2)	**(4.0)**	**(2.2)**
Homogeneity	57.4	70.8	51.1	60.9	47.5	39.0	43.7
	(1.9)	**(4.8)**	(-.3)	(1.7)	(-1.2)	**(-4.0)**	**(-2.2)**
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Source: Social Distance 2007, N=1088.
Note: abs(z): >= 1.96, in bold.

Researching different foci by social class helps us to understand how homophily originates: the embeddedness in local social networks that produces the strong ties typical of the working class tends to enhance similarity and closeness; people with higher education and from the upper classes tend to have wider sources of friendship because they tend to be more cosmopolitan and that in turn boosts their profits when mobilizing social sources in their networks. We will then turn our attention to the closeness/openness of the whole of Network 4.

The idea of Network 4: the macro-sociological approach to social structure

The conventional approach to analyzing strong ties in an ego network is to analyze the distance of ego from his/her alter in, for example, educational or occupational categories [e.g. Verbrugge 1977; Řeháková 2003]. E. O. Laumann came up with the idea of an index of status occurrence that measures the proximity of ego to the sum of his alters [Laumann 1966, 1973]. We follow this approach, but our idea here focuses rather on the social network: we can think of the three best friends and the respondent as a network of four people, which can be analyzed as such (hereafter Network 4) [cf. Laumann 1973: Chapter 10]. If we think of society as an interconnected set of egocentric networks, then these 'small networks' (R-F1-F2-F3) are samples from the whole network, and from their character we can learn about the relational aspect of the social structure. This means we can look for its homogeneity/ heterogeneity just as we would research 1-mode data in social network analysis. Then the unit of an

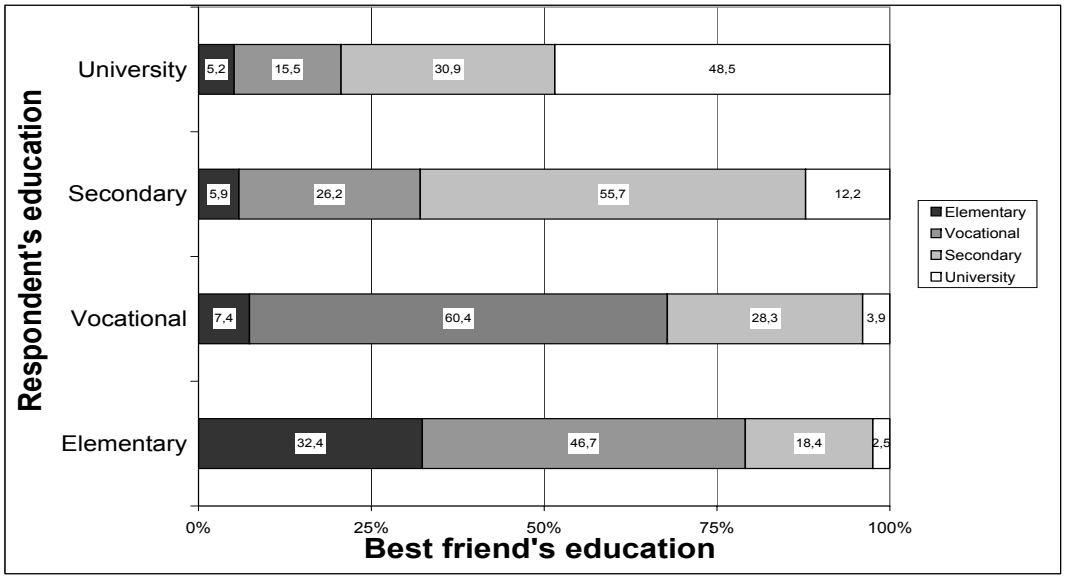
analysis is not one respondent (as it is in case of the ego-alter, e.g. the 1st friend comparison), but rather the network itself, so it can be considered as a clique analysis. We added this viewpoint to the analysis of homogeneity because we believe that it can enhance our knowledge about the openness/closeness of our society. In Table 5.5, the last column shows the educational homogeneity in Network 4, i.e. all the R-F1-F2-F3 have the same education. About one-quarter of these networks create homogeneous social circles (see also Table 5.10 for social class).

Educational homogeneity/heterogeneity

Before analyzing class and socio-economic status-based friendship patterns, we will look at educational homogeneity/heterogeneity. Educational attainment is a strong factor of status/class position formation. At the same time, it allows us to make a simplified review of the developments of friendship homogeneity in Czech society during its transformation by comparing our data with a 1993 study [Vlachová 1996], also in a simplified way, because the class indicators used in both studies are not completely identical. Some cautions comparisons can also be done with data from 1967 [Petrusek 1969].

Let us first examine absolute homogeneity in terms of percentages. In detail the specific categories of education of a respondent by his/her first best friend's schooling are shown in Figure 5.1. We can see the so-called edge effect: the most open categories are on the margins. This is because people at the edges are in principle constrained by the lower opportunity of meeting somebody from an upper or lower category. On the other hand, the biggest resemblance can be found in the case of people with vocational education, which from the point of view of absolute measures is the most closed category.

Figure 5.1. Ego and first best friend educational categories, column percentages



Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 1197; Note: χ^2*=0.04, df=9,* α*=0.000, CC =0.52.*

Now, we will turn to the overall measure of homogeneity/heterogeneity. First, slightly less then half of the population is similar – they have ties with educationally and occupationally similar friends – not to say the same, so the majority of social circles in our society is somehow heterogeneous. Men have slightly less closed networks (homogeneity for F1/F2/F3 49.6 / 45.3 / 45.8%) than women (54.3 / 52.2 / 51.5%). However, the homogeneity of Network 4 shows that one-quarter of personal networks are entirely homogeneous (at least from an educational point of view).

Table 5.5. Educational homogeneity: the respondent and his/her 3 best friends

2007	1. friend	2. friend	3. friend	Network 3	Network 4
Homogeneity	51.9	48.7	48.6	31.6	23.1
Heterogeneity	48.1	51.3	51.4	68.4	76.9
within that:					
Friend with Higher educ.	29.6	33.8	34.8		
Friend with Lower educ.	18.5	17.5	16.7		

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 1062 (Listwise).

It is difficult to compare data on the homogeneity of friendship in time. However, some limited information can be reported on the basis of results from previous studies. Educational homogeneity seems very stable over time, at least during the period of the post-communist transformation: 52.4% in 1993 [Vlachová 1996] and 51.9% in 2007 (see Table 5.5). If we go further – and this comparison is limited to the male population only (see Table 5.6) – since the end of the 1960s there is virtually no change in the extent of homogeneity. So closeness seems to be more or less stable characteristic of Czech society and perhaps a universal feature of any modern society. More work in this field needs to be done, for example, by comparing original data sets in age cohorts.

Table 5.6. Educational homogeneity in 1967, 1993, 2007, (1967, 2007 men only)

	1967*	1993**		2007	
	1. friend	1. friend	2. friend	1. friend	2. friend
Homogeneity	44.0	52.4	38.2	49.6	45.3
Heterogeneity	47.6	64.0	61.8	50.4	54.7

*Source: Social Distance 2007, *[Petrusek 1969: 413, Table 12.7] ** [Vlachová 1996: 180, Table 7].*

The prestige effect in naming friends?

In Tables 5.7 and 5.8, which contains information about the distribution of status indicators of an ego and his/her friends, we can observe a phenomenon analogical to the prestige effect relating to subjective social distances in Chapter 3. In all the cells except for elementary education the education of the friends is higher than that of the ego (Table 5.7). This trend is especially pronounced in the case of the third friend – perhaps in fact an acquaintance – where the largest proportion of people with university education is. The more distant the friend we consider the less similarity in education (Kendall's tau-b for the 1st friend is 0.42; for the 2nd 0.38, and for the 3rd 0.38). The same pattern can be observed when a different distribution of social class EGP 5 is considered (Table 5.8). However, here the prestige effect is much smaller (Kendall's tau-b for the 1st friend is 0.35; for the 2nd 0.28, and for the 3rd 0.27). Friendship choices directed at higher categories are not always reciprocated. However, one has to be aware of the fact that this is a somewhat intuitive way of assessing the prestige hypothesis since we do not have reciprocal data, i.e. reports from the ego's friends.

Table 5.7. Frequencies of education for the respondent and his/her three best friends, row percentages

	Elementary	Vocational	Secondary	University	Total
Respondent	20.9	34.4	36.2	8.5	100
Friend 1	11.8	41.4	36.4	10.3	100
Friend 2	7.5	41.8	39.7	11.1	100
Friend 3	7.8	39.8	37.8	14.7	100

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 1062 (Listwise).

Table 5.8. Frequencies of social class for the respondent and his/her three best friends, row percentages

	I. Professionals / employers	II. Self-employed	III. Routine non-manual workers	IV. Skilled manual workers	VI. Unsk. manual workers	Total	N
Respondent	26.9	5.0	11.5	23.9	32.7	100	1065
Friend 1	28.1	8.6	10.1	19.5	33.7	100	1050
Friend 2	27.0	6.8	11.8	22.3	32.1	100	1041
Friend 3	33.0	7.1	8.8	19.9	31.2	100	981

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 850 (Listwise).

Relative homogeneity (odds ratio) in educational homogeneity

Now we will turn to the relative homogeneity perspective, since absolute measures are sensitive to marginal distribution discrepancies. We will analyze the same educational choices and degree of bias for each category in terms of the odds ratio.[40] The odds ratio is not sensitive to its margins since it is invariant with row or column multiplications. In Table 5.9 there is percentage of educational homogeneity by respondents' education levels, which takes only the diagonal distribution into account, and the odds ratio, which deals with the row and columns distribution. Using relative measures the edge effect is again apparent: homogeneity bias is at the maximum for the 'edge' categories of elementary and university education. Respondents with elementary education have a 6.9 times higher relative probability of having a friend from the same educational category (i.e. a friend with only elementary education) than from any other educational category. However, in terms of odds ratio the most closed is the university education level of ego-alter pairs.

Table 5.9. Educational homogeneity bias in friendship. Percentages, odds ratios

	1st friend		All 3 friends	
	Homogeneity %	Odds ratio	Homogeneity %	Odds ratio
Elementary	32.4	6.95	26.0	7.43
Vocational	60.4	3.34	59.3	3.17
Secondary	55.7	3.70	54.9	3.09
University	48.5	12.75	48.6	9.92

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 1062 (Listwise).

Class homogeneity/heterogeneity – 'friendship between classes'

When the five-class EGP scheme is used almost one-half of all people have their best friend in their own class (Table 5.10). The level of class homogeneity of best friends among Czechs seems steady: a similar level of relative closeness was indicated in the early 1990s, with homogeneity at 41.4% [Vlachová 1996: 180].[41] While EGP with the only three classes (service / intermediate / working) considered, the view is even more closed – 54% of the population sample are from the same class and only 11% percent cross the border of two classes in their most intimate friendship. Turning to the Network 4 samples idea, again about one-quarter of the population is enclosed in a class-homogenous environment. And again, most typically the same class can be found in the networks of upper and lower class respondents (professionals / employers and unskilled workers / routine non-manuals) (Chi-sq = 42.6 / df = 4 / sig. 0.000).

40 The odds ratio measures conditional probabilities of associations in a table; for 2 x 2 contingency table OR = $f_{11}\, f_{22} / f_{12}\, f_{21}$.
41 The results from the Social Distance survey correspond with findings in the CVVM 2007/04 survey (class homogeneity among 48.1% using similar five classes), in which the respondent assigned his/herself and his/her best friend occupational-class categories directly [see Šafr and Häuberer 2008b].

Table 5.10. Class homogeneity and heterogeneity in best friendship – absolute measures, percentages

	1st friend	2nd friend	3rd friend	Network 4
Homogeneity	47.0	40.5	39.3	25.9
Heterogeneity:				74.1
Friend in a higher class	25.9	28.3	27.4	
Friend in a lower class	27.1	31.2	33.3	
N valid	997	978	931	

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 850 (Listwise).

Table 5.11 details the fundamental pattern of class homogeneity and heterogeneity in friendship ties in Czech society. The diagonal values, with the highest and lowest classes being over 50%, indicate that people primarily choose their best friends among people of the same social-occupational background. Relatively the most interactionally open is the class of self-employed, which is the result of the occupationally heterogeneous character of this category.

A distinct boundary divides manual and non-manual workers (about 70% of best friends among manual workers are from the same circle). This barrier between white and blue collars is determined by the particular organization of the social space. In particular, opportunities to associate during leisure activities, different educational pathways, the length of study, and different patterns of social and spatial mobility play a role. In this respect, Vlachová [1996] speaks of two different 'cultures' with a distinct cultural boundary between them.

Table 5.11. Best friend's social class by social class of respondent (EGP5), row percentages

	Best friend's social class (EGP 5)					
Respondent's social class (EGP 5)	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	Total
I. Professionals / employers	**53.3**	9.6	13.6	9.6	14.0	100
II. Self-employed	22.4	**26.5**	4.1	10.2	36.7	100
III. Routine non-manual workers	33.0	7.0	**26.1**	5.2	28.7	100
IV. Skilled manual workers	19.4	5.4	5.4	**42.1**	27.7	100
V. Unskilled manual workers	13.8	7.5	5.6	16.9	**56.1**	100
Total	28.6	8.4	10.0	19.4	33.6	100%
N	285	84	100	193	335	997

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 850 (Listwise).
Note: χ^2=0.034, df=16, α=0.000, CC =0.52; diagonal in bold.

Occupational homogeneity – social distance space

First, occupational homophily is indicated by high-status congruence, which is expressed in the correlation between the respondent's ISEI socio-economic status and his/her first friend (correlation 0.47; sig. 0.000). In our data, egos (respondents) were on average one unit lower in the ISEI than their first friend (39.8 for the respondent and 40.7 for the first friend; Pair sample t-test sig. 0.110). Nevertheless, this difference is too trivial and insignificant to claim that prestige invites friendship formation.

It is difficult to localize homogeneity boundaries via large number of detailed categories of ISEI. For this reason we will turn our attention to the broad 25 occupational categories derived from the ISCO-88. Figure 5.2 shows the low (two-) dimensional solution of associations of a respondent (ego) and his/her alters (cumulated for the three best friends) using non-metric multidimensional scaling (the input matrix of proximities based on correlations is in Appendix A.5.1). The greater the frequency with which members of one occupational position interact with members of another, the 'closer' they are to one another in social space' [Scott 2000: 167]. The figure shows the position and objective distances of occupations in terms of association probability.[42] The first dimension (axis X) clearly represents status, with high status professions such as high professionals and associate professionals on the extreme left and semi-skilled workers (building/metal/clothing industry and drivers) on the right. The vertical dimension probably captures the gender characteristics of the labour market, with typical female occupations at the bottom (routine non-manuals in personal service, skilled workers in the clothing industry, labourers in sales services) and male occupations at the top (security guards, managers and officials, high-ranking technical professionals). One can clearly observe the boundary between the blue- and white-collar worlds of occupations (as we saw in Figure 4.1 in Chapter 4, where subjectively experienced class boundaries based on willingness to interact were in focus). This delineates the main boundary in our stratification system, here expressed in interactions (for similar results see Vlachová [1996] and for cultural taste and consumption see Šafr [2008a]).[43]

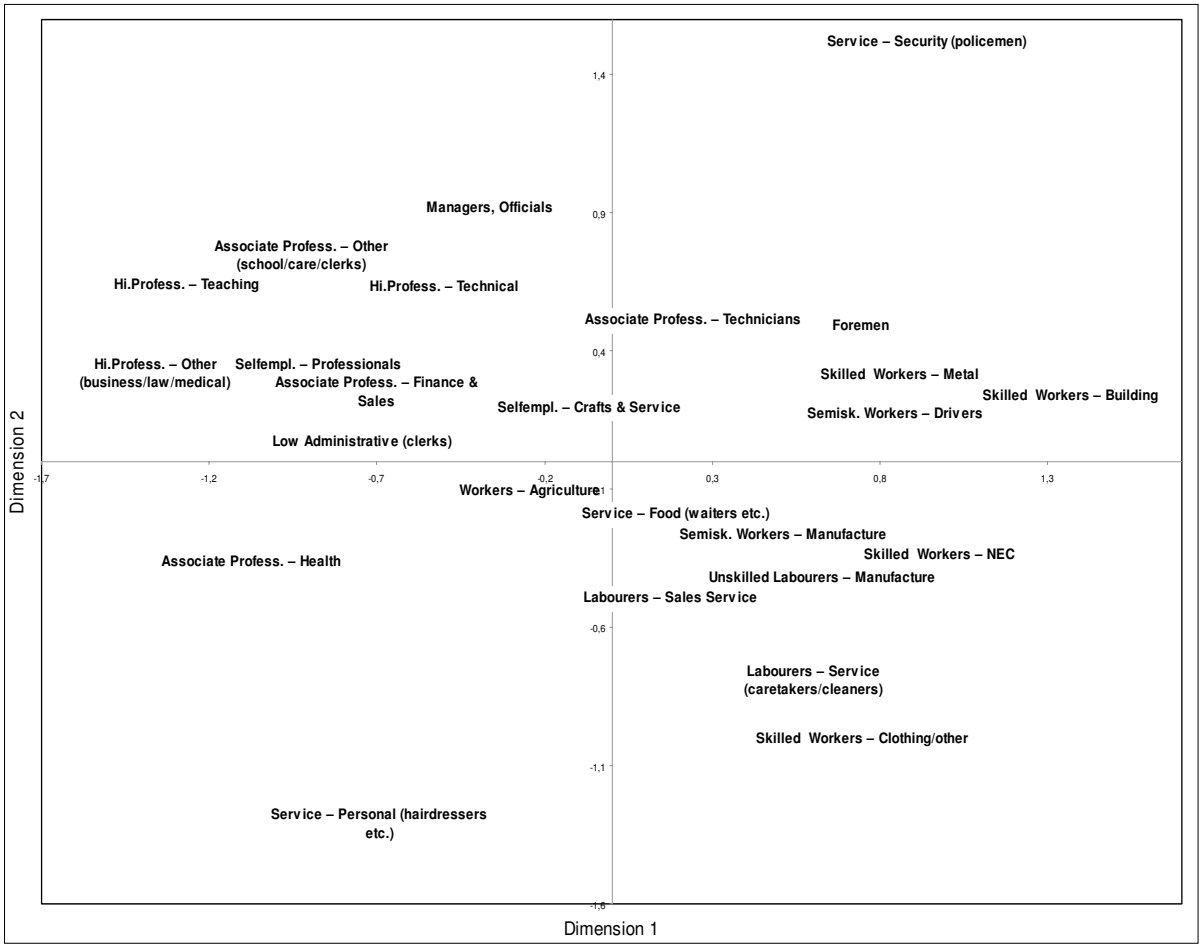
Conclusion: patterns of association – enclosed social circles

We have seen that Czech society is characterized by the clear status-based closeness of its social circles. Almost half of the country's population chooses their best friend from among the people of the same social class or education level. What kind of perspective should we take on these phenomena? It remains unclear to what extent the Czech social structure has shifted, during the transformation years, towards a class organization with distinct interaction barriers between the different classes. In particular, the levels of heterogeneity and homogeneity in different groups (such as age cohorts) should be investigated further. A simple comparison of our 2007 data and 1993 data [Vlachová 1996] on the congruence of educational levels between respondents and their best friends

42 Since it is difficult to show and interpret more than a two-dimensional solution we can regard the stress value for two dimensions as satisfactory (it is less than 0,2, which is commonly considered the threshold level). The stress for a one-dimensional solution is 0,316 and for three dimensions 0,106.

43 In general, a similar picture, with the dominant dimension of status and a supplementing gender dimension, was found when research was done on status order in terms of the differential association in friendship (31 occupational categories were used) in contemporary British society [Chan and Goldthorpe 2004].

Figure 5.2. Occupational space. Friendship patterns for respondent and his/her 3 best friends. Non-metric multidimensional scaling



Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 2890.
Note: Non-metric MDS (TORSCA) coordinates (final stress = 0.159).

reveals a stable tendency among people to establish primary links with others of their kind and create an interaction boundary in society. The reasons for such a tendency include cultural patterns, values, and orientations that are formed as early as during one's school years. From the interactional perspective, Czech society has been somewhat closed, and research evidence from forty years ago [cf. Petrusek 1969] suggests that this tendency has been rather stable. The final analysis of friendship ties in terms of more detailed occupational categories shows that the main dimension induced by patterns of association is a status continuum, but with a distance that forms a distinct boundary between the universes of manual and non-manual work.

6. Images of Social Classes and Strata

Jiří Šafr

In this chapter, we will attempt to outline how people understand social categories in terms of social class and strata and what criteria they use for membership in their own social class. In the second part, we focus on the evaluative connotations of the traits that people were asked to assign to groups and inter-class evaluation stereotypes, i.e. whether the trait attribution is dependent on the stratification position of an evaluator.

What is social class and what are criteria for class membership?

'The way that people define membership in their own class provides important insight into their interpretation of social class.' [Jackman 1979: 455] The questions about how to understand social class that are the subject of this section asked what respondents imagine under the term social class (with an open-ended answering format) and what criteria need to be known when deciding which class a person belongs to (this issue is dealt with in more detail in the next chapter on qualitative data).

We start with the terms respondents associate social class with.[44] The original 52 categories of answers were collapsed into eleven broad categories, which are presented in Table 6.1. In Czech society, class is viewed mainly in socio-economic, i.e. objective terms: wealth, money, income, and poverty. Other characteristics can be considered cultural and they express more in the way of status attributes: social standing and mention of existence of social groups (e.g. class means 'division into different social groups'). Education, lifestyle, and manners also represent this kind of semantics. Only 8% of respondents mentioned the term profession as the basis of the meaning of social class (this category comprises general occupational categories such as workers or the intelligentsia). The semantics of social class to some extent depend on socio-economic status (ISEI), but in fact less on subjective social class: social standing is more typical of the upper-middle class and atypical of the lower class, for which profession is the most typical category. The middle class understands social class in terms of education and family background (chi-sq test sig. 0.005). There are two groups of meanings according to the average of the ISEI socio-economic status of respondents. The first, typical for people with a higher socio-economic status, can be understood as cultural substance: education, family background, lifestyle/manners, and poverty social categories. For people with lower status it is typical to see social class in terms of objective economic meanings: profession, poverty or low income, wealth/money/ income. It is also typical for them not to know what social class means.

44 The question was: People can understand different things by the term social class. What do you imagine?

Table 6.1. What is social class? Answers to an open-ended question, the percentage and average value of the ISEI socio-economic status

	n	%	average ISEI
Wealth/money/income	369	30.9	39
Poverty/low income	116	9.7	38
Social standing/groups	143	12.0	43
Education	78	6.5	44
Family background	65	5.4	43
Power/antagonism	28	2.3	42
Lifestyle/Manners	46	3.8	43
Occupation	74	6.2	38
Needy/poor social categories	98	8.2	38
Other	55	4.6	39
Don't know/nothing	123	10.3	37
Total	1195	100.0	40

Source: Social Distance 2007.

In the following section we will look at the criteria of recognizing class membership. Here the respondents were asked to rank six criteria (family background, current family, money, education, occupation, and lifestyle) on the subjective meaning of social class derived from previous surveys [Centers 1949; Laumann 1966; Jackman 1979].[45] Occupation, money and to some extent education reflect objective material characteristics, whereas lifestyle is more a reflection of expressive or cultural characteristics [Jackman 1979]. The family criterion reflects inheritance and the role of socialization, which can account for both objective and cultural factors.

In order to verify the above-mentioned theoretical grouping – objective versus cultural characteristics – first a factor analysis was performed (see Table 6.2). Occupation and lifestyle (without family) form the first factor, which can be considered partly an objective and partly a cultural characteristic. We interpret the sole dimension of money as an objective criterion of material status, though it is not connected with occupation, which theoretically it might be expected to be. Education forms a specific dimension, which is principally an objective factor, but since it loads slightly on the first factor it has also some cultural/expressive meaning.

45 The question was: In deciding whether a person belongs to your class or not, which of these other things is most important to know. Please rank the following items: family background, current family, money, education, occupation, and lifestyle. The response 'everything is important, it is impossible to rank them' was coded separately.

Table 6.2. Criteria for class membership, principal component analysis, rotated Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
Family background	**-0.784**	-0.036	-0.139
Current family	**-0.726**	-0.304	-0.185
Occupation	**0.651**	0.027	0.107
Lifestyle	**0.642**	-0.456	-0.422
Money	0.155	**0.938**	-0.105
Education	0.252	-0.096	**0.913**

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 978.
Note: Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Table 6.3 shows how respondents rated each class membership criterion. The results indicate that cultural/expressive factors have at least as much weight as objective status characteristics in conceptions of social class. Here, about one-tenth of the population expresses a multifaceted way of understanding stratification, considering all factors equally important.

Table 6.3. Ranking of criteria for class membership, means, standard deviations, column percentage of the first ranking

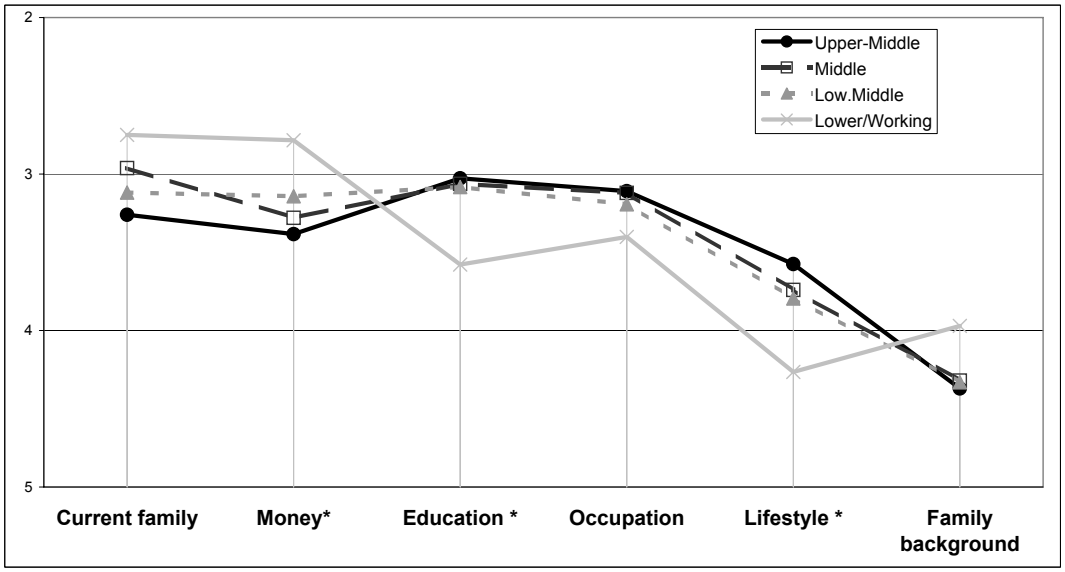
	Mean	Std. Deviation	1st ranking (%)
Current family	2.99	1.709	22.9
Money	3.16	1.596	15.8
Education	3.17	1.480	13.0
Occupation	3.20	1.477	11.6
Lifestyle	3.84	1.782	12.4
Family background	4.25	1.845	7.6
DNK: All important			9.7
DNK			7.1
Total			100 %

Source: Social Distance 2007, Valid N (listwise) 998.

Now we turn to the importance of the criteria of class membership in different social classes. The correlations between criteria and four self-identified social classes suggest that the lower classes favour more ascriptive and objective status characteristics (family background RC= -0.07,

money RC= -0.12),[46] whereas people in the upper echelons of social standing prefer cultural/ expressive criteria to distinguish class membership (lifestyle R=0.11 and education RC=0.11). To assess class interdependence in detail, Figure 6.1 presents the mean rated importance of each of the six criteria by subjective class. A clear pattern in class assessments is apparent among the most distinct classes: the most typical criterion for the lower/working class is current family and money, whereas the upper class denotes class on the basis of all criteria except family background. The most salient difference between these two classes represents education and lifestyle which is also typical for middle class members. An attitude specific to the upper class, which identifies class membership in terms of cultural characteristics, i.e. education and lifestyle, could be regarded as their justification for keeping their membership – as a status group – exclusive [Weber (1921/22) 1980; Bourdieu (1979) 1984]. On the other hand, for the working class, the key principle is wealth. This indicates that different class beliefs are somewhat relevant, but it would be exaggeration to interpret this as strong corporate class consciousness.

Figure 6.1. Rated importance of criteria for class membership by subjective social class, means



Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 978.
Note: * Means differences among the lower/working class and the other classes in the case of money, education, and lifestyle are significant at $p < 0.05$.

46 Spearman's correlation coefficients significant minimally at $p < 0,05$.

Trait attribution to social strata

In this part we turn our attention to the images of social categories. We will focus on the process of social categorization, which can be described as the negative images and stereotypes, collective representations, or shared meanings, that people bring with them into a situation. Then we focus on the differential evaluations of the in-group and out-group regarding social strata/classes. Here we measured categorical thinking as the degree to which people from specific social classes describe their own group and other groups (strata) in categorical terms.

The beliefs about three social strata – lower, middle and, upper – and about a group of recipients of social security benefits, here representing the underclass as the lowest social category,[47] were assessed in relation to four traits that form a sort of semantic differential: lazy – hardworking, intelligent – dull, selfish – unselfish, responsible – irresponsible. The first three traits were inspired by Jackman and Senters [1980],[48] while the last one was added on the basis of qualitative research results in which the role of the moral dimension was emphasized (see Chapter 8). The two adjective pairs used for each trait represent in a broader sense the opposition between positive and negative stereotypes. All trait attribution was measured on a seven-point bipolar scale. The questions on the subordinate group (benefits recipients as the underclass) preceded the assessment of the dominant group (the upper strata). There were almost no non-responses (only four respondents did not evaluate irresponsibility in the case of the middle classes).

Images of a social category: the semantic space of stratification groups

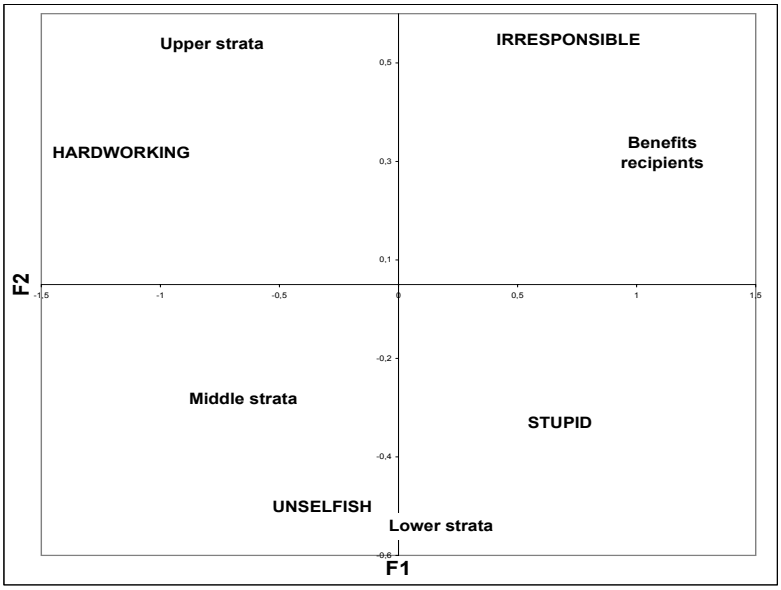
Figure 6.2 represents the semantic space of four social categories represented by the four vertical strata resulting from a linear decomposition analysis of a table of mean values (graphical mapping of interactions between rows and columns) of assessed groups by four traits (the table is not presented here). The graph tells us which groups are semantically similar and what their typical image is in the eyes of the Czech population. Not surprisingly the most positively viewed – in terms of the hardworking trait – is the category of the upper social strata (second quadrant); they are, however, also viewed as slightly selfish. In contrast, benefits recipients are a very negatively evaluated group and are viewed as irresponsible and to some extent stupid. Factor 1 (X axis; 94% explained) shows the strong interaction component correlated with thee traits hardworking and responsibility, whereas factor 2, which is in fact very weak (6%), indicates the difference in vertical stratification (upper to lower strata).[49]

47 In the text we speak of social categories.

48 Our approach differs from that of Jackman and Senters [1980]. Whereas their data measures how many people from a given category is attributed to a particular trait, we focused more on the attribution of a particular quality in a semantic differential design. This was the result of the pre-test study of the questionnaire, where most of the respondents did not comprehend the task of assessing a proportion.

49 The analysis not presented here also included ethnic and nationalities categories. The middle class has a positive image of Vietnamese and Ukrainians as hardworking and unselfish whereas Roma were seen most negatively as irresponsible and stupid. For more arguments about how people assign specific attributes to ethnic categories (Roma), see Kolářová and Vojtíšková [2008: Chapter 3.3.2 and Chapter 8 in this volume].

Figure 6.2. The semantic space of social categories. Linear decomposition analysis (LINDA)



Source: Social Distances 2007, N (listwise) = 1168.
Note: profiles based on mean values of traits (not presented). The two first dimensions extract 99.3% (93.6% and 5.7%) of inertia. The labels of traits represent one pole of an attribute.

Taken as a whole, the image of the upper and middle strata is typically positive whereas that of benefits recipients (the underclass) and to some extent also the lower strata is typically negative. From the general public's point of view, the last two mentioned are seen as lazy, dull, and irresponsible, whereas the middle and upper strata as hardworking, intelligent, unselfish, and responsible (see Table 6.4). The only exception is that the upper strata have the slightly negative image of being selfish (the mean value is 3.4 which the same as for benefits recipients). There is relative consensus among the classes in their evaluations of the four groups, but some statistically significant differences between them are important for the question of the existence of inter-class evaluation stereotypes, which is our main focus below.

Table 6.4. Positive and negative images of a social category

	Hardworking	Intelligence	Selfishness	Responsibility
Benefits recipients	-	-	-	-
Lower strata	+	-	+	-
Middle strata	+	+	+	+
Upper strata	+	+	-	+

Source: Social Distances 2007, N (listwise) = 1168.
Note: Based on mean score for whole sample (on a seven-point scale with a breaking point in the 4th category).

Inter-class evaluation stereotypes: in-group favouritism and out-group derogation

According to the theory of social identity, individuals acquire social identity from the groups they belong to. Members tend to evaluate their own group positively and they achieve positive appreciations through social comparison with relevant other groups along value dimensions. In this regard we can speak of processes of in-group favouritism, positive distinction from the out-group, and sometimes even derogation of the out-group. However, this does not mean that holding stereotypes about some group automatically leads to that group's discrimination. Social categorizations are an ordinary, common tool for understanding and dealing with the complexity of social reality. They themselves do not generate cohesive in-groups with common interests. The following questions can be pursued regarding inter-class differences in images of status groups: Can class-based stereotypes be found in contemporary Czech society? Do in-group favouritism and out-group derogation of social strata exist?

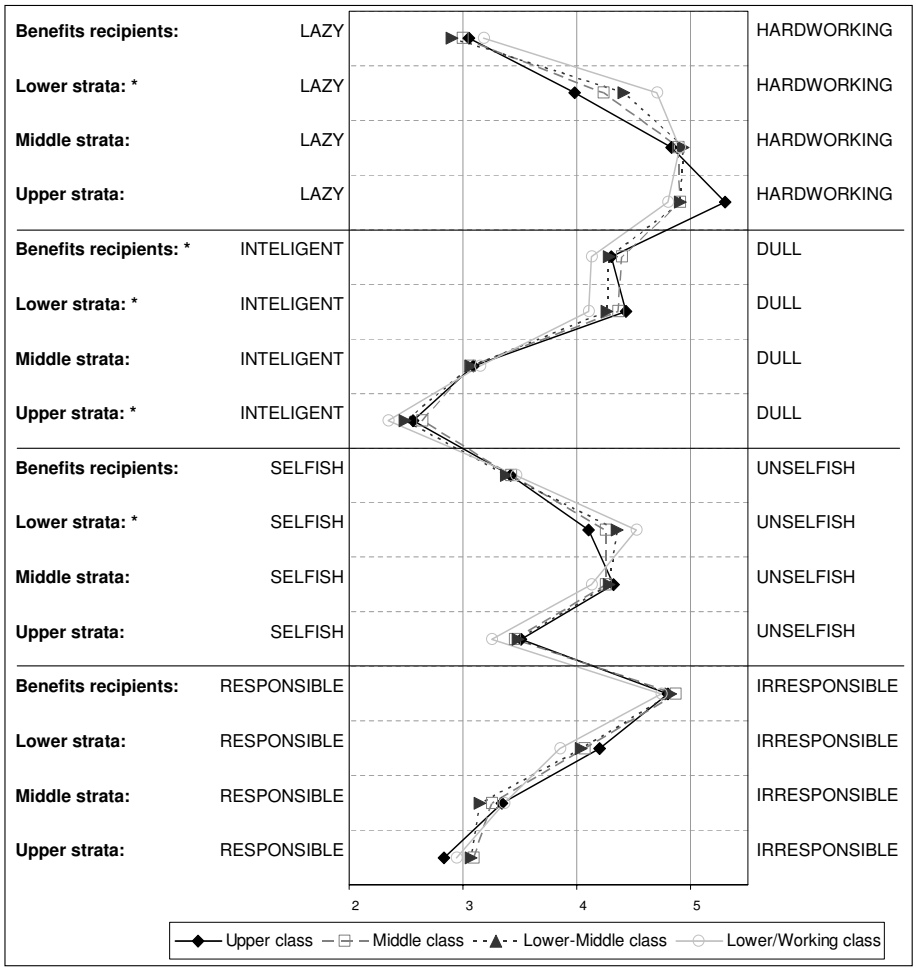
To answer this question, we consider respondents group belonging in terms of four self-identified social classes and the corresponding social categories under evaluation: benefits recipients (representing the underclass) and lower / middle / upper strata. Of course, this is a considerably intuitive approach and, in fact, not fully matching: we have no indication whether the respondent is a benefit recipient, and self-identified classes were originally inquired in about six categories, which were collapsed into four.[50] Figure 5.3 presents a semantic differential for respondents in different self-identified classes. We can trace some rather weak patterns of categorical thinking based on membership in a given social class. People from the lower/working class evaluate themselves, i.e. lower strata, better than they evaluate the upper strata. They see their group as more hardworking, more intelligent, less selfish and less irresponsible than other groups and than they are viewed by the upper class. At the same time they assess the upper strata and in particular benefits recipients (the underclass) less positively: they are seen as less hardworking, unselfish, and duller, and irresponsible (results based on means differences in a two-sample t-test). Middle- and lower-middle-class respondents are somewhere in the middle and their evaluation represents the average position.

On the other hand, the upper classes are more likely to describe themselves positively (as more hardworking, intelligent, unselfish). In the case of hardworking, intelligence, and, to some extent also, selfishness traits we can trace some discrepancies among the classes, which are proved by the statistically significant mean differences. However, in no case do the images of social categories differ substantially between classes (the only difference can be found in the case of the lower strata category, where very slight class derogation can be noticed: the upper class views this category as somewhat lazy, while the other classes (including working/lower class as in-group) assess them as hardworking). So the stereotypes are generally shared by all classes but with varying intensity.

This differentiated intensity epitomizes the rather weak form of class-based categorical thinking in Czech society. We must bear in mind that the existence of moderate social class stereotypes observed in the case of the lower and upper classes and benefits recipients can contribute to the existence of social criteria that people use to draw dividing lines separating people into 'us' and

50 As in the previous parts, self-identified social classes are: upper-middle class, middle class, lower-middle and lower-middle class.

Figure. 6.3. Traits of strata/groups by four subjective social classes, means



Source: Social Distance 2007, N (listwise) = 1168.
Note: * means difference between classes significant at $p < 0.05$ (two-sample t-test)
There is maximum of one attribute is on the left side (1) the second on the right (7), e.g. lazy vs. hard working.

'them', into in-groups and out-groups (see also findings in Chapters 3 and 8), in this case social class identity, but their existence alone falls well short of being an act of social categorization that contributes to inter-group behaviour of discrimination against an out-group, for which numerous other conditions must first be met. Nevertheless, the results of our earlier analysis of subjective social distance in terms of willingness to interact with specific occupational categories point to the mechanism in which this behaviour might work invisibly through the process of differential association rather then outright hostility or corporate class consciousness.

Conclusion: images of classes and strata

In this chapter we attempted to assess class- (or stratum-) based categorical thinking. The results indicate the significance of the process of in-group favouritism but only in the case of counter parts to social stratification (the underclass, the lower versus upper strata). It would be an overstatement, however, to speak of class-based derogation of out-groups. Classes seem to obtain their social identity (emphasizing here that we speak about sociological taxonomy) through social praxis, i.e. cultural participation and taste [cf. Šafr 2008a], and associated values, which form symbolic class boundaries. Of course, these are mutual phenomena. We assign categories a specific position in the symbolic space using knowledge about their behaviour, tastes, and values [Bourdieu (1979) 1984]. This common knowledge constitutes cultural repertoires, which to some extent are class invariant.

Thus, in general terms the middle-class image of society – 'we belong to the middle strata' – is the dominant view in the Czech Republic.[51] Concerning trait attribution only members of the upper class and the lower/working class view relatively themselves as better than do other classes. Nevertheless, there is no evidence in the quantitative data presented here of any hostility towards either the upper class or the opposite stratification extreme, represented here by benefits recipients as the underclass, and there are two reasons for this: first, the upper strata still represent 'us' and people only make an individual distinction in assessing them based on how they earned money during the period of the post-communist transformation (see Chapter 8); second, benefits recipients are viewed not only as people who receive an undeserved allowance but also as needy. So as the next two chapters will demonstrate in detail the evaluation of a group (social category) on the basis of moral criteria that derived from the dichotomy of well-deserved to undeserved.

To what extent is this image of status/class groupings enhanced by representation in media is a question. Whereas the term 'social class' is not widely used, and when it is then in a specific post-communist context, we certainly cannot encounter any negative representation of the upper classes in the media [see Kolářová, Vojtíšková 2008: Chapter 5]. The narrative interviews depicted in the next chapters revealed on the one hand that some of those that rank socially 'on top' (e.g. rich entrepreneurs) are often viewed as wicked, and on the other hand that 'benefits recipients' as the category 'at the bottom' might be viewed negatively for living at the expense of others and for being unable to take care of themselves (see Chapter 8).

In short, the analyses in this chapter suggest that beliefs about social stratification – the criteria of social class and images of hierarchical social categories – are present in Czech society and that different feelings are associated with socio-economic standing, although owing to rather small substantive differences we cannot consider them to be decisive class consciousness. In general, as regards social class images, individuals at lower stratification position understand class in terms of objective economic factors (wealth, income, profession), whereas individuals with higher status view it chiefly in terms of cultural factors (education, social standing, lifestyle). Hence, social class remains a fruitful sociological category, both as a subjective and an analytical tool, while class sentiment in the sense of a closed solidarity, i.e. corporate consciousness, is for the most part more or less non-existent in the Czech Republic.

51 Almost a half of the population identifies themselves as 'middle class' (see note 30 and Table A.1.1 in Appendix).

7. Perception of Social Classes and Class Identification in the Czech Republic

Marta Kolářová

Sociologists use the term (social) 'class', but does it also mean something to ordinary people in everyday life and discussions? It is argued in connection with the cultural turn in sociology that class analysis is obsolete. Those who continue to examine class say that theory has shifted from the 'class consciousness' that was at the centre of stratification research particularly in Great Britain from the 1950s to today's interest in 'class identity' [Butler and Watt 2007; Savage 2005]. This shift is associated with other, mainly methodological, influences; qualitative research is favoured. In addition, contexts change, and the stress is put on everyday life. In the past two decades, Butler and Watt have observed three different approaches to class identity:

1. Class identity is ambivalent. The influence of globalization has caused macro changes, and collective working identity has weakened. (post-modern)
2. Theorists associated with Marxist or Weberian approaches insist on the importance of class identity. They also argue that the majority of people place themselves in the working class. (traditional)
3. For revisionists, class identity is ambivalent, but still important. However, they criticize surveys and instead use qualitative methods. (revisionist)

Recently, qualitative research (mostly by British authors) has focused on whether people perceive society as classless and how they express class identification [Savage et al. 2001; Payne and Grew 2005]. Savage et al. discovered that people hesitate to place themselves in a specific class, even though they are able to talk about class in social and political terms. The majority of people understand class terminology, but they see themselves 'outside' any particular class. The majority doubt and use defensive patterns; for instance, people tend more to distance themselves from a specific class than to identify with one. Although according to Savage class is not central to identity, some individuals (more likely male) positively identify with the working class.

Payne and Grew [2005] criticized this research and demonstrated that class identities are significant. Their respondents also hesitated over class identification, but that may have been influenced by the order of the questions. The question of a classless society is very complex and it is difficult to answer. Therefore, the hesitation to self-identify does not necessarily mean the refusal of class. Moreover, people use different terms to talk about class or express hierarchy or differences.

The analyses presented here and in the next chapter were based on transcriptions of in-depth interviews that were conducted with thirty men and women of different occupations (from workers to professional) various educational backgrounds and social statuses who live in Prague or Liberec. This qualitative research focused on the perception of social distances and inequalities in Czech society. Besides some other issues, we studied how people perceive class and how they identify with a particular class (for more on the construction of group boundaries in the symbolic space between 'normal' people, i.e. the middle class, and the social categories 'below' and 'above' them, see the next chapter; the results of the survey are described in full detail in Kolářová and Vojtíšková [2008] which are the chapters presented here based on). In order to analyze class identity it is necessary to recognize how people view class and what it represents to them in everyday life. Self-identification is related to the way in which respondents define classes and the stratification of current Czech society. The questions focusing on class and the class division of society were included in most of the interviews in the end, so that we were able to see whether people use class as a category themselves. For most part they did not, but that does not mean that they would not talk about inequalities, the perception of hierarchy, or group boundaries. When conducting the interviews, we tried to divide the sub-questions to prevent what Payne and Grew pointed out. Still, we assume that some answers could be influenced by earlier parts of the interview.

We prepared the questions in the last part of the interview outline as follows: a) The term social class is sometimes used in the media. What do you understand by it? b) Do you think that we live in 'class free society'? Is it possible to compare it with the situation before 1989? c) How do classes differ? d) What about you and your family, what class do you identify with? e) Can you describe your class and why you choose this very class? f) When you want to find out if someone belongs to the same class as you, what would you need to know?

What does the term 'class' evoke?

When directly asked about class, particular groups of narratives appeared; they either did not consider the concept to be important, especially for their life, were not interested in it, or rejected it and replaced it with a different one. The opinion surfaced that the term is not used at all, that it is not present in public discourse. Narrators do not view this term as a word commonly used in everyday life or in the own identification.

Those who accept the term gave a certain description of what the concept of class evokes. According to them, class is a division of society, a 'caste system'. People often understood class in connection with the extreme differences in society. Some confused the terms class and stratum.

Especially in the case of university educated respondents and women from this group working in the sphere of education, the term class evokes Marxist lessons at school under the previous regime. Class is a 'technical term' associated with Marx. Some narrators expressed their – sometimes very extremely – negative attitude towards the term: 'I don't like this term, because I think it doesn't fit. I'm a little bit allergic to it; I wouldn't classify people by their background. I lived in it long enough; I'm really allergic to that term. I don't like it.' (Anna, teacher)

No positive identification with the term occurred during the interviews that could be regarded as a class consciousness or perhaps class pride. According to statements it seems that the term 'middle class' is more acceptable; it is not so negatively tied up with the previous regime as a working class and as class in general.

The definition of class and the principle of stratification

When examining how respondents perceive class and class division, we analyzed how they define and recognize classes and the basis on which society is stratified. We did not pose questions using prepared categories, but let the respondents narrate freely. We found respondents mentioned the following criteria for understanding classes.

Generally, the ranking of people into classes and in the stratification space is perceived as a multidimensional phenomenon. In this, ethno-theories are similar to the theoretical concept of multidimensional status. The impact of occupation itself is seen as low for recognizing the class position. Class is not directly dependent on occupation. It is only considered important in connection with other aspects, in particular income. Worker Jana illustrates this with the inconsistent status of her brother based on occupation, education, and income: 'My brother has a university degree and earns 12 000 in income after taxes. He should be paid more for teaching at a university.'

According to the ethno-theories, it is not occupation but income that is more important for class position. Even placement in the working class is not determined occupation anymore, although it continues to comprise manual jobs. This is evident from the statement of Viola, a cashier: '[a bricklayer] can be in the middle class, as bricklayers earn good money'.

The narrators do not consider educational level as a clear determinant for understanding class; either they explicitly refuse this connection or they assume that different characteristics are also important. Otherwise the interviewees often mentioned that people with the same educational degree differentiate according to incomes and economic status: 'you see these people often without education – these 'new rich', they were trained as workers'. (Premysl, train dispatcher)

A frequently mentioned dimension of class division was consumption and lifestyle. The interviewees spoke generally about expenses and a living standard defined by the ability to afford something. Consumption was related to food and housing and was mentioned especially by women of lower status. According to them, high class is distinguished by living in one's own house with a swimming pool. Another stratification item of consumption that was mentioned was being able to go on a holiday.

Also mentioned by the narrators – mostly men and those with high education – were car ownership and differences in hobbies. According to these narrators, poor people cannot afford to do more expensive sport activities, such as tennis, golf, surfing, or yachting. Some stated that the leisure activities of rich people are typical eccentric and snobbish. 'They try to compete, who is drinking more expensive wine, if it costs sixty thousand or a hundred twenty thousand.' (Pankrác, worker) This argument can be contrasted with the view that consumption can confuse: 'you can

meet a millionaire, who has millions on his account, but he still goes to a pub, he drinks beer, and sits with the common people.' (Filip, plumber)

The influence of family background on class was strongly opposed by the majority of the interviewees. The respondents presented themselves (the worker Pankrác is the son of a university student) and their acquaintances as examples. The teacher Anna also rejected the relationship between social position and family because of the previous regime, which produced paradoxes, and she assessed it very negatively: 'parents with a university degree changed to manual jobs and then the children had a working background. Therefore, they were accepted to university. Or the original position was remembered and they were not accepted.'

According to some respondents, alongside income level and consumption, 'social behaviour', including a person's manner of speech and style, is important. Women in the service sector especially said that this is how they classify their customers.

Great distance and animosity was expressed towards the new rich – individuals who did not inherit manners with their possessions. This is illustrated by the hairdresser Natasha: 'I don't view people as rich because they have money; it is also the ones with knowledge. Today, a stupid person can be rich, but without deserving it. A person is really rich because he has knowledge, not only money.'

Social behaviour is also connected with appearance. Again, this was noticed especially by women. So is it true that, according to one saying, 'clothes make a person'. Not quite. Appearance is understood not in the sense of clothing, but rather as an 'image'. Some pointed out that an image can lie: 'I will give one bun less to my children, buy a fancy suit and you will know nothing.' (Zbyšek, worker)

Ranking people into classes is also influenced by pretending a status – how people define themselves as belonging to a specific class. In a way class is a performance and a game. The narrators say that ostentatious consumption is often used to pretend to be of a higher class: 'My brother and his wife play at being upper class, but he could never afford it – today he has turkey for dinner, but tomorrow it's just bread.' (Aneta, worker)

What classes are perceived in Czech society?

Some interviewees thought it difficult to divide society into specific segments, and that was case even for those who then easily ranked themselves in one such segment. Or, they drew attention to the fact that stratification depends on specific criteria and principles. This is illustrated in a response from a teacher named Blanka: 'You cannot tell clearly of everybody what class they belong to. I know people that by their education should belong to the working class but by their lifestyle belong to the upper class.'

Leaving aside from those who refused to see classes, the respondents differed in their view of how many classes there are in the society, how they defined these classes, and what the classes include. The narrators do not see classes as clearly defined categories; instead they see hierarchical strata. Most often they identified three classes/strata: lower, middle, and upper – though labelled varyingly and representing various groups. The bottom or lower class was described with following

expressions: the goal of lower class is 'survival', the lower class is limited by consumption; 'lower classes are probably those who have nothing to put in the saucepan' (Jana, worker); lower classes are the poorest; they are 'the mud'.

The middle class is labelled as 'trouble free', 'normal', 'kind of average', 'normal working people', 'trying to provide for the family'. In terms of consumption, the middle class is 'the ones who have enough to eat', 'they live in a normal apartment'. Respondents often regarded the class as the intermediate between two extreme strata; often they did not label it with any characteristics. The middle class is thus defined relationally. It is generally the class in which people rank themselves; the middle class is 'us'. A large number of people belong to the middle class as it is 'everyone around me'.

A small number of people in our sample understood the working class to be a specific class. This is connected with their self-identification: I work as a worker; therefore I belong to the working class. But it is not as straightforward as that. Others ranked workers among the poor, at the bottom of society, but also in the category of normal people. According to a train conductor named Premysl, it is possible to interchange the middle and working classes as they mix together. He does not see a strong dividing line between them, but differentiates them all strongly from the 'new rich'.

A very distinct characteristic was attributed to the upper classes and often in evaluative sense. In terms of possessions, the most frequent label applied to them was that they are the rich/wealthy, 'the richest/wealthiest' (they were also called elite, new rich, snobbish, the upper ten thousand). Certain groups successful in society were understood to be the upper class: celebrities, politicians, elite, wealthy business people, and people with power. Some associate such a position with fraudulent activities. 'The upper class are thieves' (Blažena, sales assistant). 'They speculate and try to cheat on others', 'I know gangsters from the upper class', says Viola, a cashier, who also insists that those high up dominate the normal working people. Others also noticed that people in higher positions have the power to form the class discourse about the lower classes and despise them: 'politicians or judges (…), the businessmen, it is the caste of the…, Topolánek's party (the Civic Democrats, i.e. conservative party) talk about a mob, those are the ones from the middle class and lower'. (Přemysl, conductor)

Lower status narrators in particular referred to the upper class quite negatively. Ordinary working people do not always see the upper class status as deserving. They have no respect the upper-class way of life and in that way express the moral border between classes. The upper class is defined by an extravagant lifestyle, which they see as needless, literally snobbish. The narrators question both the way the upper class earns their money and how the rich spend their free time: 'these new rich differ from normal people in revelry, parties, stupid activities (…) me, personally, I don't view Mareš (a singer) as a rich man, he is new rich'. Question: 'But he works a lot.' Response: 'He works hard, but I don't see that as a job.' (Přemysl, conductor)

To a certain extent the narrators expressed envy, though verbally they denied this, and they also showed contempt for the elite. Others adopted a defensive strategy, declaring that they are not envious of people better off and tried to find negatives in their status. Female respondents also tried to persuade us that the lifestyle of rich people cannot be seen only in a positive light, it also has its disadvantages: for example, they insist that the upper class is unhappy because it is afraid, it is always chasing after something. They admit the fact that they cannot afford high consumption, but they try to play this down by saying they actually are not interested in that.

Class identification

The class self-identification of respondents is related to how they divide society, what and how many segments they see, and what the principle of the social structure they consider. Several respondents opposed the self-identification for various reasons. Květa, a psychologist, refused categorization, which in her view is bad; it is better to be an individual. Kamila, a supervisor, had a similar problem with self-ranking and said that there are no classes or strata and therefore she would not know where to place herself. Blažena, a sales assistant, avoided identifying herself in any class and put herself in the class where 'respectable people' belong. Respectability, according to her, can overcome social differences; people are then equal.

Most other interviewees identified themselves on a hierarchical ladder. Only a small proportion of them identified with a class that they defined either as 'the lowest' or 'poor', based on their understanding of their position in relation to other classes. A worker felt not to belong either to the rich or the middle class. A cashier noted her low income and limited consumption possibilities and admitted that, although she sees herself as very low, her status is relative to those who are further beneath her. The statements suggest that these narrators do not belong to the underclass, as they see other groups in lower positions.

The majority of the interviewees, both men and women, from various occupations, identified themselves as middle class. Bonifác, a bartender, has a point of reference that he is trying to achieve, but where he is not yet today: 'I am that middle class, I have a place to live, I have a car, I don't beg, I have money for petrol. And I always try to do better, always.' Others also understood their positions relationally, in relation to other groups. People distanced themselves from specific classes and said 'the middle – neither poor nor rich'. Sales assistants explained their identification with middle class by saying that, although they are not well off, they are not at the bottom of society, like for example homeless people: 'a sales assistant is in the middle, so I was saying I would draw a line even there, because it is not the middle. Those girls are badly paid. But then it is not that "mud", I would not like to fall there.' (Viola, cashier)

Only workers described themselves as working class as a sense of identity with their manual profession. They do not stress their working identity (proudly), and instead try to point out that in a way they are part of the middle class. A worker is somewhere in between the working and middle classes. Aneta noted differences that in terms of occupation put her in the working class but in terms of status defined by consumption lead her to identify with the middle class: 'I belong to the working class, but we do not live on the street, so I consider myself in the middle class.'

Alongside class self-identification, some interviewees also noted that it is not just how they think about themselves but also how others outside label and correspondingly treat them. This external labelling then strongly contrasts with one's self-consciousness and can cause unpleasant feelings. Aneta, a worker, has had a very bad experience; she has encountered degradation owing to her occupation. Her sister-in-law, a nurse, despises workers and makes this obvious to her: 'She is that superior race. She doesn't like workers, fat people….' Aneta also feels stigmatized in the public sector: 'Not that they would feel ashamed, but I don't like it when I'm filling in papers (at a bureau) and they ask: your profession? Worker. That bothers me, it seems like scum. It's strange.' Question: 'And you are embarrassed about your work?' Answer: 'No, I just mind the word.'

Her family is also viewed negatively because of their limited consumption (she is a single mother of three adolescent children). Her daughters are labelled with abusive terms because she cannot provide them with the same consumer items as their classmates. Question: 'And [the classmates] show their dislike towards them?' A: 'It's very tough, they say they are stupid at school, that they don't know anything [...]. It is true that many times there has been nothing to eat, just bread and marmalade... I didn't have money for some school activities; they said about the girls that they are beggars.'

Conclusion: the rejection of social class

The results of the qualitative analysis of social class perception and class identification in the Czech Republic can be summed up in the following statements: 1) the way people perceive classes and strata depends on what they see as the principle of stratification. A person's understanding of classes is associated with class identification. 2) For the most part people mostly do not see classes but rather gradual strata (lower, middle, higher). At most they can see the working class as a specific class, but there is some ambivalence even to this. 3) The concept of class stratification is also connected with what the term class evokes in people. This term is not without its problems in current Czech society because it refers to the class order and official doctrine of the previous regime.

Czech data point to the relevance of several points in current western (especially British) theories discussed in post-communist central Europe. For instance, class is not seen as based solely on occupation, but also on other dimensions. Czechs, like the British, do not consider today's society as class-free. But the Czech case is specific and different from the British one in several ways. Czechs did not seem to hesitate much to identify with a specific class. Some presented themselves as ordinary, normal people. Still, I would not argue that they refused to identify themselves in class terms. The methodology used may have had an influence (first defining class and only after making the self-identification) as could the different socio-cultural situation. Czechs are possibly more used to thinking in class terms; the bigger problem is that often they refuse to accept the term as such. They define class the way Marxism defined it. In the Czech Republic, class has a political meaning owing to the former communist regime and it effects people's perception of inequalities. Compared to the British, Czechs strongly rejected family background as a determinant of social status, because the communist regime greatly mixed up people's positions in society, which depended on how they related to the regime and political party and not on their achievements. The narrators expressed no positive identification with the term, no class pride; not even in the case of workers, who accept working class identity only on basis of their manual work, but at the same time point out the stigma attached to this category.

If I had to place results of the analysis of perception of class and class identity in the Czech Republic in one of the theoretical approaches introduced at the opening of this chapter, then I would reject the second one (traditional approach), but in a certain sense it would be possible to agree with the revisionists. Or a fourth approach could be created to reflect post-communist experience. It would be based on the argument that people understand society as stratified gradually; they may think about inequalities, but some people strongly oppose the term class because of its negative association with the communist ideology of the previous regime.

When western theorists speak about the end of class, they are more likely referring to the influences of structural changes in post-modern and post-industrial society. Of course they are mainly considering western or rich countries in north, where global restructuring is associated mainly with the decline of working positions in production and industry. These phenomena have no doubt influenced the Czech Republic in the past two decades, but the 'end of class' and class identity can also be understood as a result of other processes. It is especially the negative stance towards communist discourse still apparent in people's minds that forces them to reject class categories, though they are able to conceptualize the inequalities in our society.

8. Constructing the Group Identity of Ordinary People: Who Are 'Those Below' and 'Those Above'?

Kateřina Vojtíšková

Society can be viewed as a social space filled with variously defined groups or social categories. The question of how best to grasp the variability of social groups has been addressed by generations of sociologists. Is society better described as numerous strata with unclear boundaries between them or as a few clear, distinct classes? This issue was addressed primarily in Chapter 4. Apart from social science theories and conceptualizations of this phenomenon that draw mainly on economic relations (i.e. labour market position), sociologists have also studied ethno-theories – lay constructions of social structure and inequality.

The following section, which draws on the qualitative study introduced in the previous chapter, aims at such representations of the upper and lower parts of society regardless of a priori concepts. We deal with the lay constructions of certain social categories/groups through symbolic boundaries. We have also studied how narrators constructed their own social identities rationally by distancing themselves from some groups (out-groups, 'them') while identifying with others (in-groups, 'us'). In particular, we focused on the discursive representation of social categories of narrators located 'below' and 'above' in Czech society [see also Vojtíšková 2007]. Social categories were constructed from membership criteria, member characteristics, entitlements and obligations, and the level of subjective distance/identification. It is not restricted to the actors' labour market positions. The world of occupations is thus not necessarily the cornerstone from where social categories are allocated a position in the hierarchical symbolic space.

Lay normativity and the construction of group boundaries

When we study recognition we also have to deal with lay normativity and lay morals. The moral aspects of normativity include reciprocal rules of human interaction, which are the key to one's subjective and objective well-being. Pride, shame, envy, resentment, sympathy, and disdain represent judgments about people that mirror their authors' own values. Preferred norms are found universally applicable, good for everyone, and those who do not observe them will find themselves on the other side of the moral boundary. At the same time, unequal access to resources and opportunities can significantly affect the pursuit of such ways of life that bring recognition and self-confidence [Sayer 2005]. Therefore, the question of recognition cannot be separated from access to valued goods and practices (entitlements).

In a constructivist approach, groups or categories do not bear fixed contents or attributes, and are instead defined in the local, contextual process of constructing symbolic boundaries whereby people are categorized, membership is designated, and labels are assigned. Such symbolic boundaries represent culturally embedded conceptual means and are expressed in normative interdictions, preferences, attitudes, and practices, which can also become instrumental in asserting one's own definition of reality [Lamont and Molnar 2002: 168]. They make symbolic exclusion possible and define what is desirable and undesirable for group members, what and who needs to be avoided, and how one's own purity can be preserved [Lamont 1992].

A social or collective identity is derived from one's membership in different groups and determines who a person is and how they should think and act as well as who they are not, how they should not act, and how they are positioned vis-a-vis other groups. People have interest in perceiving and presenting their own social group (in-group) in a positive light, sustaining its superiority over other relevant social categories (out-groups), and maintaining self-respect. That can be done both by stressing the in-group's positive attributes and by pointing out the negative properties or stigmatizing of out-groups [Hewstone et al. 2002]. This discursive inter-group competition for value-based specificity builds upon culturally established dichotomies such as high-low, male-female, natural-cultural, etc. [Lamont and Fournier 1992].

Douglas [(1966) 2002] pointed out the importance of the concepts of purity and impurity for the establishment of social order. In order to maintain order internally, groups must classify the impure (groups), which represent a threat to the existing order and which, in the interest of order, must be kept 'at the margins' or 'outside'–socially excluded. The impure designation of social categories and their members is based on the threat they allegedly pose to the order and the world of 'us', ordinary people. Purity and impurity become distinctive criteria in the discursive construction of distances and symbolic boundaries between 'us' and 'them' within the stratification space [Vojtíšková, Špaček and Šafr 2007].

Social groups or categories (such as homeless people, the unemployed, the proletariat, and politicians) are not enclosed within clear boundaries and rather are constructed on a local basis, this process draws from shared symbolic resources that enable inter-subjective understanding. There is a stereotype for each category, a representation that narrators perceive as predominant in society and refer to, whether by asserting or questioning it.

Perceptions of and statements about the in-group's and other groups' respective positions within society rely on a structured view of the social world that endows it with certain meanings. The in-group's position is perceived within the context of relations towards other relevant social groups/categories. Comparisons and the making of hierarchies are based on existing interpretations of how reality is structured (status quo). These can be reproduced, questioned, or explicitly rejected, and alternative interpretations can be asserted.

When asked about social hierarchies and the relations of superiority and inferiority in Czech society, narrators elicited numerous perspectives with different degrees of relevance. Interviews showed that people found two dimensions crucial: the position within the material and power inequalities of society (i.e. economic characteristics / class dimension / economic symbolic boundary)

and the symbolic position within society (recognition / a status dimension). They also called for correspondence between the two dimensions concerning location of social categories. A perceived inconsistence (e.g. high economic and low moral status) was openly contested as illegitimate. In the interviews, an individual's or a group's position within society was, therefore, always related to their characteristics, symbolic evaluation, and feelings about the legitimacy (worthiness) of their position, i.e. culture [Bottero and Irwin 2003].

The 'ordinary' majority

Irrespective of their occupation or education, most narrators identified with the group of ordinary, normal, or decent people. To a large extent, they constructed the positive identity of such a group by means of moral boundaries. The ordinary were referred to as the average or the majority and included blue-collar workers, the middle class(es) or strata, and some wealthy people. In the interviews, a positive picture of these people was drawn and their lifestyles were, in fact, advocated:

> Interviewer: 'What kinds of people do you respect?' Laura: 'Mostly those who stayed the way they've always been and do not place themselves above others, do not pretend to be someone they aren't, people who work, go to work, those who live an ordinary life.'

Narrators at the same time distinguished and distanced themselves from groups like the Roma, homeless people, abusers of social welfare, politicians, the rich, the upper class, and celebrities.

The following positive traits of ordinary people were mentioned: they have a meaningful job; unemployment is not a standard for them; they are independent because they earn their own and their family's living; and they pay taxes. (Nataša: *I would hate being unable to stand on my own feet.*) They are decent, skilful, reliable, responsible, and honest. They stay the way they have always been, value their family, and find money a means rather than a goal in itself. Since divorce has become a normal part of life, a two-parent family is no longer a trait of ordinary people. Instead, one narrator finds her 'functional family' to be an exception. Nevertheless, children attending school, a clean and cosy home, a full refrigerator, and home-cooked dinners are found to be the attributes of ordinary people's homes. The fact that narrators 'do not pretend to be someone else' and do not show off is their important virtue. They do not like placing themselves above other people and they do not like envy. One's position within the imagined community [Anderson 2003] of ordinary people also depends on luck. Fortune may cause ascents and falls during a life course. Note that these characteristics must be understood as related to a constructed community of ordinary people, an ideal model, rather than the lived reality.

Ordinary workers are sometimes found to be the worst off because not only do they have to earn their own living but they are also solidaristic with the incompetent people 'below', feed the politicians above, and fall victim to cunning swindlers:

> Iveta: 'The middle class is the worst off and the largest. Therefore, it is able to fund and subsidize the government the most, through its work and its skills.'

Those 'below' can take advantage of social welfare or various forms of assistance, there is nothing to take from them, while the rich deny their incomes. Most narrators related that they did

not feel recognized enough. The government depends on them but does not offer anything in return. They are not recognized symbolically or, when in need, materially:

> Iveta: 'Nobody takes care of ordinary people, which is not nice.'
> Emil: 'The state ... does not create an environment in which they could be satisfied.'

What is more, they are called low, plebeian people by some politicians. However, the hands of working people are, in their own eyes, clean, and they see themselves as ranking high in the symbolic hierarchy.

> Bruno '...they do not take advantage of welfare, they have to work hard in order to make a living, and they bring in the biggest chunk of taxes, thus feeding the top managers. These people are the worst off. It is weird but true... those who are employed can even find themselves in the higher ranks, earning a decent salary which makes a living, but they do not earn fortunes, they get by, they save up, they'll pay anything, but they also create tax revenues and feed other people.'

Constructing symbolic boundaries between 'ordinary people' and the others

Representatives of 'ordinary people' talked about their strong distance from those who do not want to work and instead earn their living in other ways, such as social welfare, illegitimate business activities, or begging. All these attributes can be understood as impurity that does not go in line with the ordinary people's normative order. The latter is built around the value of work and the norm that a person of 'productive age' works – the building stones of ordinary people's statements and culture. This is the right and universally applicable viewpoint (with the exception of people too sick to work and those who take care of dependent family members), and it is strongly normative. People of this viewpoint assert that they want to live in a society that shares the values of responsibility, hard work, and independence.

We studied what kinds of people narrators found to be 'those below' and 'those above', i.e. members of marginal groups within society. They included homeless people, the Roma, and the unemployed, on one hand, and politicians, rich entrepreneurs, celebrities, doctors, and scientists, on the other. The symbolic boundaries differentiating between (some morally impure, some pure) the categories of those below and above and (mostly) the pure ordinary people are very important for constructing a relatively positive collective identity for narrators and people like them whom they regard as their equals [Lamont 1992, 2000].

While the world of 'those below' is, in the case of the homeless and the Roma, found to be physically dirty, more importantly their impurity is viewed as moral impurity. They are impure owing to their undesirable character and behaviour. The prevailing notion of homeless people is of someone who is lazy, unwilling to work and fulfil their duties, irresponsible, a threat to others, incompetent, responsible for their own situation, and beggars or thieves. The Roma are mostly perceived as members of a lazy and irresponsible minority who try to live as parasites on ordinary people:

> Vít: 'No contribution to society, one in a hundred, always extending their hands: give me, give me, give me.'

The Roma are distinguished from homeless people by the fact that they abuse social welfare and do not exclusively occupy the lowest social ranks. They can almost become ordinary people through their efforts, but not quite so. Even if they move beyond the Roma majority and become 'decent Roma', they cannot be quite normal because the ethnic boundary is construed as one that is natural, inalterable, and impossible to transcend. For categories that are not distinguished as strongly and clearly from ordinary people, negative judgments require further caveats and conditions under which judgments apply and one has to raise or stress the boundaries in order to clean their hands. For example, the unemployed are only stigmatized when they are not seeking work, live at the expense of others, or hold illegal jobs. The unemployed in pre-retirement age or mothers with small children who cannot find work because of discrimination by employers are not stigmatized.

The symbolic boundaries towards all of the above-mentioned social categories are constructed through characteristics such as dishonesty, the violation of moral principles, egoism, and their domineering behaviour. Politicians are predominantly seen as dishonest people who have made it to the top through acquaintances, violate the norms of good conduct, do not play fair, are egoists, only regard their own interests instead of striving to help the country and the people, and view the general public as low, plebeian people (Emil: *Politics are terribly dirty*.). Thus they represent the media or imaginary elites that are found by the narrators to be powerful but not worthy of symbolic recognition. Very similar characteristics are assigned to a sub-group of rich entrepreneurs, i.e. those who made their money through irregularities and financial fraud (asset stripping). Dishonest conduct (moral impurity) is, in the eyes of the narrators, the reason why these people score high in the class dimension and rank extremely low in the recognition dimension:

> Přemysl: 'There is a certain caste of people who are rich but only a fraction of them became rich in an honest way. Others are swindlers who say they are successful but they are not, they are just rogues.'

People contest the legitimacy of the position occupied by these politicians and refuse to recognize them. With some exceptions, the above-mentioned groups have bad intentions, commit fraud and theft, are spendthrift, and show off.

Even more often than politicians, entrepreneurs are positioned on the positive side of the boundary as fair, principled people who participate in the functioning of the country and its economy, give people jobs, and do not put themselves above others. Thus, they form part of the natural, recognized elites (high-ranking experts such as physicians, athletes, and entrepreneurs) who help paint a good picture of the country abroad and make people proud to be Czechs. People identify with such elites, but are also compliant to accept their own inferiority to them.

Conclusion: deprecation and a call for recognition

The world of ordinary people is differentiated from those 'below' and 'above' by its moderation, reliability, and perceived internal diversity. The necessity to work for one's own living and take care of oneself and one's family is a common characteristic. In many respects this world is constructed through oppositions to marginal groups, things that those above or below have too much or too little of. In order to differ from those categories, one must have a job, have a place to stay, maintain hygiene, not abuse

other people's help and generosity, use no violence, not take advantage of acquaintances, be honest, avoid cheating and financial fraud, have time for the family, and not pretend to be someone else or show off. There is clear evidence of the categorization of people as 'below' and 'above' based on the economic dimension of having less (or nothing) or having much (money, property), but the analysis revealed other significant dimension: 'recognition'. It assesses how justified the high income of 'those above' is and the extent to which 'those below' are responsible for their privation. Thus, in general, a group position in society is viewed in terms of the material and power inequalities (economic characteristics – class dimension) and the symbolic position (recognition – status dimension). The environment at the margins of the society is mostly described as morally deficient, spoiled, and impure (there are though rare and notable exceptions).

While those below are incompetent and live in between filth, laziness, and irresponsibility, the rich are cunning, do not allow decency and rules to restrict their actions, are ready to deceive, cheat, manipulate others, and act snobbishly. Even positively sanctioned behaviour (such as charity) is condemned when it is done ostentatiously. People should not flaunt their money, education, or competence: they should not place themselves above or below others. Ordinary people despise those who do not act naturally and instead try to impress because such behaviour violates the principles of equal treatment, a precondition of trust and solidarity.

The constructed positive identity of the honest person enables the narrators to raise moral claims, criticize and distance themselves from those who do not comply with the norms of the ordinary. The symbolic boundaries between people who deserve recognition and those who do not distinguish the hardworking from the lazy, the responsible from the irresponsible, those capable of taking care of themselves and their family from the incompetent, and the handicapped from those who are responsible for their own situation. There is also the important related question of social solidarity and redistribution, i.e. who and under what conditions should have the right to draw from common funds, who should be helped. According to the narrators, it should be the people who are not responsible for their own situation and are trying to work, to reintegrate. Solidarity should be limited to those who accept these values and norms. Those who do not want to work and contribute to the development and wealth of society should not be entitled to a share of it and should instead be cast out from it–excluded. There is strong condemnation of advantages based on ethnicity (specifically Roma), poverty, or vociferousness that exist to the detriment of groups like seniors or single mothers–those who dropped out of the labour market due to their age or care for dependents. Unfortunately, politicians who decide on the use of public funds are depicted as people who regard their own good, rather than justice, i.e. help those who deserve it.

Czech workers share an ideology of meritocracy. They acknowledge the principle that position should be based on individual merits, i.e. competence combined with performance which refers to status competitive feeling. Even those with minimum incomes strongly oppose egalitarianism. However, this does not mean that everyone agrees on which competences should be rewarded and how. Although politicians and swindler entrepreneurs cannot be denied certain competencies, these do not legitimize their high positions. Only those elites whose pathways to success satisfy the moral criteria occupy a high position in society legitimately. Only those who use their capabilities without violating the rules of decency are evaluated positively and perceived as contributing to social progress, improving the Czech Republic's reputation abroad so that people are proud of it. What's more, they (often) act just like ordinary people and do not show their superiority. According to the narrators, such elites deserve not only symbolic recognition and respect, but also large material rewards.

9. Conclusion: How Do Czechs See the Structure of Their Society?

Jiří Šafr, Julia Häuberer

This volume addressed the issue of the symbolic dimension of stratification. In doing so, instead of describing society in terms of predefined socio-economic categories, the focus was on patterns of social and cultural relations. The interactional-social-distance approach was applied to analyze interaction choices and perceptions of inequalities and thus to assess class / status divisions in Czech society. First, the core of the discussion on social distance here was the affinity between people. Do individuals have a high probability of interaction or not? In particular we focused on subjective social distance, i.e. the willingness of people to interact with others from different groups defined by occupation. Second, on a more general level, we asked how people understand the symbolic space. What concepts and criteria do they use in assigning social groups to it? For the purpose of mapping the symbolic and interactional dimension of the Czech stratification system two data sources were analyzed: first, the quantitative representative survey 'Social Distance 2007', and second, a qualitative analysis of thirty in-depth interviews with members of various status groups.

In the first part focused on social distances, first a modified Bogardus Scale was used to ascertain the subjective social distance to 22 occupational stimuli. Looking at the social distances expressed we found an overall positive willingness to interact with all occupations. This is mainly mediated by the reputation of the target job, since the prestige effect is nearly three times stronger than the 'like-me' effect (i.e. the preference for occupations similar to that of the respondent in terms of socio-economic status). The 'like-me' effect only applies to some extent, mainly among the most distinctive social classes (EGP 5) of professionals and unskilled workers. This finding is also supported by the results for both extreme categories of distance reaction: 'marriage' and 'want nothing to do with him/her'. However, it is impossible to speak of any clearly distinct in-group / out-group class favouritism and/or deprecation which would maintain a well-built inter-class symbolic boundary defined by interaction willingness. A comparison of the stratification-specific social distance of the respondent to the occupation and his/her subjectively perceived social distance reveals that the like-me principle does apply slightly to the high- and low-prestigious professions. For professions with a middle level of prestige, especially gendered professions, the prestige effect is predominant. We also focused on class beliefs as expressed in terms of subjective social distance. More relevant here is status sentiment then explicit class consciousness. However, some very slight class feelings are expressed in consistency with attitudes to social stratification, mostly by working class people. Summing up, we found strong evidence that the prestige effect structures subjective social distance, while the like-me effect is negligible.

The results of objective social distances suggest that like-me effect – principle of differential association – is however very strong in determining actual associations in friendship: about one-half

of Czechs have the best friend from the same class and/or with same educational level. Yet, one quarter of friendship networks (ego and his/her best three friends) are comprised of a class-homogeneous environment. Interactional patterns of occupations are ordered primarily along a status continuum with a distinct gap between white and blue collar. It is necessary to consider the additional dimension to vertical ordering of status/prestige which captures the gender characteristics of the labour market, to some extent.

Besides examining how social distance is produced we dealt with the question of how Czechs rank occupational categories in the stratification system, i.e. whether they perceive strict borders between classes or a status continuum. The first part of analyses of subjective social distances mentioned above already provided one answer to this: the prevalence of the prestige effect points to the existence of a status continuum with specific differentiations. The qualitative study also revealed that Czechs understand society primarily as gradually stratified. Yet, using quantitative data, we found a clear boundary between blue- and white-collar occupations. The attempt to group the 22 occupational stimuli on the basis of social distances in terms of interactional willingness yielded seven groupings. From them, the highest (high experts) and lowest (unskilled workers) can be considered as subjectively perceived classes. Sub-groups of high professional occupations in particular should be regarded as situses. However, one reasonable solution sees four subjectively perceived groupings which may be considered classes derived from interactional willingness: high professionals, lower professionals dominated by women (pink collars), skilled or semi-skilled manual together with routine non-manual workers, and unskilled occupations with low prestige.

The next part of the study focused on beliefs about social stratification and perceptions of inequalities. First, using quantitative data the criteria of social class and images of social strata were analysed. In general with regard to social class images, people in a lower-status position understand class in terms of objective economic factors (wealth, income, profession), whereas people with higher status view it chiefly in terms of cultural factors (education, social standing, lifestyle). We also examined the stratification determination of stereotypes about various social strata. We cannot find any hostility to either the upper strata or the stratification category at the opposite extreme represented by benefits recipients as the underclass. Different feelings are certainly associated with socio-economic standing, although owing to small substantive differences we cannot consider them as class consciousness.

Second, deeper insight into this theme was provided by qualitative survey results. When narrators were asked to state what class they would classify themselves in, most of them (particularly with higher socioeconomic status) rejected the term ‘class’ as such because of their sense of its strong Marxian references. However, Czechs do not hesitate to group themselves in specific strata – most respondents see themselves as belonging to the middle strata/class. This result supports several results from the quantitative study, without using predetermined categories. In particular, it demonstrated the existence of status sentiments in the form of membership in the middle strata, and the absence of concrete class boundaries on account of widespread image of society as differentiated groupings.

The qualitative study also analyzed lay conceptions – ethno-theories of social stratification focused more generally on non-a priori social categories understood as ‘those above’ (like politicians) and ‘those below’ (like the homeless) in the symbolic space, and not necessarily in terms of labour

market position, which often combines more criteria such as ethnicity, gender, wealth (and its deservedness), societal usefulness, morality. The narrators maintain for themselves a positive identity of ordinary – middle class – people, which requires the construction of symbolic boundaries and distancing themselves from particular marginal groups described mostly as morally deficient, spoiled, and impure. When assigning other people (social categories) a position in the symbolic space, two dimensions are decisive: the material and power hierarchy (economic characteristics, i.e. the class/stratum dimension) and the symbolic position within society (recognition, i.e. a status dimension). Their perceived inconsistence is assumed as illegitimate.

Both the surveys and the methods of data analysis we employed to study social distances and the perceptions of inequalities in the social space have provided us with a tool to assess the extent and quality of class/status sentiments. In contemporary Czech society, we cannot really speak of the existence of *corporate class consciousness* in terms of closed group solidarity and cohesiveness, which would subsequently generate potential specific forms of collective action. When actual patterns of association are explored interaction closure between the blue- and white-collar worlds of occupations can be observed to some extent, which is persistent over time. Broadly speaking, on the basis of the symbolic aspects of stratification that we researched, Czech society is a middle class society. In general, it may be described in terms of *competitive status feeling* in which the values of competitiveness are inherent to members of all status/class groupings and people are aware of the permeability of the stratification system in terms of individual merit. However, the findings from the qualitative interviews indicated that Czechs at the same time have doubt about universal functioning of meritocratic criteria in the sense that there is an impression of undeserved wealth which emerged in post-communist transition in some striking cases. Ironically, both these phenomena are the legacy of post-1989 development towards an open society.

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Appendix

Table A.1.1. Social Class EGP5 and Self-identified Subjective Classes, column percentages and adjusted residuals, average values of ISEI and SIOPS

	Self-identified Subjective Class (4)				
	Upper–Middle	Middle	Low. Middle	Lower/	Total Working
Professionals/Employers	62.5	36.9	22.7	1.7	27.2%
	(7.0)	**(6.4)**	**(-2.0)**	**(-9.8)**	
Selfemployed	8.3	5.9	5.3	1.7	5.0%
	(1.3)	(1.2)	(0.3)	**(-2.6)**	
Routine non-manuals – Clerks	12.5	14.4	11.7	3.9	11.3%
	(0.3)	**(2.9)**	(0.3)	**(-4.0)**	
Skilled workers	1.4	22.2	27.7	29.1	23.8%
	(-4.6)	(-1.0)	(1.8)	**(2.2)**	
Unskilled workers & Routine non-manuals	15.3	20.6	32.6	63.5	32.8%
	(-3.3)	**(-7.6)**	(-0.1)	**(11.2)**	
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Subjective Class	6.8%	44.7%	26.7%	21.8%	100%
Average ISEI	53	44	38	29	
Average SIOPS	49	42	38	31	

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 1056.
Note: χ^2= 0.02; df=12; α=0.000, CC = 0.43 Kendall's tau-b = 0.38
abs(z): >= 1.96, in bold.

Table A.3.1. p-values of Analysis of Covariances among the 5 classes

	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.
I. Professionals	x	0.116	0.362	0.117	0.017
II. Self-employed		x	0.499	0.893	0.547
III. Non-manual routine clerks			x	0.555	0.173
IV. Skilled workers				x	0.42
V. Unskilled workers					x

Source: Social Distance 2007, N= 717 (listwise).

Table A.4.1. Means differences of social distance scales for pairs of occupational stimuli in three self-identified social classes, T-test

	Class	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v
a. Owner - store	Upper		**0.34**	0.47	0.42	**-0.50**	**-0.15**	-0.97	-0.92	-0.87	-1.56	-1.81	-1.31	-0.87	-1.77	-1.52	-2.11	-2.21	-2.74	-1.60	**-0.45**	**-0.19**	**-0.13**
	Middle		**0.00**	0.56	0.29	-0.62	**0.01**	-0.62	-0.79	-1.06	-1.15	-1.35	-1.01	-0.64	-1.61	-1.44	-2.18	-2.15	-2.59	-1.54	-0.55	-0.28	-0.25
	Lower		-0.36	0.35	**-0.04**	-0.76	**-0.01**	-0.75	-0.93	-1.17	-1.09	-0.98	-0.87	-0.33	-1.14	-1.01	-1.82	-1.79	-2.33	-1.17	-1.01	-0.70	-0.66
b. Top executive	Upper			**0.13**	**0.08**	-0.84	**-0.48**	-1.31	-1.26	-1.21	-1.90	-2.15	-1.65	-1.21	-2.11	-1.85	-2.45	-2.55	-3.08	-1.94	-0.79	-0.53	-0.47
	Middle			0.56	0.29	-0.62	**0.01**	-0.62	-0.79	-1.06	-1.15	-1.35	-1.01	-0.64	-1.61	-1.44	-2.18	-2.15	-2.59	-1.54	-0.55	-0.28	-0.25
	Lower			0.72	0.32	-0.40	0.36	-0.39	-0.57	-0.81	-0.73	-0.62	-0.50	**0.03**	-0.78	-0.64	-1.46	-1.43	-1.97	-0.81	-0.65	-0.34	-0.30
c. Physician (doctor)	Upper				**-0.05**	-0.97	-0.61	-1.44	-1.39	-1.34	-2.03	-2.27	-1.77	-1.34	-2.24	-1.98	-2.58	-2.68	-3.21	-2.06	-0.92	-0.66	-0.60
	Middle				-0.27	-1.18	-0.56	-1.18	-1.35	-1.63	-1.72	-1.92	-1.57	-1.20	-2.17	-2.00	-2.74	-2.72	-3.15	-2.11	-1.11	-0.84	-0.81
	Lower				-0.39	-1.11	-0.36	-1.11	-1.29	-1.52	-1.44	-1.33	-1.22	-0.68	-1.50	-1.36	-2.17	-2.14	-2.68	-1.52	-1.37	-1.06	-1.02
d. Lawyer	Upper					-0.92	-0.56	-1.39	-1.34	-1.29	-1.98	-2.23	-1.73	-1.29	-2.19	-1.94	-2.53	-2.63	-3.16	-2.02	-0.87	-0.61	-0.55
	Middle					-0.91	-0.28	-0.91	-1.08	-1.35	-1.44	-1.65	-1.30	-0.93	-1.90	-1.73	-2.47	-2.44	-2.88	-1.84	-0.84	-0.57	-0.54
	Lower					-0.72	**0.03**	-0.72	-0.90	-1.13	-1.05	-0.94	-0.83	-0.29	-1.10	-0.97	-1.78	-1.75	-2.29	-1.13	-0.97	-0.66	-0.62
e. Teacher	Upper						0.35	-0.47	-0.42	**-0.37**	-1.06	-1.31	-0.81	**-0.37**	-1.27	-1.02	-1.61	-1.71	-2.24	-1.10	**0.05**	**0.31**	**0.37**
	Middle						0.62	**0.00**	**-0.17**	-0.45	-0.54	-0.74	-0.39	**-0.02**	-0.99	-0.82	-1.56	-1.54	-1.97	-0.93	**0.06**	0.34	0.37
	Lower						0.75	**0.01**	**-0.17**	-0.41	-0.33	**-0.22**	**-0.11**	0.43	-0.38	-0.25	-1.06	-1.03	-1.57	-0.41	-0.25	**0.06**	**0.10**
f. Nurse	Upper							-0.82	-0.77	-0.73	-1.42	-1.66	-1.16	-0.73	-1.63	-1.37	-1.97	-2.06	-2.60	-1.45	**-0.31**	**-0.05**	**0.02**
	Middle							-0.62	-0.79	-1.07	-1.16	-1.36	-1.02	-0.65	-1.61	-1.44	-2.18	-2.16	-2.60	-1.55	-0.56	-0.28	-0.25
	Lower							-0.75	-0.93	-1.16	-1.08	-0.97	-0.86	-0.32	-1.14	-1.00	-1.81	-1.78	-2.32	-1.16	-1.01	-0.70	-0.66
g. Accountant	Upper								**0.05**	**0.10**	-0.60	-0.84	**-0.34**	**0.10**	-0.81	-0.55	-1.15	-1.24	-1.77	-0.63	0.52	0.77	0.84
	Middle								-0.17	-0.45	-0.54	-0.74	-0.39	**-0.02**	-0.99	-0.82	-1.56	-1.54	-1.97	-0.93	**0.06**	0.34	0.37
	Lower								-0.18	-0.41	-0.34	-0.22	**-0.11**	0.43	-0.39	-0.25	-1.06	-1.04	-1.57	-0.41	-0.26	**0.05**	**0.09**
h. Secretary	Upper									**0.05**	-0.65	-0.89	**-0.39**	**0.05**	-0.85	-0.60	-1.19	-1.29	-1.82	-0.68	0.47	0.73	0.79
	Middle									-0.28	-0.37	-0.57	-0.22	**0.15**	-0.82	-0.65	-1.39	-1.37	-1.80	-0.76	0.23	0.51	0.54
	Lower									-0.23	**-0.16**	**-0.04**	**0.07**	0.60	**-0.21**	**-0.07**	-0.88	-0.86	-1.40	-0.23	**-0.08**	0.23	0.27
i. Policeman	Upper										-0.69	-0.94	**-0.44**	**0.00**	-0.90	-0.65	-1.24	-1.34	-1.87	-0.73	**0.42**	0.68	0.74
	Middle										**-0.09**	-0.29	**0.05**	0.42	-0.54	-0.37	-1.11	-1.09	-1.53	-0.48	0.51	0.78	0.82
	Lower										**0.08**	**0.19**	0.30	0.84	**0.03**	**0.16**	-0.65	-0.62	-1.16	**0.00**	**0.16**	0.47	0.51
j. Nurse	Upper											**-0.24**	**0.26**	0.69	**-0.21**	**0.05**	-0.55	-0.65	-1.18	**-0.03**	1.11	1.37	1.44
	Middle											-0.20	**0.14**	0.51	-0.46	-0.28	-1.02	-1.00	-1.44	-0.39	0.60	0.87	0.91
	Lower											**0.11**	0.22	0.76	**-0.05**	**0.08**	-0.73	-0.70	-1.24	**-0.08**	**0.08**	0.39	0.43
k. Shop assistant	Upper												0.50	0.94	**0.03**	**0.29**	**-0.31**	-0.40	-0.94	**0.21**	1.35	1.61	1.68
	Middle												0.34	0.72	-0.25	**-0.08**	-0.82	-0.80	-1.24	-0.19	0.80	1.08	1.11
	Lower												**0.11**	0.65	**-0.16**	**-0.03**	-0.84	-0.81	-1.35	-0.19	**-0.03**	0.28	0.32
l. Joiner	Upper													0.44	-0.47	**-0.21**	-0.81	-0.90	-1.44	**-0.29**	0.85	1.11	1.18
	Middle													0.37	-0.60	-0.43	-1.16	-1.14	-1.58	-0.53	0.46	0.73	0.77
	Lower													0.54	-0.28	**-0.14**	-0.95	-0.92	-1.46	-0.30	**-0.14**	**0.16**	**0.20**
m. Auto-mechanic	Upper														-0.90	-0.65	-1.24	-1.34	-1.87	-0.73	**0.42**	0.68	0.74
	Middle														-0.97	-0.80	-1.54	-1.51	-1.95	-0.91	**0.09**	0.36	0.39
	Lower														-0.81	-0.68	-1.49	-1.46	-2.00	-0.84	-0.68	-0.37	-0.33
n. Worker in a factory	Upper															**0.26**	**-0.34**	-0.44	-0.97	**0.18**	1.32	1.58	1.65
	Middle															0.17	-0.57	-0.54	-0.98	**0.06**	1.06	1.33	1.36
	Lower															**0.14**	-0.68	-0.65	-1.19	**-0.03**	**0.13**	0.44	0.48
o. Truck driver	Upper																-0.60	-0.69	-1.23	**-0.08**	1.06	1.32	1.39
	Middle																-0.74	-0.72	-1.15	**-0.11**	0.89	1.16	1.19
	Lower																-0.81	-0.78	-1.32	**-0.16**	**-0.01**	0.30	0.34
p. Cleaner	Upper																	**-0.10**	-0.63	0.52	1.66	1.92	1.98
	Middle																	**0.02**	-0.42	0.63	1.62	1.90	1.93
	Lower																	**0.03**	-0.51	0.65	0.81	1.11	1.16
q. Unsk. constr. worker	Upper																		-0.53	0.61	1.76	2.02	2.08
	Middle																		-0.44	0.61	1.60	1.87	1.91
	Lower																		-0.54	0.62	0.78	1.09	1.13
r. Street sweeper	Upper																			1.15	2.29	2.55	2.61
	Middle																			1.05	2.04	2.31	2.35
	Lower																			1.16	1.32	1.63	1.67
s. Factory foreman	Upper																				1.15	1.40	1.47
	Middle																				0.99	1.27	1.30
	Lower																				**0.16**	0.47	0.51
t. Univ. professor	Upper																					**0.26**	**0.32**
	Middle																					0.27	0.31
	Lower																					0.31	0.35
u. Programmer	Upper																						**0.06**
	Middle																						**0.03**
	Lower																						**0.04**
v. Draftsman	Upper																						
	Middle																						
	Lower																						

Source: Social Distance 2007 N= 799 (listwise).

Note: Bold numbers indicate *insignificant* differences, i.e. the same social distance in a given social class, (pair T-tests with $p < 0.05$).

Table A.5.1. 3 friends' and respondent's occupation – 25 occupational categories. Proximity matrix (correlations).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
1 **Self-employed – Professionals**	1.00																								
2 **Self-employed – Crafts, Service**	0.53	1.00																							
3 **Managers, Officials**	0.49	0.47	1.00																						
4 **Hi. Professionals – Technical**	0.54	0.31	0.53	1.00																					
5 **Hi. Professionals – Teaching**	0.55	0.12	0.24	0.46	1.00																				
6 **Hi. Professionals – Other**	0.48	0.17	0.52	0.27	0.38	1.00																			
7 **Asc. Professionals – Technicians**	0.29	0.41	0.51	0.53	0.04	0.18	1.00																		
8 **Asc. Professionals – Health**	0.38	0.31	0.08	0.17	0.17	0.54	0.28	1.00																	
9 **Asc. Professionals – Finance**	0.71	0.54	0.61	0.45	0.53	0.63	0.41	0.35	1.00																
10 **Asc. Professionals – Other**	0.67	0.13	0.43	0.57	0.44	0.42	0.16	0.16	0.38	1.00															
11 **Low Administrative**	0.72	0.47	0.43	0.54	0.51	0.52	0.27	0.29	0.84	0.55	1.00														
12 **Service – Food**	0.23	0.54	0.16	0.28	-0.01	-0.01	0.33	0.11	0.37	-0.04	0.25	1.00													
13 **Service – Personal**	0.00	-0.06	-0.31	0.00	-0.12	-0.07	-0.20	0.22	0.03	0.01	0.21	0.32	1.00												
14 **Service – Security**	-0.08	0.10	-0.07	-0.15	-0.12	-0.16	0.01	-0.14	-0.04	-0.11	-0.12	-0.06	-0.13	1.00											
15 **Workers – Agriculture**	0.45	0.44	0.27	0.27	0.40	0.22	0.30	0.20	0.64	0.18	0.62	0.36	-0.09	-0.08	1.00										
16 **Foremen**	-0.03	0.17	0.28	0.25	-0.22	-0.16	0.60	-0.03	-0.02	0.12	0.07	0.17	0.07	-0.07	0.13	1.00									
17 **Skilled Workers – Building**	-0.17	0.23	0.16	-0.06	-0.25	-0.27	0.37	-0.20	-0.10	-0.19	-0.30	0.41	-0.30	0.08	0.04	0.21	1.00								
18 **Skilled Workers – Metal**	-0.04	0.28	0.29	0.27	-0.16	-0.19	0.75	-0.05	0.03	0.05	-0.04	0.43	-0.17	0.07	0.28	0.66	0.59	1.00							
19 **Skilled Workers – Clothing**	0.02	0.11	-0.20	-0.13	-0.12	-0.17	0.08	-0.12	0.06	-0.08	0.12	0.10	0.01	-0.15	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.08	1.00						
20 **Skilled Workers – Other**	-0.04	0.23	0.00	0.01	-0.16	-0.28	0.32	-0.12	0.05	-0.04	0.06	0.25	-0.09	0.03	0.45	0.42	0.28	0.60	0.36	1.00					
21 **Semisk. Workers – Manufacture**	0.10	0.52	0.10	0.23	-0.03	-0.13	0.38	0.07	0.14	-0.03	0.26	0.38	0.00	0.03	0.60	0.43	0.22	0.50	0.32	0.60	1.00				
22 **Semisk. Workers – Drivers**	0.01	0.38	0.22	0.14	-0.13	-0.15	0.65	-0.02	0.11	-0.06	-0.01	0.54	-0.21	0.09	0.26	0.38	0.71	0.84	0.11	0.50	0.50	1.00			
23 **Labourers – Sales service**	0.15	0.43	-0.02	0.14	0.01	-0.01	0.19	0.14	0.29	0.11	0.43	0.51	0.20	-0.06	0.53	0.41	0.07	0.26	0.44	0.56	0.69	0.37	1.00		
24 **Labourers – Service**	-0.07	0.29	-0.18	-0.05	-0.09	-0.15	0.08	0.12	0.04	-0.08	0.07	0.32	0.11	-0.10	0.24	0.05	0.29	0.29	0.45	0.43	0.53	0.37	0.44	1.00	
25 **Unskilled Labourers – Manufacture**	0.03	0.30	-0.03	0.24	-0.08	-0.07	0.30	0.04	0.09	0.07	0.09	0.39	0.04	-0.02	0.31	0.25	0.42	0.37	0.48	0.54	0.69	0.42	0.57	0.70	1.00

Source: Social Distance 2007, N = 2890

Note: occupational categories based on ISCO88. The total N of 2890 friendship pairs (for 3 friends).

Summary

The objective of this volume is to explore the symbolic boundaries that contribute to social hierarchies in the symbolic stratification space. Generally, the question of class or status identity formation is addressed through social interaction. The first chapter provides a theoretical introduction to the relational notion of inequality. A culturalistic approach to class analysis–focusing on how cultural practices contribute to the origin of symbolic boundaries and a view of classes as empirical clusters–is introduced, along with a review of different concepts and definitions of social distance. Of special interest is the interactional conception of social distance, in terms of affinity (subjective distance) and different patterns of associations, such as friendship (objective distance) [Laumann 1966].

The next three chapters study subjective social distance, i.e. interactional willingness related to given occupational stimuli, as researched through the population-representative survey Social Distances 2007. In the second chapter, the use and descriptive statistics of a subjective social-distance scales towards 22 occupations is introduced, together with a comparison with other stratification scales (ISEI, SIOPS) and with an evaluation of the usefulness to society of the same set of professions indicating both scales are measuring slightly different aspects. The analysis also finds that the scales of subjective distance are not significantly influenced by either the gender of the respondent or the gender characteristics of the target occupation.

The third chapter focuses on how distinct mechanisms–closeness (like-me) and looking up (prestige)–work to form social distances. The prestige effect is by far the more prevalent (nearly three times stronger). The like-me effect applies only to a limited extent, mainly among the most distinctive social classes of professionals and unskilled workers. So it is impossible to speak of any clear in-group/out-group class favouritism or deprecation that would maintain a firm interclass symbolic boundary. In addition, subjective social distance is an expression of class beliefs. Results of interclass differences (EGP) point to the presence of status sentiment rather than explicit class-consciousness. Only some very slight class feelings are expressed consistently with attitudes about social stratification, mostly by working-class respondents.

The fourth chapter examines the existence of subjectively experienced classes. Matrix of similarity between pairs of occupational stimuli was in the first step transferred to a two-dimensional space. The prestige effect points to a dominant status continuum, in which there is a boundary between blue- and white-collar occupations. Furthermore, occupational stimuli were first clustered into seven groupings. Among these, the highest (high experts) and lowest (unskilled workers) can be considered as distinct subjectively perceived classes. Yet, some subgroups should be regarded as situses. Finally, occupations were grouped into four subjective classes: high professionals, lower professionals in fields dominated by women (pink-collars), skilled or semi-skilled manual and routine non-manual workers, and unskilled workers with low prestige.

The fifth chapter deals with objective social distance in terms of actual patterns of association in egocentric social networks (respondent's three best friends). The homophily, or like-me, effect is very strong and persistent over time in determining friendship: About one half of Czechs have a best friend of the same class or with same educational level. Moreover, one quarter of friendship networks (ego and three best friends), comprise a class-homogeneous environment. Furthermore, analysis of the association among 25 occupational categories, employing multidimensional scaling of a proximity matrix of friendship pairs, showed that interactional patterns are ordered primarily along a status continuum, supplemented with a dimension of gender characteristics, with a distinct gap between white and blue collar.

The volume next explores stratification beliefs and perceptions of inequalities. The sixth chapter is concerned with people's images of social classes and the attribution of traits to various strata. People with lower status understand class in terms of objective economic factors (wealth, income, profession), whereas those with higher status define it chiefly in terms of cultural factors (education, social standing, lifestyle). Concerning trait attribution (laziness, ignorance, selfishness, irresponsibility), no hostility was found toward either the upper strata or the benefits recipients (underclass). Generally, only members of the upper class and the lower or working class view themselves relatively better than do other classes.

This issue is pursued in greater detail in the following part, using narrative data from a qualitative study focused on the perception of inequalities. In-depth interviews were conducted with thirty men and women, with various educational backgrounds and social statuses, living in Prague or Liberec. The seventh chapter introduces a description of what the concept of class evokes and what criteria people employ in understanding social class. Narrators of higher status reject the term 'class' as such, because of their sense of its strong Marxian overtones. However, they do not hesitate to group themselves in specific strata. Most respondents see themselves as belonging to the middle strata or class. This demonstrates the existence of status sentiments in the form of membership in the middle strata, as well as the absence of concrete class boundaries.

The eighth chapter examines lay conceptions – ethno-theories of social stratification, focused more generally on non–a priori social categories and not necessarily in terms of labour market position, understood as 'those above' and 'those below'. These concepts often combine a number of criteria, such as ethnicity, gender, wealth, societal usefulness, morality. Most narrators maintain an identity of ordinary, middle class people. When assigning other people to a position in the symbolic space, two dimensions are decisive: the material and power hierarchy and a person's symbolic position within society (recognition). Perceived inconsistency of these dimensions is assumed to be illegitimate.

In general terms, both studies reveal that substantial corporate class-consciousness is not present. Contemporary Czech society may be better described in terms of competitive status feeling, with values of competitiveness inherent to all strata/classes and a widespread awareness of the permeability of the stratification system based on individual merit. Yet, this is cast into doubt by a widespread impression of undeserved wealth that emerged during the post-communist transition in some striking cases.

Shrnutí

Studie přináší souhrnné výsledky dvou výzkumů, které si kladly za cíl prozkoumat, jak symbolické hranice přispívají ke vzniku sociálních hierarchií ve stratifikačním prostoru. Otázka třídně/statusové identity je zde obecně chápána prismatem sociální interakce. První kapitola uvádí teoretický přístup k relačnímu pojetí nerovností. Představuje kulturalistické pojetí třídní analýzy, které obrací pozornost k roli kulturní praxe při utváření symbolických hranic a rovněž nahlíží na sociální třídy jako na empirické shluky. Dále uvádí přehled odlišných sociologických konceptů sociální distance. Pozornost je věnována interakčnímu pojetí sledujícímu míru afinity (subjektivní distance) a odlišné vzorce sdružování, např. v přátelských vazbách (objektivní distance) [Laumann 1966].

Následující tři kapitoly zkoumají subjektivní distance, tj. ochotu k interakci s profesními kategoriemi, které byly sledovány v rámci reprezentativního šetření Sociální distance 2007. Nejprve druhá kapitola uvádí metodu a popisné statistiky škál subjektivní distance k 22 profesím. Rovněž je porovnává s jinými stratifikačními škálami (ISEI, SIOPS) a podrobněji také s hodnocením společenské užitečnosti stejného souboru 22 profesí. Celkově jsou oba koncepty podobné, z hlediska subjektivní stránky stratifikace se však jedná o poněkud odlišná měřítka. Analýza dále ukazuje, že distance nejsou podstatnějším způsobem genderově podmíněny – ani pohlavím respondenta ani genderovými charakteristikami hodnocených profesí.

Třetí kapitola sleduje, jak jsou subjektivní distance utvářeny mechanismy podobnosti (like-me) a „vzhlížení“ (prestiž). Efekt referenční prestiže zřetelně převažuje (je přibližně třikrát větší). Vliv podobnosti se projevuje pouze velmi slabě mezi respondenty z krajních pólů třídního postavení – vysokých odborníků a nekvalifikovaných dělníků. Nelze proto hovořit o existenci předpojatosti ani o odsuzování profesí z odlišných kategorií, než je sám jedinec. Sociální distance rovněž odráží třídní postoje. Analýza třídní (EGP) podmíněnosti distancí ukazuje na to, že spíše než o vyhraněném třídním vědomí je třeba uvažovat o statusovém smýšlení. Pouze velmi slabé třídní postoje – preference vlastní skupiny, které jsou v souladu s dalšími postoji ke stratifikačnímu uspořádání – jsou vyjadřovány skupinou dělníků.

Čtvrtá kapitola zkoumá existenci subjektivně vnímaných tříd. Silný vliv efektu referenční prestiže vede k tomu, že v představách převažuje statusové kontinuum, v němž je patrná hranice mezi profesemi s bílými a modrými límečky. Další analýza ukázala, že v rámci tohoto kontinua lze identifikovat sedm seskupení, z nichž ty nejvýše a nejníže postavené – vysocí odborníci a nekvalifikované pomocné profese – lze označit za jednoznačné třídní, zatímco některé je lépe považovat za situsová seskupení. Tato seskupení lze dále sloučit do čtyř klastrů profesí – subjektivně vnímaných tříd: vysocí odborníci, odborné ženské profese, manuální a rutinně nemanuální pracovníci a nekvalifikované povolání s nízkou prestiží.

Objektivními sociálními distancemi danými skutečnými vzorci asociací v egocentrických sociálních sítích (tři nejlepší přátelé respondenta) se zabývá pátá kapitola. Zde je mechanismus homophily (like-me) velmi silný, navíc je dlouhodobě přítomný: přibližně u poloviny respondentů pochází jejich nejlepší přítel ze stejné třídy nebo má stejné vzdělání. Nadto jedna čtvrtina přátelských sítí (respondent a jeho tři přátelé) je složena z třídně zcela homogenního prostředí. Další analýza asociací mezi 25 profesními kategoriemi, použita byla metoda multidimenzionálního škálování pro matici podobnosti, ukazuje, že interakční vzorce jsou uspořádány primárně podél statusového kontinua – spolu s doplňující dimenzí genderových charakteristik profesí – se zřetelnou hranicí mezi manuálními a nemanuálními profesemi.

Druhá část se věnuje představám o stratifikaci a percepcím nerovností. Šestá kapitola pojednává o významech sociální třídy a připisování vlastností společenským vrstvám. Lidé s nízkým statusem chápou třídu zejména z hlediska ekonomických faktorů (bohatství, příjem, prefese), zatímco respondenti s vysokým statusem prostřednictvím kulturních faktorů (vzdělání, sociální postavení, životní styl). V kategoriálním myšlení sledovaným jako připisování určitých vlastností skupině (lenost, hloupost, sobeckost, nezodpovědnost) se v hodnocení ani jedné ze skupin, tedy ani vůči krajním pólům vyšších vrstev a příjemců sociálních dávek (underclass), neprojevuje nepřátelskost. Pouze reprezentanti vyšších tříd a nižší/dělnické třídy hodnotí svou vlastní kategorii ve srovnání s příslušníky ostatních tříd pozitivněji.

Následující kapitoly se věnují tomuto tématu podrobněji v analýze narativních dat z kvalitativního výzkumu zaměřeného na percepce nerovností. Hloubkové rozhovory s 30 muži a ženami odlišné vzdělanostní úrovně a sociálního zázemí byly provedeny v Praze a Liberci. Sedmá kapitola nejprve uvádí, co evokuje pojem sociální třídy a jaká kritéria při chápání tohoto pojmu lidé používají. Respondenti (s vyšším statusem zejména) vesměs pojem „třída“ odmítají vzhledem k jeho marxistické minulosti. Na druhou stranu neváhají zařazovat sebe i ostatní do sociálních vrstev, přičemž se sami nejčastěji identifikují se středními vrstvami (třídami). To ukazuje na převažující způsob uvažování o společenském postavení v prizmatu sociálních vrstev a na absenci zřetelných třídních hranic.

Laické koncepce a etnoteorie stratifikace dále sleduje osmá kapitola. Zaměřuje se na obecnější neapriorně definované sociální kategorie, které nejsou nezbytně chápány v souvislosti s postavením na pracovním trhu. Analýza zkoumá, které skupiny/kategorie jsou považovány ve společnosti „nahoře“ a „dole“. Při umisťování těchto kategorií respondenti kombinují více kritérií jako etnicitu, gender, bohatství, společenskou užitečnost a morálnost. Souběžně tak budují vlastní pozitivní identitu běžného člověka – střední třídy. Pro určování pozice v symbolickém prostoru jsou podstatné dvě dimenze: materiální a mocenské hierarchie a symbolického postavení ve společnosti (uznání). Pokud dochází k jejich vzájemné nekonzistenci, pak je takové postavení považováno za nelegitimní.

Celkově vzato, výsledky obou výzkumů ukazují na to, že v českém prostředí dnes nelze hovořit o existenci korporátní formy třídního vědomí projevujícího se jako uzavřená skupinová solidarita a silná koheze s výrazným potenciálem pro kolektivní jednání. Současná česká společnost se vyznačuje spíše tzv. kompetitivním statusovým vědomím, v němž jsou hodnoty soutěživosti vlastní příslušníkům všech statusových a třídních seskupení, kteří si jsou vědomi prostupnosti stratifikačního systému na základě individuálního úsilí. Univerzální fungování výkonových kritérií je nicméně narušeno rozšířenou představou často nezaslouženého zbohatnutí, které se v některých očividných případech objevilo během postkomunistické transformace.

Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende soziologische Studie analysiert zwei Erhebungen zur Frage wie symbolische Grenzen zur Entstehung sozialer Hierarchien im sozialen Raum beitragen. Die Frage der Klassen- oder Statusidentität wird hier allgemein im Focus sozialer Interaktionen betrachtet. Im ersten Kapitel werden theoretische Ansätze zur Erklärung von Ungleichheiten durch soziale Beziehungen eingeführt. Vorgestellt wird der kulturtheoretische Ansatz der Klassenanalyse, welcher analysiert wie kulturelle Praxis symbolische Grenzen erzeugt und soziale Klassen ebenfalls als empirische Cluster versteht. Des Weiteren werden verschiedene soziologische Konzepte sozialer Distanz dargestellt. Von besonderem Interesse ist hierbei die Konzeption sozialer Distanz in Interaktionen, d.h. der Grad der Affinität (subjektive Distanzen) und verschiedene Muster des miteinander Verkehrens, z.B. unter Freunden (objektive Distanzen) [Laumann 1966].

In den folgenden drei Kapiteln werden subjektive Distanzen untersucht, d.h. die Interaktionsbereitschaften bezüglich Berufskategorien, die im Rahmen des repräsentativen Surveys Sociální distance 2007 (Soziale Distanz 2007) erhoben wurden. Im zweiten Kapitel wird die verwendete Methode vorgestellt und allgemeine Ergebnisse beschreibender Statistik der Skalen subjektiver Distanzen für 22 Berufe aufgeführt. Zudem werden diese Skalen auch mit anderen Stratifikationsskalen (ISEI, SIOPS) sowie der Bewertung des gesellschaftlichen Nutzens dieser 22 Berufe verglichen. Insgesamt ähneln sich beide Konzepte (soziale Distanz und gesellschaftlicher Nutzen), messen jedoch verschiedene Aspekte der Stratifizierung. Die Analyse zeigt des Weiteren, dass die Distanzen weder durch das Geschlecht des/der Befragten noch durch die Gender-Merkmale der bewerteten Berufe wesentlich bedingt sind.

Das dritte Kapitel untersucht, wie durch Mechanismen der Affinität (like-me) und des „Aufschauens“ (Prestige) subjektive Distanzen geprägt werden. Es überwiegt der Effekt des Referenz-Prestiges (der ungefähr drei Mal größer ist als der des like-me Effekts). Der Einfluss des like-me Effekts äußert sich nur sehr schwach im Vergleich der Extremkategorien der Befragten, d.h. zwischen hochqualifizierten Fachkräften und unqualifizierten Arbeitern. Daher kann man weder von einer Favorisierung der eigenen Gruppe noch von einer Verurteilung anderer Berufsgruppen sprechen, was zu einer starken symbolischen Abgrenzung zwischen den Klassen führen würde. Soziale Distanzen spiegeln gleichfalls eine Art Klassenbewusstsein wider. Die Ergebnisse der Analyse von Klassenunterschieden (EGP) in den Distanzen deuten darauf hin, dass eher von einem Statusdenken als von ausgesprochenem Klassenbewusstsein auszugehen ist. Lediglich in der Gruppe der Arbeiter ist ein – wenn auch gering ausgeprägtes – Klassenbewusstsein, bzw. die Bevorzugung der eigenen Gruppe zu finden, in den anderen Gruppen nicht.

Im vierten Kapitel wird die Existenz subjektiv wahrgenommener Klassen untersucht. Der starke Einfluss des Referenz-Prestiges auf die sozialen Distanzen führt dazu, dass in den Vorstellungen ein

Statuskontinuum überwiegt, in dem die Grenze zwischen Handwerks- (blue-collar) und Angestelltenberufen (white-collar) deutlich wird. Weitere Analysen zeigen, dass im Rahmen dieses Kontinuums sieben Gruppierungen identifiziert werden können, von denen lediglich die jeweils höchste und niedrigste – hoch qualifizierte Fachleute und unqualifizierte Arbeitskräfte – als eindeutige Klassen bezeichnet werden können, während die übrigen eher als „Situs"-Gruppierungen betrachtet werden sollten. Diese Gruppierungen lassen sich weiterhin in vier Berufscluster, bzw. subjektiv wahrgenommene Klassen zusammenfassen: hochqualifizierte Fachkräfte, frauentypische Berufe, manuelle und nicht-manuelle Routinearbeiten und unqualifizierte Arbeitskräfte mit geringem Prestige.

Im fünften Kapitel werden die durch tatsächliche Interaktionsmuster in egozentrierten sozialen Netzwerken (drei beste Freunde des Respondenten) gegebenen objektiven sozialen Distanzen betrachtet. Hier ist der Mechanismus des „like-me" sehr stark ausgeprägt und überdies langfristig präsent: Ungefähr bei der Hälfte der Befragten stammen die besten Freunde aus der gleichen Klasse oder haben den gleichen Bildungsgrad. Darüber hinaus setzt sich ein Viertel der Freundschaftsnetzwerke (Respondent und seine drei Freunde) aus einem sozial homogenen Umfeld zusammen. Die weitere Analyse der Komposition der Freundesnetzwerke unterteilt in 25 Berufskategorien, unter Verwendung multidimensionaler Skalierung für Ähnlichkeitsmatrizen, zeigt, dass die Interaktionsmuster primär entlang eines Statuskontinuums angeordnet sind, ergänzt mit einer Dimension der Gender-Merkmale der Berufe, wobei eine deutliche Grenze zwischen blue and white collar Berufen besteht.

Der zweite Teil ist den Vorstellungen der Befragten über die Stratifizierung und der Perzeption von Ungleichheiten gewidmet. Im sechsten Kapitel werden die Bedeutung der sozialen Klassen und die Zuschreibung von Eigenschaften zu gesellschaftlichen Schichten betrachtet. Menschen mit niedrigem Status begreifen „Klasse" insbesondere hinsichtlich ökonomischer Faktoren (Reichtum, Einkommen, Beruf), während Menschen mit höherem Status sie über kulturelle Faktoren erfassen (Bildung, soziale Stellung, Lebensstil). Im Kategoriendenken, das als Zuschreibung bestimmter Eigenschaften (Faulheit, Dummheit, Egoismus, Verantwortungslosigkeit) zu einer Gruppe erfragt wurde, äußerte sich gegenüber keiner Kategorie Feindseligkeit, was auch für die Extreme, d.h. obere Schichten bzw. Sozialhilfeempfänger (Unterschicht) gilt. Lediglich die Vertreter der höheren Klassen und der niedrigeren bzw. Arbeiterklassen bewerten ihre eigene Kategorie im Vergleich zu den Angehörigen übriger Klassen positiver.

Die folgenden Kapitel analysieren dieses Thema noch detaillierter unter Verwendung narrativer Daten einer qualitativen Erhebung zur Perzeption von Ungleichheiten. Tiefeninterviews mit 30 Männern und Frauen unterschiedlicher Bildungsgrade und sozialer Herkunft wurden in Prag und Liberec geführt. Im siebten Kapitel wird zunächst erläutert, welche Assoziation der Begriff „soziale Klasse" beim Befragten hervorruft und welche Kriterien zum Verständnis dieses Begriffs verwendet werden. Angesichts seiner marxistischen Vergangenheit wird der Begriff „Klasse" von den Befragten (insbesondere jener mit höherem sozialen Status) abgelehnt. Auf der anderen Seite zögern diese nicht, sich oder andere einer sozialen Schicht zuzuordnen, wobei sich die Selbstidentifikation am häufigsten auf die mittleren Schichten (Klassen) bezieht. Auch dies weist auf ein überwiegendes Statusgefühl der Zugehörigkeit zur Mittelschicht und auf die Abwesenheit deutlicher Klassengrenzen hin.

Im achten Kapitel werden Laienkonzeptionen, bzw. Ethnotheorien der Stratifizierung aufgezeigt. Das Kapitel befasst sich mit allgemeinen nicht a priori definierten sozialen Kategorien, die nicht unbedingt im Zusammenhang mit der Stellung auf dem Arbeitsmarkt gesehen werden. Es wird unter-

sucht, welche Gruppen/Kategorien in der Gesellschaft als „oben“ und „unten“ stehend angesehen werden. Bei der Zuordnung dieser Kategorien kombinieren die Befragten mehrere Kriterien, wie ethnische Zugehörigkeit, Geschlecht, Reichtum, gesellschaftlichen Nutzen und Moral. Gleichzeitig bauen sie dadurch eine eigene positive Identität als Angehörige der Mittelschicht auf. Für die Bestimmung der Position im symbolischen Raum sind zwei Dimensionen von grundlegender Bedeutung: die materielle Hierarchie und Machthierarchie sowie die symbolische Stellung in der Gesellschaft (Anerkennung). Kommt es zu einer Inkonsistenz dieser Dimensionen, so wird diese Position als nicht legitim angesehen.

Insgesamt zeigen beide Erhebungen, dass man heutzutage im tschechischen Umfeld nicht von der Existenz eines korporativen Klassenbewusstseins sprechen kann, welches sich in einer geschlossenen Gruppensolidarität und starker Kohäsion mit einem ausgeprägten Potential für kollektives Handeln äußern würde. Die heutige tschechische Gesellschaft zeichnet sich eher durch so genanntes kompetitives Statusbewusstsein aus, in dem die Werte des gesellschaftlichen Wettbewerbs bei den Angehörigen aller Status- und Klassengruppierungen vorherrschend sind. Zudem sind diese sich der Durchlässigkeit des Stratifikationssystems aufgrund individueller Leistung bewusst. Die universelle Gültigkeit dieser Leistungskriterien wird jedoch durch die weit verbreitete Auffassung gestört, dass im Rahmen der postkommunistischen Transformation in augenscheinlich unrechtmäßigen Fällen Reichtum erworben wurde.

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