

THE SYMBOLIC VALUE OF A THING: AN ANALYSIS OF THE *KRAVATA* IN CROATIA

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The subject of this paper is a thing, or rather an object, the social phenomena of the neck tie in Croatia. The popularity of the neck tie, or in Croatian the *kravata*, is at the present time undergoing a particular kind of renaissance in Croatia. It is not that Croatians are running around purchasing *kravatas* at an astonishing rate, but rather, it is the idea of the origins of the *kravata* in public discourse that is experiencing a rebirth. Due to certain public events and media coverage a large percentage of Croatians have become aware of the historical fact that Croatia is the proud home of the *kravata*. The *kravata* is now being promoted as a national symbol of Croatia; a testament to the shared cultural heritage of Croatia and Europe. Indeed, it is true that Croatian mercenaries stationed at Versailles introduced the *kravata* to Western Europe in 1635. The Croatian cavalry wore uniquely tied scarves around their necks as part of their formal dress. The fashion accessory was spotted and adapted by Louis XIV who, with his legendary persuasion over the French aristocracy and France's cultural dominance of the 17th century, quickly turned the *kravata* into a desired item of European high culture (Cravatica Academia). However, as Abner Cohen noted 'the history of a cultural trait will tell us very little about its social significance within the situation in which it is found at present' (Cohen 1976:3). A basic argument of this study will be that the *kravata*'s present popularity in Croatia is not due to the uncovering of new historical facts, nor does it involve the continuation of a long standing tradition but instead is actually prompted by the social, economic, and political transformations occurring in Croatia at the present time.

Croatian independence was gained in 1991 from Yugoslavia and since then it has been argued that the state has gone through two distinct phases of orientation (Fisher 2006). The first, was a strongly nationalist phase that permeated throughout Croatia during the early 90s. The second Europeanist phase, arose during the late 1990s and extends until the present day. The nationalist phase can partially be explained as an inevitable reaction to the war within the former Yugoslavia, the subsequent national mobilization, and the necessities of nation building. It can also be seen, as a concerted effort from the political elite

and especially the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) to manipulate the population by using national symbols to gain a level of deference while they consolidated their economic and political power through corrupt practices (Fisher 2006). Conversely, the main feature of the Europeanist phase has been the Croatian government's concentration on integrating and gaining membership to the European Union (Fisher 2006). This dissertation will argue that the social popularity of the *kravata* is the product of this Europeanist phase. In particular, it is the result of a concentrated effort by elites to promote Europeanization of Croatian nationalism. The elite have an interest in the promotion of the *kravata* as having Croatian origins because the *kravata* provides a symbolic link between Croatian and European history. Exposing the Croatian population through the media to these particular historical facts is necessary for the gaining of social legitimacy for the European Union integration process. This is, of course, not the only example of such a link being made between Croatia and Europe by elites in the Croatian media and it is here, also, relevant to remind you that the gaining of social legitimacy is a complex process which involves the proliferation of a multitude of such symbols. However, it is still interesting to study a specific symbol such as the *kravata*, to explain the political, economic, and social micro functions it performs and the particular meanings it has for different segments of Croatian society.

For the identification of the political and economic functions of the legitimizing symbol of the *kravata*, we must look at the implications of the European Union integration process itself. The process of European Union integration mandates neo-liberal economic and political reforms. These types of neo-liberal reforms have been found to have negative implications for the welfare state and social inequality, tending to reinforce capitalist class power. (Harvey 2005) By helping to accumulate legitimacy for the process which is pushing these reforms forward, the *kravata* indirectly functions as an economic and political tool of domination that naturalizes Croatia's development trajectory in the constricts of the European Union. Thus, the adoption of the symbol of the *kravata* into Croatian nationalism indirectly func-

tions to reinforce class power through the degradation of the state and the increase in social inequality.

In addition, I will also show how the symbol of the *kravata* is legitimated by moral practice. Taking the example of the *kravata* being used in gift exchange at Christmas, I will show, how the *kravata* takes on moral meanings and thus serves to legitimate its political and economic functions. The main argument of this dissertation will be that the *kravata* must be seen as a multifaceted symbol to explicate all the different poles of meaning that are differentially activated depending upon one's social practices with it. Even if a *kravata* has a personal moral meaning because it was received as a gift, this does not discount the latent public meanings attached to the *kravata* through the practices of the media. By viewing the *kravata* as a symbol in practice, it allows us to evaluate the different degrees of moral, political, and economic meanings that the *kravata* takes on and the ways in which these meanings intertwine. The symbolic value of the *kravata* is thus the total aggregation of the multiple categories of meaning the symbol of the *kravata* activates within a particular social space and time. This conception of the *kravata* as a symbolic value shall be used to challenge Appadurai's concept of political regimes of value and Bourdieu's theory of symbolic capital.

Theoretical Paradigm

In order to demonstrate how the *kravata* can be seen as symbolic value in Croatia I need to construct a theoretical paradigm through which to conceive the multitude of variables involved in this endeavor. A primary concept in this paradigm, to conceive the *kravata*'s complexity of meaning, will be the symbol. There are two particular methods I use in my approach to symbols. What must be kept in mind here is that I want to adopt a wide enough approach to show how symbols are both political tools for the manipulation of a polity and meaningful constructions for people. From this perspective I will be following Klatch in her article, *Masters and Meanings*, in which she integrates two major traditions in political symbolism. The first is the Masters tradition drawn from Marx concentrating on domination, which views symbols "as weapons of class conflict, tools, used by the ruling class to maintain class control" (Klatch 1988:142) and the second the meaning tradition drawn from Geertz's symbolic anthropology and the structural functionalist school, which "calls attention to the essential role political symbols play in creating social solidarity and in providing understanding to the individual" (Klatch 1988:141). By integrating these two approaches I hope to obtain a fuller appreciation of the implications of the *kravata* as symbolic form in Croatian society.

Now that I have elaborated my general approach to symbols I must define what the word symbol means in my theoretical paradigm. The most important trait of a symbol for my paradigm is its multivocality of meanings; the numerous poles of meaning that become activated when one perceives a symbol in a specific social time and space. In emphasizing the multivocality of meaning I follow both Cohen and Firth. In Cohen the multivocality of meaning and the ambiguity of meaning are stressed primarily to allow for continuity and change in both symbolic forms and their attached functions. On the other hand, Firth is interested in showing how a symbol can evoke multiple meanings both of a public and private character. In addition, Cohen and Firth begin to investigate how symbols carry out political functions, their significances in power relations, and the way they can be manipulated in politics. It is because of the manipulability of symbols found in these studies that Firth concludes that symbol systems are lacking in coherency, "with gaps, modifications, and inconsistencies" and leads Cohen to conclude that symbols have ambiguous meanings. A problem, however, with both Firth's and Cohen's rendition of the symbol is that they do not completely explain what the words inconsistent or ambiguous actually mean in their conceptual frameworks. They do not go far enough in defining what meaning actually is and how it is formulated.

For a fuller explanation of why the terms arbitrary and ambiguous are used when generally classifying the multiple poles of meaning of a symbol we turn to Turner who addresses the problem of meaning more explicitly. Turner claims symbols are always organized in two-way semantically open systems, where both the number and the positional relationships of signifiers and signifieds change depending upon the particular social actions one associates with the symbol. (Turner 1975:147) This posits social action as the culprit of meaning, and therefore suggests the reason for the classification of the meanings of symbols as ambiguous. This formulation allows Turner to precisely define what the relations between public and private symbols are dependent upon. The relations are dependent upon the embedding of differentiated meanings generated by social actions in both the public and private domains in one symbolic form. "Individuals may add personal meaning to a symbols public meaning by utilizing one or another of its standardized modes of association to bring new concepts into its semantic orbit" (Turner 1975:154). I will use this conception of public and private symbols in my paradigm for analyzing the symbol of the *kravata*. This conception, is particularly useful for my paradigm because it gives me the capability to analyze how the *kravata* can have two poles of meanings simultaneously; the public meanings attached to it by the elites in the media, which function to rein-

force domination and the private moral meanings the *kravata* generates in the social action of gift giving. Turner continues, “such initially private construction may become part of public hermeneutic or standardized interpretation if the exegete has sufficient power, authority, or prestige to make his views stick” (Turner 1975:154). This analysis of how private meanings diffuse into public discourse is dependent on the individual’s power to manipulate public meanings to be congruent with their own constructions and obviously can be used in my paradigm to analyze the way elite meanings of the *kravata* have permeated into public discourse, and eventually through social action, have become legitimated.

In order to enable our paradigm to properly explain and conceptually organize how distinct practices lead to a plethora of different interpretations and functions some of which are publicly shared and others which are privately held, I need to first start with Bourdieu’s neo-structuralist theory of practice. Bourdieu argued that the study of practice had been ignored by the structural functionalists and structuralist schools of thought and that this led them to posit mechanical and predictive social models based on the scientific construction of rigid social rules and laws. Bourdieu rejected this theoretical legalism as just objectifying one segment of social time and space into universal laws which acted upon the social structures of the societies under study. These types of approaches left out the socially significant analysis of strategies and improvisations that come with the study of practice, which are especially important when one studies social change. Bourdieu, however, also rejected the other extreme notion of practice being completely dependent on an agent’s independent judgment or choice. Bourdieu here used the concept of the *habitus* to take account of “the durable transposable dispositions,” that structure practice (Bourdieu 1977:72). The *habitus* was meant to mitigate between structure and practice, providing generative unconscious cognitive and behavioral schemes which regulate our social actions, thus cyclically producing and reproducing the *habitus* in practice. The regularity of the *habitus* also provides the path by which modes of domination become naturalized, eventually constituting *doxa* whereby modes of domination become closed off from the arena of public opinion and discourse. It is also crucial to note here, that the *habitus* is subjective but not individual, therefore it can be used to analyze the different predispositions of specific social groups towards certain regular practices.

I will use Bourdieu’s notion of *habitus* in my analysis to show how the different meanings and functions of Croatian nationalism and the *kravata* are created by the political elite and the Croatian polity in practice, and how the elite meanings become public through the practice of the media, therefore add-

ing poles of meanings to these symbolic forms. I will also employ the notion of *doxa* to analyze how these additional elite meanings of Croatian nationalism and the *kravata* permeate through the media, incorporating domination by metonymically implying European Union integration and neo-liberal reforms, which in general lead to the increasing of capitalist class power and exploitation. Therefore, Bourdieu’s theory provides my paradigm with two important conceptual tools of *habitus* and *doxa*.

Now that I have firmly established the meanings of key concepts such as symbol, *doxa*, and *habitus* in my theoretical paradigm I must move on to the third component and explain my conceptualization of value and the gift. There are numerous different and contradictory theories of value. My approach to this great accumulation of knowledge, shall be to try to encompass the main theories into one overarching approach by resolving certain critical theoretical issues. In this I shall rely heavily on Graeber’s, *Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value*. In combining Marx and Mauss, Graeber posits value is determined by the embodiment of creative action measured against, or in reference to, a larger social totality. Thus value is always relative and is always socially determined. According to this theory, value is determined by the implicit acceptance of equality since in order to conceptualize different values between two or more persons or things, there always must be some criteria of similarity at the base of the comparison (Graeber 2001.) The purpose of Graeber’s broad approach to value, as the embodiment of creative action, is that it gives him the capacity to measure value in non-market societies where wage labor does not exist and therefore also encompasses religious, moral, or family values, which operate outside of the market in market societies. The most crucial part for Graeber’s understanding of value, is his dichotomy between the production and the realization of value. Graeber argues that the production and realization are two different forms of value, which occur independently of one another but are usually mistakenly conflated. The production of value here consists of the embodying of action in *potentia* and the realization of value, is the process of integrating the creative action into a larger social whole so that it becomes visible. The production of value thus remains invisible until it’s realization in a larger social whole. The visibility of value only comes into being with its realization (Graeber 2001).

This dichotomy between the production and the realization of value has certain implications for Appadurai’s theory of value as exchange. In the introduction of, *The social life of things*, Appadurai outlines how all objects can be perceived as commodities if you look at their entire life cycles (commodities here being defined as objects that are produced for exchange). At one period of their life cycle

or another, all objects are exchanged depending upon the different political regimes of value they enter into. Based on the scope of this approach, Appadurai is allowed to posit all objects as commodities because at one point of their life cycles or another, all objects will be exchanged. For Appadurai there is little difference between the forms of exchange such as commodity or gift, instead Appadurai argues that the most important aspect of exchange is that two or more objects are equalized in value. The particular rules or regulations of exchange that differentiate the gift and commodity exchange are of no importance when trying to abstract the value of an object. Whether through gift or commodity exchange, there is always an implicit objectification of value through the equalization of one object for another. Therefore, Appadurai draws the conclusion that value is constituted by exchange and the political regime of value surrounding the exchange (Appadurai 1986).

Applying Graeber's dichotomy of the production and the realization of value to Appadurai's approach, one will notice that Appadurai is only focusing on the realization of value and not its production. Appadurai ignores the production of value and thus does not address the question of the genesis of value. How did an object come to constitute or gain the value recognized through exchange? Avoiding the question of the production of value allows Appadurai to ignore the realm of potential invisible value that is embodied within objects. My approach will go beyond Appadurai's showing how invisible value is produced in an object through the embodiment of creative action which cannot be taken account of by the objectification of exchange. In doing this, I must show how the production of invisible value is different from the realization of visible value through exchange. I will demonstrate this by using the example of the gift. Here, it is important to remember the earlier dichotomy between public and private symbols. I will argue that the perception of the gift's moral invisible value is through private symbols. This is in contrast to Appadurai, who only acknowledges the public symbols of the gift by focusing on the gift's realization of value through exchange, thereby showing the gift's visible value. This allows Appadurai to classify gift exchange under the board category of commodity exchange. Alternatively, I will acknowledge gift exchange's distinctive characteristics by recognizing the private moral invisible values of the gift that are produced through creative action. Appadurai's two theoretical errors seem to be the ignoring of production and the conflating of the commodity and the gift in the general and ambiguous term exchange. These two errors allow Appadurai to insist that it is the political regimes of value that decide in the last instance the value of an object. I will take account of Appadurai's theory by insisting that the

political regimes of value allow for the realization of visible values through public symbols.

Appadurai is similar to Bourdieu in reducing the differences between gift and commodity exchange. Bourdieu considers both to be based on individual calculation of benefits. The only difference between the two exchange practices is the passage of a longer period of time before the obligation to reciprocate and complete gift exchange. Bourdieu classifies the general characteristic of trust that emanates from the practice of gift exchange as symbolic capital. Symbolic capital is readily transferable to material capital in Bourdieu's conceptualization. Bourdieu also places material capital as the overarching primary form of capital that all other forms of capital culminate to become. Bourdieu's view of the gift as calculative, gives validation to Lambeck's critique of Bourdieu as lacking an analysis of moral practice. This is because Bourdieu insists on "a general science of the economy of practices, capable of treating all practices, including those purporting to be disinterested or gratuitous, and hence non-economic, as economic practices directed towards the maximizing of material or symbolic profit" (Bourdieu 1977:183). Both Appadurai and Bourdieu underestimate the importance of invisible value in gift exchange and thus misunderstand the gifts implications in market societies.

As James Carrier points out, ignoring the moral private implications of objects is very evident among social scientists. As Carrier suggests, this is due to the dualistic conceptualization by social scientists of two different domains of action or practice, the male and the female. Most social scientists concentrate on the actions that fall into the public male domain which leads to the degradation of the private female domain. This type of reductionism is especially prominent in studies of the gift, with its strong private and moral implications (Carrier 1995). Appadurai's view of the gift as a commodity does not even acknowledge the existence of the private female domain. In contrast, Bourdieu acknowledges the existence of a female domain by his recognition of symbolic capital but only to subordinate it to the economizing structure of the public male domain. In trying to mend this problem, I will use Carrier's analysis of the moral and personnel implications of Christmas gifts in the Anglophone world, as basis for my analysis of the Christmas gift in Croatia. The meanings and values embodied within the symbol of the *kravata* being given as a gift at Christmas will be explored. The analysis will show how the Christmas gift of the *kravata* is endowed with invisible moral values produced through creative action, which can be seen in opposition to the neo-liberal reforms. The argument will then be made that the symbol of the *kravata* can be seen as a paradox, both embodying moral values that are in opposition to neoliberalism

and conversely, functioning as a political value to convey nationalist legitimacy, inherent in neoliberal reforms pushed forward by the European integration process. The theoretical confusion of Appadurai and Bourdieu is that they do not take proper account of the private moral invisible value.

An Analysis of the Symbolic Value of the *Kravata* in Croatia

Now that I have identified all of the main theoretical components of my paradigm it is imperative to analyze the present popularity of the *kravata* in Croatia to show its symbolic value. The analysis of the symbolic value of the *kravata* will show how the use of the *kravata* as a public symbol of domination and a private symbol of opposition is dependent upon the social time and space in which it is perceived. The present popularity of the public symbol of the *kravata* shall be shown to be connected to the Europeanist phase of Croatian politics. This phase was conditioned by the reorientation of the Croatian state away from nationalist isolation toward European Union integration and neo-liberal reforms. The increased public visibility of the *kravata* during the Europeanist phase will be demonstrated to be the direct result of a concentrated Croatian elite effort in which public events and media coverage were orchestrated for the purpose of painting the *kravata* as a Croatian national symbol. A symbol, carefully constructed to represent the historic links between Croatia and Europe. This linking serves to naturalize the idea of Croatia joining the EU. Therefore, the *kravata* serves as an indirect political symbol of class domination by functioning to socially legitimize the neo-liberal reforms inherent within the European Union integration process. The second part of my analysis shall concentrate on how the *kravata* is itself legitimized by its use as a private symbol.

The first step in showing how the *kravata* is being manipulated as a tool for Croatian political domination by the political elite is to look at what the *kravata* is legitimizing. This will encompass looking at the types of neo-liberal reforms mandated on Croatia by the European Union integration process. Croatia formally started the European Union integration process in 2001 with the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) for the Western Balkans. The agreement affirmed that Croatia was a potential future candidate for EU membership. It outlined the economic and political criteria for Croatia to complete before being considered for full membership. The "economic criteria for EU membership require the country to be a functioning market economy capable of coping with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union" (Otto 2004:12). This meant that Croatia had to aggressively

pursue neo-liberal reforms such as the controlling of inflation, the decreasing of the budget deficit, the privatization of state owned industries, the deregulation of markets, and the liberalization of international investment and trade (Otto 2004). In 2004 the European Commission announced that although Croatia had progressed into a functioning market economy further reform was needed for Croatia to be able to cope with competitive pressures within the EU (Otto 2004:12). A major problem with the SAA and other accession agreements is that the EU conditionality placed on the assenting countries "are very general... leaving ambiguity about when they have been met. This ambiguity increases the EU's power of negotiation" (Grabbe 2002) and allows the EU to push Croatia towards greater neo-liberal reforms. These neo-liberal reforms are acknowledged to be painful for Croatian citizens to endure, especially since the Croatian economy is based on traditional industries. (Boromisa 2004) These negative "short term" effects are partially justified by Croatian economists and political elites by their insistence upon the long term benefits of Croatian membership in the European Union. Furthermore, they claim that these reforms should not be looked at as only stimulated by the EU integration process since this may lead to the degradation of the sensitive popular consensus by leading the people to believe that Croatia is being coerced into economic reforms by foreign powers. Instead, they posit that neoliberal reforms should be seen as necessary for the completion of the Croatian market transition and the future growth of the Croatian economy. (Boromisa 2004)

As stated by David Harvey, neoliberalism is part of a world trend started around 1973 that represents an attempt by capitalist classes to increase their political and economic power (Harvey 2005). "Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within the institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (Harvey 2005:2). This neoliberal institutional framework has resulted in market exchange being valued as "an ethic in itself, capable of acting as a guide to all human action and substituting for all previously held beliefs"... it seeks to bring all human action into the domain of the market" (Harvey 2005:3) The functional purpose of neoliberal policy is the dilapidation of state sovereignty by the withdrawal of the state from social welfare provisions and the regulation of the market. This constricts the state to cut away their social welfare programs instead focusing solely on providing a stable currency and enforcing property rights. The implementation of neoliberal policies and the subsequent constriction of state intervention have led to the increase of capitalist class power through

rising relative social and economic inequality caused by uneven geographic growth. The ideological neoliberal promises of greater growth in the long run remain unfulfilled even though it has been over thirty years since neoliberal reforms were first introduced (Harvey 2005). An examination of the consistently dismal performance of neoliberalism throughout its history unveils the Croatian economists and political elites, promises of growth and prosperity to be unrealistic capitalist class ideology. Neoliberalism's history demystifies its motives by positing the increase of capitalist class power as the main reason for the neoliberal trend both in the EU and the world. It identifies neoliberalism as an ideology of class domination.

The question then becomes why people around the world accept the implementation of neoliberal policies. Although Harvey offers a number of answers to this question, one in particular is crucial for the analysis of the *kravata* as a symbol of domination. Harvey suggests that neoliberal economic and political policy reforms, with their consequences of alienation through ever greater market exchange and their subsequent distorting of social relations, are sometimes accompanied by neoconservative social policies meant to increase social cohesion. By neoconservatism, Harvey does not just mean the American political ideology that arose in the late 1970s. Instead, Harvey uses neoconservatism to identify the broad category of policies used by numerous countries meant to foster social unity and moral values, thus simultaneously functioning to counteract and reinforce neo-liberal reforms. Harvey cites a number of examples of neoliberalism being reinforced by the state through the promotion of neoconservative values such as religion or nationalism. The Christian-backed social policies of the Bush Administration or the promotion of nationalism in Putin's Russia are two obvious examples (Harvey 2005:81-85). Cris Shore's analysis of the creation of a European identity by the European Commission can also be cited as an example of a global trend towards reinforcing neoliberalism through the promotion of social cohesion. Shore found that the European Commission "has invested a great deal in information campaigns and public awareness activities" since 1985. The European Commission has set up various committees whose motivation is the completion of the internal market and European integration by "selling the Community" or "making Europeans more aware of their common cultural heritage" (Black and Shore 1992:11). This initiative has incorporated the proliferation of various symbols such as the European passport, the standardized driver's license, and the European flag, which are meant to build a more coherent sense of European culture (Black and Shore 1992:11). The symbol of the *kravata* is being used in a similar manner by Croatian

and European Union political and economic elites to incorporate a sense of European cultural heritage into Croatian national identity. By looking at the way the *kravata* is represented in public events and the media in Croatia I will show how the symbol of the *kravata* naturalizes the European integration process and reinforces neoliberal reforms, thus acting as a political symbol of domination.

The primary figure in the promotion of the *kravata* as a public symbol that embodies European heritage and Croatian national identity is the owner of Potomac Limited, Marijan Busic. Potomac Ltd., the conglomerate that produces the Cravat label in Croatia, was founded in 1989. Potomac propagates itself as a completely western organized company. In 2003 the Croatian Managers and Entrepreneurs Association gave Busic "the most successful project manager of 2003 award," for his leadership in the *kravatas* promotion. Busic was recently honored again by an American lecturer at George Washington University, William E. Smith, when he used Potomac Limited as an example of successful management practices in his 2006 book "The creative powers of purpose: A transformational organizing process" Busic's self proclaimed goal is to make the Cravat label a recognized brand name around the world. Cravat already has five established stores in Zagreb and two in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as several distributors in Western Europe, North America, and Asia (Croatia online). In one interview Busic jokingly stated, "this country, slung around the western rim of the Balkan region, has got the entire world by the neck. Only the rest of the world does not know it yet" (Jansson 2005). This brief biographic sketch of Busic and his future plans for the Cravat label clarifies why he is a supporter of European Union integration. Croatia's ascension into the European Union represents a tremendous opportunity for Busic to develop and market his Cravat brand name within Europe's large internal market. It brings him one step closer to realizing his dream of the Cravat being a globally recognized brand name. Therefore, it is the subjective habitus of Busic as the owner of Potomac Limited that fuels his positive view of the European Union integration process. In promoting the *kravata* as both a symbol of Croatia and Europe, Busic is attempting to transfer and disseminate this aspect of his habitus among the Croatian population to legitimize the European Union.

A great help in achieving Busic's goals of promoting his Cravat label and legitimizing the European integration process has been the Academia Cravatica. The Academia Cravatica is the so-called non-profit institute intended to educate and inform people of the origins and history of the *kravata*. It was created by Busic himself in 1997 in Zagreb, Croatia. The Academia Cravatica has all of the ornaments of a serious academic institute. For example,

the academia boasts: "The Cravat museum," where historic *kravatas* and art are displayed, a library featuring books on the *kravata*, and a board of directors consisting of actual academics from the University of Zagreb and the Croatian Academia of Arts and Sciences. Basic himself a sociologist is the head of the board of directors (Academia Cravatica). However, certain aspects of the Academia make it clear that this is simply a front for Basic's Cravat label and functions as an external marketing wing of Potomac Limited. For example, on the Academia Cravatica website, everywhere the word *kravata* or neck tie should be used as in quotes from famous authors or thinkers such as Oscar Wilde and Umberto Eco, the original term for the neck tie is replaced with the word Cravat. This is obviously a marketing ploy by Basic and the Academia, done to gain name brand recognition for the Cravat label. It shows that the Academia is more interested in promoting a product than actually doing academic research. The Academia allows Basic to propagate his vision, by attaching specific self-interested meanings to the symbol of the *kravata*, through the deception of the establishment being an actual academic institution. A truly disturbing fact is that the Academia even requests donations from people visiting the website under the masquerade of being a non-profit organization.

The main objective of the Academia Cravatica is the promotion of the *kravata* through grandiose public events that always garner large amounts of media attention. The formal reason given for these events is the celebration of the Croatian cultural contribution to Europe and the world through the creation of the *kravata*. By analyzing these public events anthropologically I will show how they are specially designed to manipulate time and space to identify the symbol of the *kravata* both with Europe and Croatia. These public events are imperative in creating and recreating the social memory of Croatia's as the originators of the *kravata* and thus reaffirming their place in Europe. As Paul Connerton outlines, it is the actual practice of public ceremonies that creates and recreates social memory. The memory must be implicit within the actual present social experiences or actions of a collectivity. These practices of public ceremonies become especially important when a collectivity is going through a transitional period or starting upon a new historical epoch, which necessitates the reinterpretation of their history (Connerton 1989). Croatia is going through just such a transitional period with its European integration process, necessitating the foraging of links between Croatia and Europe. The Academia's grandiose public events include: the tying of the largest *kravata* in the world around a Roman amphitheatre in Pula, Croatia, the tying of a 4,000 km *kravata* around the border of Croatia, the hanging of the *kravata* on a public statue, and the engraving of the image of the *kravata* on a

large piece of farmland (Academia Cravatica). I will now analyze these public events to show how the *kravata* is linked through them, both to Croatian national and European identity.

The tying of the world's largest *kravata* around a Roman arena is a particularly interesting public event, if the time and space manipulation is analyzed and the symbolic meaning of the event is shown. The event manifests Basic's attempt to directly link Croatia with Europe through the symbol of the *kravata*. The major sponsors of the event included the Academia Cravatica, the Croatian government, and the European Commission. In addition to financially sponsoring this public event, the Croatian government and the European Union demonstrated their support by sending officials to the ceremony for the unraveling of the *kravata* (Croatia Online). The genius of this public event can only be brought into focus if the meanings of the two primary objects are identified. The arena in Pula is one of the best preserved remnants of the Roman Empire in Europe. The use of the arena signifies that before the recent history of socialism and the Balkan crisis the Croatian territory was once a part of the Western Rome Empire. This is particularly important if one considers the division between Western and Eastern Europe as being dependent upon the division of the Rome Empire into Western and Eastern spheres in the 4th century AD. This division of Europe into East and West is still common among historians, even though other more popular divisions between the East and West do exist such as the Elba-Trieste line or the more recent history of the division between socialism and capitalism (Davies 1996). An important difference for the Academia Cravatica between these different European divisions is that using the Western Roman Empire as the measure of Western Europe includes Croatia in this category. The second object in this public event used is the oversized *kravata*, that due to the efforts of Basic and the Academia to promote the idea of the *kravata* as originating in Croatia, and exaggerating its cultural significance in Europe, also has European connotations. Therefore, the social experience of this public event, with the image of the oversized *kravata* proudly tied around the ancient arena, represents the conflation of the notions of Croatia and Europe in space. The affect of which, is a constriction of people's perception of the concept of time, to periods of history, when Croatia and Europe were considered as a unit or at least shared common cultural values. Through media coverage and participation in this public event, the Croatian people create their collective memory. It is a memory of a conjoined Europe and Croatia existing prior to recent political history. This collective memory metonymically implies the reinforcement and legitimization of the European integration process

and neo-liberal reforms because of the association between Europe and the European Union.

Another interesting fact surrounding this public event, which happened on the 18th of October, 2003, is that the Academia Cravatica proclaimed the day to be "Cravat day" within Croatia. "Cravat day," is intended to be a special period in which Croatian's remember that the *kravata* originated in their homeland (Academia Cravatica). This gesture is again, an attempt to structure and consolidate Croatian concepts of time around the *kravata* and to form social memory through the annual repetitive practice and action of commemoration. The creation of public holidays to commemorate historical events is a well documented method used by a state to create nationalist sentiment or feeling. (Alonso 1994) Of course, the Academia has no power or right to create public holidays but the attempt still clearly reveals their goal; to attach Croatian national meanings or sentiments to the *kravata*.

The other grandiose projects of the Cravatica Academia that I will analyze do not as explicitly create links between Europe and Croatia through the *kravata*. This is because the *kravata* is already established as a consumption good in Europe, thus reestablishing this link between Europe and the *kravata* would be redundant. Instead, the Academia concentrates on the identification of the *kravata* with Croatia, which therefore automatically implies a Croatian link with Europe. In other words, through these projects the Academia tries to attach national meanings to the public symbol of the *kravata*. An example of such a public project is the tying of a 4000 km *kravata* around the border of Croatia carried out in the summer of 2006. This project was performed at the most opportune time since the summer is when Croatia is frequented by tourists. The Croatian media followed the tracing of the border by the *kravata* very closely with almost daily reports about recent villages or cities the 4000 km *kravata* has reached. The tying of the *kravata* around the Croatian border represents the enclosure of the Croatian national space by the *kravata*. The notion of borders and national space or territory is another important aspect of creating a national sentiment since a nation must have a territory or space to call its own (Alonso 1994). This project had the affect of creating the association between the national space and the *kravata* within the minds of Croatians who viewed the media coverage. This again was carried out with goal of creating a national sentiment towards the *kravata*.

Another public event or project the Academia Cravatica carried out was called "the Ban's Cravat". This again was carried out with the precise goal of manipulating Croatian notions of time and space. The Ban's Cravat is in reference to the attachment of the *kravata* to a statue of Ban Josip Jelacic within the central square in Zagreb in June of 2003. The first

element to note is that this project was once again carried out at an opportunistic time since a fair was occurring in Zagreb's central square. Also to be considered is the fact that Zagreb's central square is a large public space where most national celebrations and protests are carried out. The third element is that the statue of Ban Jelacic is considered by most Croatian's to be a pristine symbol of the history of the Croatian nation. The Ban had attempted to unite the Croatian nation, by leading a nineteenth-century revolt against the Hungarians. The statue was taken down during the period of Yugoslavia but was immediately erected when Croatia gained its independence (Fisher 2006). The tying of a *kravata* around a loaded nationalistic symbol such as the Ban's neck is an attempt to install the *kravata* as present within Croatian history in Croatian collective memory. This action thus naturalizes and creates national sentiment towards the wearing of the *kravata* by Croatians.

One of the newest projects carried out by the Academia Cravatica is carving out an image of the *kravata* into the grass of a sizable piece of farmland. This represents an attempt by Busic to spread the symbol of the *kravata* beyond its regular boundaries. The *kravata* is traditionally consumed as a specialty product of the bourgeois and thus hardly penetrates within village peasant communities. This is due to nineteenth century French and English influences, in which the *kravata* was worn by the banking and mercantile classes therefore transforming it into a symbol and consumption good of the upper classes in urban centers (Academia Cravatica). By branding the image of the *kravata* onto a large piece of land in the middle of a Croatian peasant area, Busic is trying to break the strictly urban bias associated with the *kravata*. This project also plays into Busic's attempt to create a national sentiment centering on the *kravata* because of the popular association of peasants with a pure uncorrupted form of nationalism, first written about by Herder. This notion is especially true in Croatia, where the Croatian Peasant Party has played an intricate role throughout Croatian history in nation building. Busic's recent farmland project is important to note because it demonstrates the broad aims of the Academia to encompass the entire Croatian population within its ideological projects. Ultimately, it attempts to embody the simultaneous creation of a new European and Croatian identity through the *kravata*.

The Academia Cravatica is, however, not the only promoter of the *kravata* as a link between Europe and Croatia. Political elites from the Croatian government and the European Commission have also participated in this ideological project. This is inherent in the symbolic actions of the meeting between Croatia's Premier, Ivo Sanader and the head of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso. After the official meeting in Zagreb Croatia, Sanader and Barroso escorted the Croatian media to Cravat's

downtown location for a photo-op which featured Sanader presenting Barroso with a Cravat and explaining its cultural significance and European ties (Croatia online). These types of publicly staged events directly implicate the *kravata* in attempting to socially legitimate the European Union integration process and thus neoliberal reforms.

The public symbol of the *kravata* as represented to the Croatian people by various political elites in publicly staged events has two purposes. The first purpose, carried out by the Academia, is the promotion of the *kravata* as being authentically and originally Croatian. This is done for profit, by raising product recognition and thus sales. The second objective, executed by both the Academia and the Croatian political elite is the foraging of a link between Croatia and Europe to socially legitimate European integration and neo-liberal reforms. The ultimate goal of these public events is to recreate social memory and structure. As stated earlier, these practices represent a neoconservative trend in global politics which simultaneously counteracts and reinforces neoliberal reforms. It is because of the general history of neoliberalism as a reassertion of capitalist class power that the public symbol of the *kravata* is the embodiment of domination. From this perspective the visible value of the public symbol of *kravata* is constituted by Appadurai's political regime of value which is constituted by the Europeanist phase of Croatian politics.

However, this analysis does not yet take into account the symbolic value of the *kravata*. In order to fully comprehend the holistic symbolic value of the *kravata* I must examine how the symbol of the *kravata* is perceived within the private sphere. To do this, I will analyze how the *kravata* is recognized within the context of Christmas in Croatia. This analysis will be partially based on my own experience of celebrating Christmas in Croatia over the past five years and partially based on the theoretical implications of Carrier's analysis of Christmas. The theoretical implication of Carrier's analysis is that Christmas constitutes a time of family (Carrier 1995:189). Thus Christmas gift exchange, represents the polar opposite of alienating market transactions because the exchange is carried out within the institution of the family not the market (Carrier 1995). The objects that are given as gifts at Christmas take on a personal or moral value because they no longer are simply commodities for exchange on the market (Carrier 1995:189). The creative action of personalizing commodities such as the *kravata* into Christmas gifts embodies invisible moral value within the gifts because although some of these personalizations are not seen they are felt privately between the giver and receiver. The private symbol of the *kravata* being given as a Christmas gift in Croatia is comparable to Carrier's analysis. In Croatia, based on my experi-

ence, Christmas giving constitutes the binary opposite of regular market exchange. The creative action that goes into picking and preparing a *kravata* for Christmas gifting transforms the public symbol of the *kravata* as a commodity, into a private symbol encoded with a moral invisible value that can only be perceived by the gift giver and the receiver. This private moral invisible value is determined by the importance of the social relationship between the two parties. The result, is that the symbolic value of the *kravata* is not only determined by the public sphere's political regime of value but also by the moral regime of value within the private sphere. These moral regimes of value can be seen in opposition to the political regimes of value that reinforce neoliberalism. The symbolic value of the *kravata* then, can be interpreted as containing paradoxical poles of value that imply either domination or opposition depending upon the social time and space within which it is perceived. The moral regimes of value of the private sphere, however, constitute a legitimizing force for the political regimes of value, reinforcing domination once they are taken out of the context of Christmas. These moral regimes of value make it possible for the naturalization of the private and public meanings of the *kravata* within the practice of everyday life. The domination implicit within the public symbol of the *kravata* becomes doxa within the private sphere if the public poles of meaning are not acknowledged.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to analyze the social phenomena of the *kravata* in Croatia. The analysis has shown how the public symbol of the *kravata* in Croatia is being manipulated by economic and political elites to produce social legitimacy for the European Union integration process. The production of social legitimacy was demonstrated to be dependent upon the creation and recreation of Croatian collective memory through the public practices embedded within the on going social experience connected with the *kravata*. The public symbol of the *kravata* functions to reinforce neoliberal reforms and thus operates as a visible symbol of class domination. Conversely, the analysis of the private symbol of the *kravata* as a gift at Christmas was shown to embody invisible moral value produced by creative action. These two contradictory values constitute the complete symbolic value of the *kravata* in Croatia both as a public and private symbol.

The purpose of this paper in showing the symbolic value of the *kravata* is to demonstrate how in the social totality of society the interpretation of the meanings and values of the *kravata* is dependent upon the context in which the object is perceived. The *kravata* can be recognized as a product of both

the political and moral regimes of value depending upon whether the public or private symbols are analyzed. This insight into how objects are perceived within different spheres goes further than Appadurai's theory of political regimes of value and Bourdieu's theory of symbolic capital. The problem with these two theories is that they do not take into full account the implications of the private symbols that emanate from objects. In ignoring the full implications of the private construction of symbols, they do not acknowledge the invisible moral values of objects that are produced in the private sphere. This deficiency and lack of an analysis of moral practice within the private sphere has the affect of locking both Appadurai and Bourdieu in a utilitarian ethic. In the Social Sciences today this utilitarian ethic represents the colonization of disciplines such as sociology and anthropology by economics. In this way, Appadurai and Bourdieu themselves represent a form of doxa by incorporating their economizing theoretical models into anthropology. However, the discipline of anthropology has an exclusive place in the fight against the colonization of the social sciences by economics because of the pre-theoretical qualitative methods of anthropology which investigate into the private domains of human existence. Anthropology, due to its very nature, is presented with the constant opportunity to falsify the economic assumptions of the self interested individual thus discrediting economic deductive models. This falsification of economic assumptions was the broader goal of this paper.

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