

# Social Class in the Russian Society

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Studies in the social classes and social change  
of contemporary Russia

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## Social class and media use in Russia

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### Introduction

After the collapse of the Soviet system, Russian media has gone through major changes. The former, centralised structure has largely collapsed and been replaced with more regional media markets. Newspaper circulation has been dropped, while the number of newspapers and especially magazines has increased significantly. Television is the only really national media, while some national newspapers have recently gained readers with regionalised editions. Nowadays Russian media has often been criticised for government control and self-censorship which is certainly true for some of the main media, mostly main television channels. However, Russian media is not a monolith but contains diverse development trends. Russian magazine market is one of most dynamic sectors, in a significant degree in foreign ownership, while Russian state television is largely controlled by the government. Russian internet provides information and opportunities for free discussions. Newspapers are in a larger degree than magazines based on sponsorship or on full advertisement revenues in the form of free sheets.

The development of a class society in Russia is visible also in the differences in media use of different social classes. The division to classes in this chapter is based on Erik Olin Wright's class theory without modifications (the same as Harri Melin has used in this volume), based on skills and assets required in the work (see also Leiulfstrud, Bison & Jensberg 2005). In addition to class criteria based on the position in the division of labour, also additional criteria like education have been taken into account.

The differences in media use between different classes in the Soviet Union were rather small. The number of individual media channels was smaller than in Western countries, but the circulation of individual media were high. The media system was highly centralised: in 1990 ten national daily newspapers took 46 % of total newspaper circulation (80% of circulation of daily newspapers; only Russian Federation included) (Pechat SSSR... 1991, 57). In a typical middle-sized town only two or three general newspapers were published and in many places only two television channels were available (Paasilinna 1995, 84). More educated people and elite groups used some specialised newspapers and journals, like *Ekonomicheskaya gazeta* for those interested in economy, and *Uchitelskaya gazeta* for educators, or scholarly journals in which the most controversial and innovative opinion appeared (Hopkins 1970, 194, 230).

During perestroika and after the collapse of the former system differences started to appear. First, the circulations of reformist and liberal newspapers like *Izvestiya* and *Komsomolskaya pravda* rose while conservative ones like *Pravda* and *Sovetskaya Rossiya* stagnated (Gibbs 1999, 86, Schillinger 1989). After the collapse of the system, the regional newspapers took over the market and national newspapers lost most of their dominant position. Later, national newspapers have improved their position in the regional level by publishing large amount of regional editions (Resnyanskaya & Fomicheva 1999). The differences have been mainly caused by the fact that there are some media which are mainly followed by the upper social classes, while media which are used mainly by lower classes are rare. In Karelia in years 2000 and 2002 that kind of media structure was visible (Pietiläinen 2002, 306–307).

Newspaper reading in general increased with increase of the social position, but some newspapers were read almost with the same frequency in all the social groups. Every newspaper was read more often by higher social classes, but there were some newspapers which were only seldom read by lower classes. While there were no newspapers overwhelmingly read by workers, there were newspapers that the workers did not read often. It was also found out that the more local the papers were, the smaller the class differences in reading of them were. (Pietiläinen 2003, 82–83)

## Theoretical background

This article applies also a Bourdieuan view of a class as defined by distinction based on consumer choices. Consumers choice products, media products as magazines, newspapers or television programmes, in order to manifest their belonging to some group, for example on the basis of income or social position, and also in order to acquire cultural resources which they need on the basis of their social status.

Bourdieu applies the concept of field as a research tool in order to enable the scientific construction of social objects (Bourdieu 2005, 30). For him field is a social arena in which people manoeuvre and struggle in pursuit of desirable resources, like educational and cultural capital. Cultural capital includes also use of various media products which people tend to choose on the basis of their social position.

Studies on relations between media choices and class or social status have been made for example in Finland, Spain, Hungary and Chile. In Finland it was found out that people “belonging to same socioeconomic class differ in their use of mass media greatly depending on their education and occupation” (Erämetsä 1990, 263). In Spain it was found out that education and occupational status were more relevant determinants of newspaper consumption than income (Escardíbul & Villarroya 2009, 64).

Another Spanish study pointed out that younger generational groups prefer cultural “products that symbolize modernity” and that in each age group cultural consumption “range from high to popular culture” (López Sintas & García Álvarez 2002, 133).

In Chile it was found out that “status hierarchy has a significant influence on book reading, and that this influence is net of educational attainment, income, and social class” and that book reading rather than newspapers and magazine reading has preserved its character as a marker of ‘elite culture’ (Torche 2007, 70). A Hungarian study pointed out also that “the effects of class on book reading and reading preferences are less marked than those of status” and that “people’s reading behaviour is strongly associated both with their own and with their parents’ social status” (Bukodi 2007, 112).

On the basis of a Dutch study, it was concluded that “media use is affected not only by respondent’s status position but also by that of his/her partner”, even if the partner’s status is less important than that of person’s own status (Kraaykamp et al. 2007, 147). Some other Dutch studies have divided media users in several categories by distinguishing entertainment and information orientations of the audience, users of regional media as well as non-readers and omnivore readers (Eijck & Rees 2000, 593–595). These groups are quite close to what Pietilä distinguished in the 1960s in Finland on the basis of different content choices. According to him, “the differences between life styles of different social strata” are associated “with mass media use as in their content consumption” (Pietilä 1969, 77). It was also found out that consumption of entertainment content (in television) increased with growing level of education (Pietilä 1969, 78). In recent studies it has also been found that media repertoires are characterised by other dimensions than distinction between highbrow and lowbrow or legitimacy and that status in itself is inadequate to segment audiences (Rees & Eijck 2003, 465).

The huge increase of media channels in post-Soviet Russia has created a situation in which audience can make choices in the media market. According to somewhat reliable data the number of newspapers in Russia has increased from 4,800 in 1990 to 8,250 in 2006 and the number of journals and magazines from 1,140 in 1990 to 4,677 in 2006 (Pechat Rossiiskoi federatsii v 2006 godu, 178, 195). These figures are smaller than the number of registered newspapers and magazines, since not all of them are actually published. There can certainly be also some flaws in the number of published newspapers and magazines.

Since 1987, many foreign magazine brands have entered to Russian magazine market and actually the most prominent international participation in the Russian media market has taken place in

magazine market which is less politicized than television or even newspapers. Of ten biggest magazine publishers five are foreign (Russian periodical press market 2008, 51). Most of Russian magazines have been published in Moscow. Of total number (also other periodical publications like yearbooks etc. included) of 5,429 publications 64% were published in Moscow and these publications represented 89% of total circulation (Pechat RF... 2007, 179–181).

The post-socialist Russian patterns of consumption have been described as hybrid because former cultural conventions have been broken and new elements have emerged and coexist with the former ones (Shevchenko 2002). The new rich may have very different backgrounds and differ widely in terms of their social origin, social ties, habitus and political attitudes (Nikula 2002, 136). One possible explanation for perhaps weaker role of habitus in Russia may be that cultural capital in forms of use of media, cultural service etc. can be less essential because of the importance of interpersonal connections (see Ledeneva 1998). In market economy, however, the importance of *blat* and similar practices may become less important so that role of cultural capital, also in form of selective media use, may become more important.

Differentiation in media choices is also a sign of transformation process. Media are not only products of modern society but also promote modern values and cultivate modern individuals. As Sztompka has pointed out a key precondition for real modernity is the development of civilizational competency, which (Sztompka 1993, 88–89; Nikula 2002, 135) includes enterprise culture, civic culture, discursive culture and everyday culture. Many elements of these cultures can be promoted and cultivated by media.

## Method

Usual methods in studies on media use and social class have been hierarchical cluster analysis, factor analysis and correspondence analysis. Hierarchical cluster analysis has been used to divide different media according to the audience use of them. In correspondence analysis different variables are positioned in a two-dimensional model.

This approach emphasise the active role of the audience. Media users are analysed in terms of consumers who make choices in the media market.

The different media were grouped into fewer categories by the researcher. This grouping is certainly subjective and can be based only to very general knowledge of each publication type. In general the aim was to distinguish “serious” or “quality” content from “popular” as well as free sheets and advertisement publication from ordinary newspapers. Actually quite large part of newspapers reported to been read by respondents are advertisement papers, specialised small

audience papers (like health gardening or cross-word papers), television programme sheets and other similar one which may not have been classified as newspapers in many other countries.

Also magazines include quite a wide range of different magazines from popular women's magazines to specific professional magazines. The range of these is, however, not as wide as in the case of newspapers. The media content itself was not asked in the survey and therefore only media outlets can be used as basis for distinction of media use. This may cause problems mainly in case of television channels which offer a wide range of different content. Some media were very local and used only in one locality or one region.

Newspapers were divided on the basis of their geographic orientation to national newspapers and others. Even if many national newspapers have only marginal readership outside Moscow (or even in Moscow itself), they are the only printed media which have readers in many parts of the country. Most of successful national newspapers have become more popular in style and the regional editions include also local material. Also papers like Moskovsky komsomolets, sport papers and car papers were included in national papers, but cross-word papers, advertisement papers and similar were not included because they are not journalistic products in proper sense of the word.

Newspapers were also divided roughly into two categories, popular papers and quality papers. Popular papers include those oriented towards scandals, celebrities, sport, entertainment and other things which are related to immediate reward in contrast to delayed reward received from newspapers oriented to politics, economics and culture (Pietilä 1969). Also television guides, car, health and advertisement papers were classified as popular ones, while traditional local and regional newspapers (socio-political ones) were classified as quality papers. In some cases this division was made on the basis of very small amount of information on the nature of these papers.

### **Differentiation of media use**

The media use was measured in survey by asking respondents which television channels they watched, which radio stations they listened and which newspapers and magazines they had read. Watching of individual television programmes or certain types of programmes were not included in the survey. Therefore the results tell about audience of individual media channels rather than use of defined content. Use of television or choice of television channel is not as remarkable source of distinction than choice of print media. Main differences can be found in watching of Rossiya channel and Ren-TV, of which Ren-TV is more popular among entrepreneurs, while Rossiya is less popular in the same group. It might be likely that if different television programmes would have been taken into analysis, the differences might have been greater. Even culturally more

sophisticated channel Kultura is watched almost exactly in all the class groups. If education is taken into analysis Kultura channel is clearly more popular among more educated groups in all social classes, while for some reason Ren-TV tends to be more popular among less educated people in all class groups. First channel is watched more among more educated people in lower classes, while more educated people watch is less often if they are managers or entrepreneurs.

There were rather small differences between watching of different television channels on the basis of social class. In general, more traditional channels were more popular among older age groups, in countryside and smaller towns and among older population, while new entertainment channels were more popular among young and in large cities (Pietiläinen 2008, 367).

Table 9.1. Popularity of main television channels in different classes (%)

Class	entrepr.	managers	supervisors	experts	skilled workers	low-skilled workers	others
Television in general	95.9	97.8	98.6	95.5	97.5	99.5	98.3
First channel	72.6	79.1	69.2	72.7	71.0	73.6	78.0
Rossiya	57.5	74.7	74.7	71.2	66.8	67.7	69.4
NTV	52.1	52.7	50.7	50.0	43.9	48.9	44.0
STS	30.1	27.5	30.1	30.3	31.3	27.7	26.3
TNT	19.2	23.1	18.5	10.6	19.4	16.5	17.7
Ren-TV	20.5	14.3	14.4	12.1	10.4	13.6	10.1
Kultura	8.2	6.6	6.8	9.1	7.9	6.4	8.3

Even Kultura, a public service channel without advertisement, was not significantly more popular among expert workers. On the other hand, channels like TNT and in some degree also STS attract the working class more, while Rossiya channels gets less popularity among them in comparison with managers and supervisors. It was also remarkable that Ren-TV, sometimes named as the last independent Russian television channel, was more popular among less educated in each class.

Various radio channels get their audience mainly on the basis on age and gender, while class has a minor effect. Anyhow, expert workers listened Ekho Moskvyy and Evropa Plus much more often,

while low-skilled workers chose more often Avtoradio or Russkoe radio. Entrepreneurs belong to active radio listeners, while there was practically no difference between other classes.

## Newspapers

Newspapers, *gazeta* as defined in Russian, were read by quite many (66% of Russians in total) but many of those newspapers were such which hardly could fulfil a more universal definition of a newspaper as a publication aimed at a broad spectrum of readers and containing information and opinion about current events and news. If more strict criteria are used and various advertisement only and too specialised papers are excluded only around 60% of Russians read proper newspapers, and if more strict criteria would have been used, this figure might lower, close to 50%.

On the basis of social class newspapers were read more often by managers, but there was practically no difference between other classes. National newspapers were read more often by managers and in some degree also by supervisors and expert workers.

Table 9.2. Some of the most popular newspapers by social class (%)

Class	entrepr.	managers	supervisors	expert workers	skilled workers	low-skilled workers	others
Read newspapers in total	56.2	86.8	68.5	63.6	67.3	67.4	62.6
Reads proper newspapers	53.5	80.9	66.0	57.8	60.0	59.1	56.4
Read popular newspapers	38.4	54.9	46.4	43.9	39.4	44.7	36.1
Read quality newspapers	38.4	62.6	50.0	40.9	47.9	42.7	44.2
Read national newspapers	31.5	68.1	44.5	48.5	37.2	38.5	30.9
Komsomol-skaya Pravda	9.6	22.0	15.8	16.7	9.6	12.3	8.0

Argumenty i fakty	5.5	22.0	13.0	18.2	11.0	9.1	9.5
Antenna-Telesem	9.6	8.8	11.0	4.5	8.4	8.4	7.2
SPID-Info	2.7	5.5	4.1	0	2.0	3.7	1.4
Rossiiskaya gazeta	1.4	2.2	2.7	1.5	0.8	1.0	0.5
Izvestiya	1.4	1.1	0	1.5	0	0.2	0.6

Some differences between classes can be observed on the basis of newspaper choice, but in general differences are small and two most popular newspapers are usually read more often among managers, experts and supervisors than among ordinary workers. Antenna-Telesem enjoys almost equal popularity among all classes, except expert workers.

In comparison to SPID-Info the difference is clear. SPID-Info is more popular among workers (and also among supervisors) than among managers or expert workers. It has lost popularity especially among experts and skilled workers, but it continues to have some popularity also among members of higher social classes. Rossiiskaya gazeta and Izvestiya are newspapers which are read mainly by higher social classes.

Between 1998 and 2007 newspapers have lost their popularity especially among entrepreneurs (drop of reading from 73% to 56%) and expert workers (from 88% to 64%), while newspaper reading has preserved best among managers (drop only from 92% to 87%) and low-skilled workers (from 74% to 67%).

On the other hand, there is no clear information on the drop of print run of newspapers and some sources indicate that print run of newspapers “has remained fairly stable” (Beumers, Hutchings & Rulyova 2009, 21), while some indicate drop, even significant one, in readership figures for some newspapers like SPID-Info and Moskovsky Komsomolets (Russian Periodical Press Market 2008, 23).

## Magazines

Magazine reading represents partly different picture than reading of newspapers. Magazine reading is more popular in upper levels of society, among managers, supervisors and experts. The difference

between higher classes and lower classes is, however, not a great one and in comparison to 1998 it has been declining. Differences in magazine choice are also clearly visible between classes. Expert workers are a group which choose often Cosmopolitan or other Western brand magazine, while their reading of car magazine *Za rulem* is very low. *Zdorovye* as the most popular popular-science magazine has highest popularity among expert workers. *Karavan istorii*, journal for popular entertainment reading, enjoys popularity among entrepreneurs and expert workers.

Between 1998 and 2007 especially magazines paved the way of the distinctive choice of the new middle class. Magazine reading became more popular in almost all population groups but especially among skilled workers, among whom it had been rather low in 1998. Especially magazines which were oriented to women or for hobbyists and people interested in specific topics became more popular.

Table 9.3. Reading of magazines among social classes (%)

Class	entrepr.	managers	supervisors	expert workers	skilled workers	low-skilled workers	others
Reads magazines 1998	37.8	54.1	42.3	47.2	32.0	28.8	21.8
Read magazines 2007	39.7	53.8	47.3	54.5	41.7	37.3	31.3
Read <i>Liza</i>	8.2	6.6	8.9	4.5	7.3	8.9	4.4
Read <i>Cosmopolitan</i>	2.7	4.4	2.1	7.6	1.1	5.4	1.6
Read <i>Za rulem</i>	9.6	4.4	4.1	1.5	5.1	5.4	1.6
Read <i>Zdorovye</i>	0	1.1	1.4	4.5	3.1	0.7	1.4
Read <i>Karavan istorii</i>	4.1	1.1	0.7	3.0	1.4	1.7	0.9

Magazine reading has increased especially among workers among whom it was rather low in 1998. This may indicate some kind of diffusion of cultural habits to lower classes, since the increase has happened especially on the basis of education. The more educated people in all classes have started to read magazines more often, while the less educated ones have not increased their magazine reading with the same pace.

Table 9.4. Education and change in magazine reading according to class

Class	Education	Read magazines in 1998	Read magazines in 2007	Change
entrepreneurs	higher	36	56	+20
	lower	39	35	-4
managers	higher	59	64	+5
	lower	46	42	-4
supervisors	higher	47	63	+15
	lower	39	38	-1
experts	higher	49	61	+12
	lower	44	44	0
skilled workers	higher	46	55	+9
	lower	26	37	+11
low skilled workers	higher	31	51	+20
	lower	29	35	+6
others	higher	36	46	+10
	lower	19	29	+10

Among people with lower education the magazine reading increased only among workers and non-active population. In these groups most popular magazines were often those aimed for wider population like women's magazine Liza or most widely spread car magazine Za rulem, but also some Western brands like Glamour or Cosmopolitan, which popular also among low-skilled workers. It seems to be that class division on the basis on professional skills is not sufficient factor in defining the choice of magazines. Actually the differences in magazine reading between social classes have become smaller between 1998 and 2007, while magazines has gained new audience

especially among workers who did not read them so actively at the end of the 1990s, but the connection with education has become more important.

In new Russian media landscape magazines, especially those based on foreign brands, represent the new consumerist middle-class values. Middle class in Russia is often characterised by economic possibilities and level of consumption rather than position in production. Also level of education is seen as indicator of belonging to middle class (Gladarev & Tsingman 2007, 65–66). While the Soviet society did not pay much attention to consumption or consumer products, the new possibilities opened after the collapse of the former system and economic growth (since 1998) have increased interest to more varied consumption and the need for information in this consumer market has been important. Many Russian magazines have even been launched for the consumers of the middle class. Magazines like “Kak potratit” (supplement to Vedomosti newspaper), Vash dosug (Your freetime) and Ya pokupayu (I am buying) present new ways of consumption for different audiences. Even more high class magazines, glamorous ones (glyamurnye in Russian), present new kind of elite goods for affluent consumers who have not yet developed a proper taste and consumer culture in order to make individual choices.

Income, or actually the personal self-judgement of economic possibilities, is a clear indicator of magazine reading. Of those whose economic situation is better many more read magazines than of those who are poor. The improved economic possibilities were also a significant factor in increase of reading of magazines. While in 1998 over half of population (54%) could not make ends meet or had problems in buying clothes, in 2007 only 20% belonged to these groups. Magazine reading had actually not increased inside income groups (significant increase only among those for whom buying a real estate would be a problem), but increase in total figures happened because people moved towards more affluent income groups. Changes in income have certainly had impact on individual level, but on group level magazine reading has increased only among supervisors and skilled workers with income higher than average. Similar connection can not be found between newspaper reading and economic situation. It may be that newspaper reading is not as dependent on economic possibilities (also because various free sheets are included in the category of newspapers) than magazine reading.

Table 9.5. Income and change in reading of magazines in different classes.

Class	Income group	read magazines in 1998	read magazines in 2007
entrepreneurs	higher	35%	37%
	middle	43%	55%
	lower	--	--
managers	higher	55%	61%
	middle	54%	40%
	lower	53%	--
supervisors	higher	38%	51%
	middle	55%	41%
	lower	33%	40%
experts	higher	59%	57%
	middle	50%	49%
	lower	38%	--
skilled workers	higher	23%	47%
	middle	41%	39%
	lower	28%	36%
low skilled workers	higher	39%	44%
	middle	32%	34%
	lower	24%	29%
others	higher	51%	50%
	middle	26%	31%
	lower	16%	18%

Education has not significant influence on variance in magazine reading among expert workers. It seems that among them the more important factor is cultural interest. High correlation can be found also among non-reading of magazines and non-participation in cultural activities like going to

theatre, cinema or libraries. This can be explained mainly by place of living: in countryside and in small settlements this kind of cultural activities are rare.

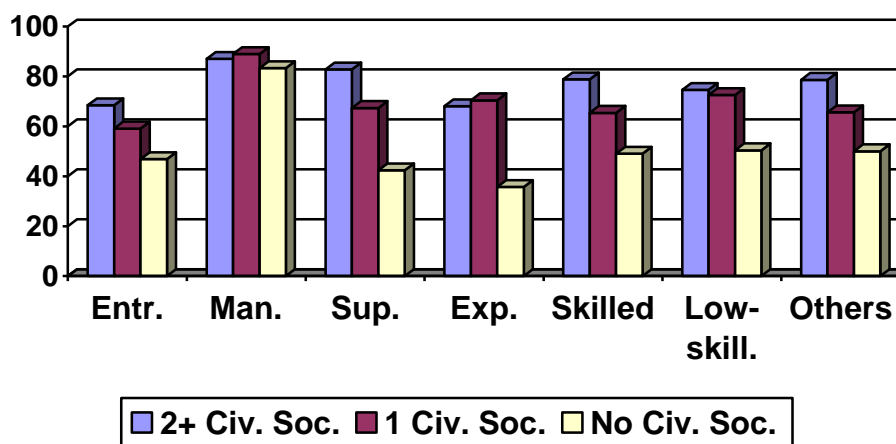
Especially those who feel that their well-being has improved since 1998 are active magazines readers. Of those whose well-being has improved 50% read magazines while of those whose well-being has worsened only 27% read magazines. This connection is higher than average among expert workers on the one hand and among those who are not working on the other.

### **Active newspaper reader in civil society**

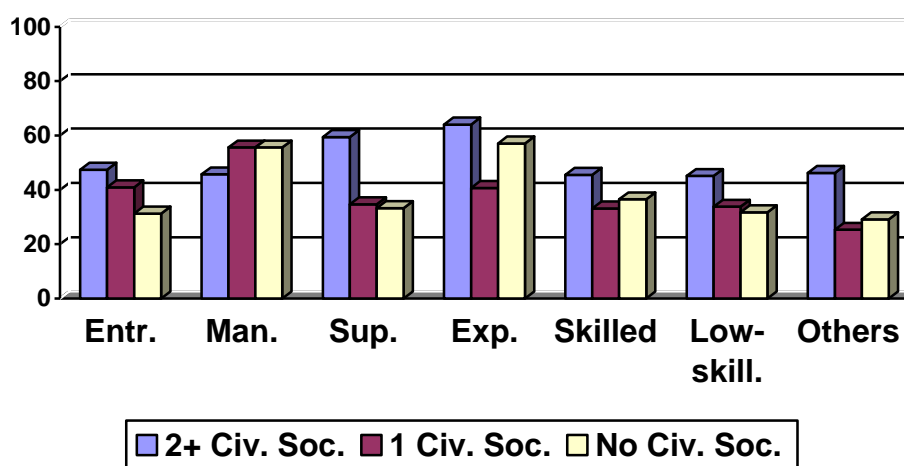
An interesting relationship can also be found between various forms of civil society activity and newspaper reading. Civil society activity was measured by asking participation in various civil organisations from political parties to sport clubs and consumer organisations as well as taking part in strikes, voting in local elections in last two years and so on. Of all Russians 29% took part at least two of these activities, 38% took part in only one activity (most often voted in elections) and 33% did not take part in any such activity. Differences between classes were rather small, usually participation increased with the social position, even if entrepreneurs were the least active in civil society (44% taking part in no such activity). Of low-skilled workers 30% did not take part at all, while of managers 20% were non-active.

Newspaper reading is also related to civil society activity. This is even more remarkable when different social classes are analysed separately. Various forms of participation in civil society increase clearly reading of newspapers (Figure 9.1). Of workers who did not take part in civil society activities only 50% read newspapers, while over 70% of workers who take part in some civil society activity read newspapers. In case of other media differences are much smaller, and in case of radio and television even not significant. Magazine reading did not cause such a clear connection with civil society activity (Figure 9.2.).

**Figure 1.**  
**Newspaper reading according to class**  
**and civil society activity**



**Figure 2.**  
**Magazine reading according to class**  
**and civil society activity**



In comparison with 1998, the general participation level has decreased mainly because less people took part in elections. The relationship between newspaper reading and civil society activity increased between 1998 and 2007 mainly because newspaper reading decreased more among those who did not participate (or those who did not read papers stopped to participate).

In some groups only, the reading of newspapers and magazines did not correlate with civil society participation. Among managers there was not such a relationship between reading of newspapers and magazines and civil society activity and also experts who participated in civil society activities did not read magazines more actively. Newspaper reading is significantly more frequent even if a person participated in some civil society activity.

## Cultural orientation as an indicator for magazine reading

While newspaper reading is linked with civil society activity, magazine reading represents another kind of links with social activity. People who go to theatre, concert, library or movies more often tend to read magazines, and especially women's magazines like *Cosmopolitan*, *Liza*, *Sem dnei*, *Krestyanka* and *Glamour* more often. The non-reading of magazines is clear indicator for not taking part in such kind of cultural activities. The difference is visible especially among supervisors and entrepreneurs when classes are analysed separately. Among managers and expert workers the connection is much lower since these groups are active magazine readers, whose non-participation in cultural activities might depend of other factors than lack of interest. There is certainly some degree of impact of gender, since women are more active participants in cultural activities as well as magazine readers. Also among men cultural activity is connected with magazine reading, even if cultural activity does not increase reading of magazines on the same pace as is the case with women. Among women who are active participants in cultural activities 66% read magazines, while of culturally active men only 46% does so. Among non-participants these figures are 19% for men and 22% for women.

Interestingly, also such a free time activities like going to cafés, bars or pubs, taking sport exercise and drinking alcohol at home have positive correlation with magazine reading, while of them only libraries and concerts have some significant positive correlation with newspaper reading. Also this indicates that magazine reading is more related with active lifestyle while newspaper reading is more wide spread habit and not directly linked with life style.

When cultural activity is measured as a combination cultural activities (going to theatre, movies, libraries and concerts), most active are expert workers of which over half are very active participant in cultural activities, while of low-skilled workers only 18% belong to this group. Culturally active people are more active magazine readers. Of those who are very active participants over half (57%) reads magazines, while of non-participants only 20% read magazines, while differences in newspapers reading between these groups are practically non-existent (62–69% reads newspapers in all groups). When classes are analysed separately the connection between magazine reading and cultural activity is especially high among entrepreneurs, supervisors and expert workers. Class have only minor role in connection which exists between cultural activity and magazine reading: in all classes cultural activity and magazine reading are strongly linked. Newspaper reading on the other hand is practically not linked with cultural activity.

Table 9.6. Cultural activity and magazine reading on the basis of social class

Class		high cultural activity	low cultural activity	no cultural activity
entrepr.	Reads newspapers	73%	50%	48%
	Read magazines	68%	29%	19%
managers	Reads newspapers	88%	85%	86%
	Read magazines	71%	43%	40%
supervisors	Reads newspapers	70%	68%	67%
	Read magazines	70%	40%	22%
experts	Reads newspapers	70%	59%	56%
	Read magazines	67%	46%	44%
skilled workers	Reads newspapers	72%	69%	61%
	Read magazines	58%	44%	25%
low skilled workers	Reads newspapers	76%	63%	66%
	Read magazines	58%	40%	26%
others	Reads newspapers	61%	64%	64%
	Read magazines	56%	34%	16%

Also consumer orientation, as measured by buying costly things during last five years, is a clear indicator for magazine reading. Especially acquisition of computer, car and mobile phone have clear link with magazine reading. When acquisition of 16 things is grouped together the correlation with magazine reading is even higher. Of those (28% of total population) who have acquired not a single of these things 24% reads magazines, of those who have acquired from one to three things (46% of total population) 35% reads magazines, while of those who have acquired at least four of these things as many as 51% read magazines.

## **Conclusion**

When media use by different social classes is analysed in Russian context, it seems that other factors, mainly education, cultural activity and civil society participation explain differences better than social class based on profession. On the other hand, class has also some impact on media use, mainly because education, income and also cultural and civil society participation have different impact on media use among different classes. While television has almost universal audience and choice of radio channel is not dependent on class, the most important differences can be found in newspaper reading and magazine reading. Newspapers are more related with civil society activity, while magazines are linked with education and cultural capital as measured in participation in cultural life. Also economic possibilities and consumer culture, and possibilities to participate in it, have important role in magazine reading.

Between 1998 and 2007 Russian society has experienced a decade of economic growth which has changed also Russian media market. Western brands have appeared in magazine market, in many cases also in form of Western ownership, while Western capital has been only in minor role in many other sectors of Russia media. Magazines have become the clearest factor of distinction among 'middle class' public. Not only class position as such but also other forms of distinction like education and income have been important when Russians have decided to get information from magazines.

In Russia, magazines, not newspapers in the first place, promote values of modernity and modern society. In Russia the division is not primarily between the papers of entertainment around the ideal of the 'story' and the papers of factuality around the ideal of 'information' as was the case in America of the 1890s (Schudson 1978, 89), but between consumption and political participation as two distinctive alternatives in being part of society. Certainly these two approaches are related and many citizens are not taking part of any of them. Many newspapers in the regional level survive with just a modification of the Soviet model, while for magazines a key to success has been

complete and very profound renovation, promoted also by competition from Western brands. Those magazines, *Krestyanka* and *Rabotnitsa*, quite popular still in 1998, have not been especially successful in this and has lost major part of their audience, even if their renovation has been greater than that of most of regional newspapers, which has anyhow been too little and too late. Successful ones, like *Za rulem*, have preserved their positions in very competitive market.

A future development of media market in Russia might be in some degree similar with the development in China. Also in China the middle class has been accumulating wealth and a consumer culture has been developing. The media “has become apolitical in order to accommodate the middle class with its consumer, popular and leisure culture” and it may even “weaken the political and civic interests of the middle class” (Wang 2009, 55–56). In Russia this role to accommodate consumer culture seems to remain mainly as a task for magazines (and possibly for some television programmes), while newspapers may keep political interests alive, although with decreasing popularity.

**Note:** In published book only a common bibliography at the end of the book

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