Don't let them in ?

Exclusion effects of new career requirements in management.

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1. <u>Introduction</u>

In the past years, changes at the macroeconomic and organisational level have introduced new aspects into the discussion of career. Since about a decade the academic and practitioner literature on organisations widely assumes that pressures such as globalisation, technological change and shortening of product cycles lead to radical organisational innovations. These are discussing under terms of cellular (Miles et al. 1997), empowering (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998), fractal (Warnecke, 1993), heterarchical (Hedlund, 1986), learning (Cohen and Sproul, 1996), organisation or business process reengineering (Hammer and Champy, 1994) and differentiated network (Nohria and Ghoshal, 1997; Sydow, 1992). It is widely assumes that these innovations are leading to more decentralised organisations consisting of small units and small firms (Zenker and Hesterly, 1997). In addition, there are signs that we enter a post industrial age where the traditional emphasis on the production of material goods is replaced by concentrating on more intangible goods like service or knowledge. The proportion of people working in the production of information and knowledge is steadily increasing since the beginning of the 20th century (Barley, 1994; Drucker, 1986).

The classical managerial "organisation career" was traditionally defined by a high degree of rationalisation and a close and long-term link to an organisation. The organisational and technological changes of the post-industrial society have lead to new conceptualisations of career. The link to a specific organisation that is one of the major characteristics of 'traditional' careers becomes weaker and the long-term commitment is replaced by short-termed projects like specific assignments. In turn, this has further consequences for the

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shaping of career paths as well as for organisational and individual career planning. To be sure, this is not to say that the traditional landscape of careers will completely disappear. However, these examples are part of a broader picture that that clearly entails signs of significant change relevant in managerial careers (von Rosenstiel et al., 1997). New concepts like the "boundaryless career" (Arthur et al., 1996) or the "protean career" (Hall et al., 1994) are the obvious signs of a new wave of research trying to deal with these issues.

This paper shows that the process of acquiring behaviour necessary for successfully coping with the new requirements in managerial career fields contains specific exclusion mechanisms linked with social origin and heritage.[*] These exclusion mechanisms are not totally new, but gain importance for managers' careers through these new developments. Our line of argument follows three major steps. First, we will briefly outline the historical genesis and significance of organisational careers (chapter 2). Second, the changing landscape of organisational careers and the new requirements for sucessfully coping with these requirements in terms of necessary capitals in the sense of Pierre Bourdieu will be discussed (chapter 3). Finally, the social exclusion effects of the process of acquiring these capitals will be outlined (chapter 4).

2. <u>The forming of the "organisational career"</u>

2.1. The career as metaphor

For most of the people, the word "career" is concerned with activities at work and upward movements in terms of promotion. "Making career" is therefore meant for someone reaching progressively a leading position in his/her work. This dominant and popular interpretation of what a career should be is actually both recent and obsolete. With recent we mean the relatively late development of this specific signification of the "career" which certainly wouldn't occur without the existence of the particular social framework given by the industrial society. Career can seen as a metaphor: the Latin origin of the word is *carrara* (which comes itself from *carrus*, easy to recognise in the English words carriage or car), meaning both the road and the lists used for the carriage tournaments. The figurative sense of career, applied to the live course of people can be found at least since the 17th century, but was only meant to consider life or more precisely a work activity as a whole and not as in the modern sense as the evolving sequence of employed-related positions. The modern sense of career has to be seen in relation to this special pattern. It shows the logic of the utilisation of this metaphor: the image of a road, delimited on both sides with a departure and an arrival fits well to the "organisational career". The use of a metaphor, as Morgan (1997) wrote, is far more as just a device for embellishing discourse. It implies a way of thinking and a way of seeing that pervade how we understand our world generally. In this particular case, if the career – that we define, following Arthur and al. (1996) as the "evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time" – refers to a kind of road, it will create valuable insights about how a career has to be conducted. The road is leading somewhere and to reach this goal one cannot leave the road looking for a short-cut. This means that the modern sense of careers, is still determined by the idea of a regular and successful progression in a relatively narrow area given by an organisation or a domain of competence (or both of them).

2.2.   The rationalisation of the career

This evolution to the modern sense of career was permitted by the social changes which occur during the period of industrialisation: Social mobility was made possible – or at least easier – and no more completely pre-determinate by birth. The study by Boltanski (1982) about the constitution of the managers (*les cadres*) as a new social group in France during the 20th century brings several interesting elements to our own focus. He showed how the rising industrial and financial companies with the growing complexity of their organisational structures were lead to develop a rational organisation of career, in order to integrate fractions of the bourgeoisie to make managers of them. The latter, were used in the former domestic capitalistic system to a certain security and a relative control of their destiny through the importance of private property and familial transmission. In this way, the rational organisation of career can be seen as a kind of compensation for the loss due to the modernisation and the structural changes in the economic field and a manner for the organisation to legitimate its own rules.

The importance of legitimisation is a central element for the rationalisation of career which lead to the necessity of a maximum reduction of the arbitrariness of the decisions taken within the organisation. This has already been observed by Max Weber (1971), who considered the career as a generic feature of a modern, rational society. For it was essential in modern societies based on rational authority to ensure that those individuals in position of power would not be inclined to use such positions for self-aggrandisement. The career was the rational solution to this problem. As Mike Savage (1998) underlines, by emphasising to individual employees that they could expect to be moved between jobs they would come not to treat any one job as a sinecure but would be more likely to develop a "vocational" orientation to their work. This can be connected to the efficiency-principle that sociologists like Offe (1970) defined as distinctive trait of the industrial society: Efficiency oriented attitudes can only be expected from individuals if they believe in their chances of social ascent. At the organisational level, each decision has to be rationally justified and must therefore comply with the written and official rules of the organisation, known by each of its member. The development of the "organisational career" pattern is therefore connected with a growing demand for fairness: with rationality, the criterions for decisions are supposed to be objective and no more related to a social capital unequally distributed among individuals. Numerous hierarchical scales are a condition for this career pattern. For the organisation, the career is closely linked with both the possibility of planing its future manager needs and the diffusion of a high performing tool of control and discipline as showed by Savage (1998).

The "organisational career" considered as the ideal-type of career in the industrial society can be described as follows: One starts his/her career at a low level of an organisation and manages to climb progressively the hierarchical ladder. Each progression is due to good performances at work and belief in a high potential from their supervisors. It is, with another name, what Bendix (1956) called in his career typology – as growing pattern during the industrialisation of the society – the "bureaucratic career" which tends to show a succession of salaried jobs and may lead up to an executive position. Such a career pattern means that the organisation is also interested in investing in an individual's potential by, for instance, financing further education measures. Security and predictability can therefore be seen on the one hand in the long-term commitment between the employee and the organisation and on the other hand, in the clear knowing of what has to be done (following the written rules) to climb the ladder.

2.3. The career as provider of security

The popularity of the need hierarchy theory of Maslow among scholars and practitioners during the 60's, although it has also been vigorously criticised, is a precious indicator of the importance given to security in the industrial society. Indeed, Maslow in his well known pyramid putted the safety needs just after the elementary physiological ones. This safety needs refer to the need for the a secure environment, free from threats of physical or psychological harm. It is of course not to say that industrial organisations may bring this kind of comfort but as said before, career brought some elements able to contribute in fulfilling this needs.

The safety aspect of career for individuals has to be seen in their possibility to plan their own development into the organisation, under the condition that they have accepted and incorporated its values and rules (Grey, 1994). This is also part of the rationality which distinguishes the industrial society: Weber, once again, was very conscious of the importance of this point and considered that the rationality of the organisation shows in its ability to "calculate" the consequences of its actions. In this way, it seems logical that organisations of the industrial era accorded a strategic role to planning. Writing about career planning, Douglas and Francine Hall (1980) propose in order to ameliorate its effectiveness, the utilisation of a career-growth cycle: The process is triggered by a job that provides challenging, stretching goals. The clearer and more challenging the goals, the more effort the person will exert – and the more effort exerted, the more likely it is that good performance will result. The authors insist on the fact that each job should represent a challenge, and the sequence of jobs should be planned to provide a systematic and continuing growth of career skills. The organisation and the employees are in this way making a kind of deal: The company needs skilled and high motivated people, and the employees become gratification if they act the way the organisation expects them to do. But one condition remains absolutely necessary to permit the use of such a career-growth cycle: the long-term commitment. This abstract of a French management book for practitioners illustrates well what have just been said:

"The first need to fulfil and manage one's life is a minimum of safety, so that one's mind is not always preoccupied with the fear of what tomorrow will be and can really dedicate all his attention for his work. French companies give a great safety to their managers in the way that the risk to be fired and to be unemployed is very low; fire a manager is not part of the traditions, except in the very exceptional case of fraud." (Froissard, 1969; quoted by Boltanski and Chiappello, 1999).

3. The new career fields: from security to employability

The new developments in the economic environment and the organisational structures and processes have a number of effects on the management of organisations. Take as an example the degree to which front-line managers are provided with greater autonomy. It seems likely that they are allowed "to design their own jobs, fix their own processes, and do whatever it takes to satisfy a customer" (Hamel and Prahalad, 1994). Hence, these new developments question the degree to which responsibility between line and staff functions is shared (Mayrhofer, 1999). Likewise, more flexible, project-based forms of organisation are advocated (Whittington et al., 1998). In a similar way it is suggested that formal and informal

information networks bind autonomous units together (Chakravarthy and Gargiulo, 1998). These changes increase demands on members of these new organisations who have to exhibit higher degrees of co-operation, co-ordination, organisation and self control (Drumm, 1996) as well as personal skills such as "strong interpersonal, communication and listening skills; ... an ability to construct long-term relationships; ... tolerance of high level of ambiguity and uncertainty; ... a good strategic sense, vision and ideas; ... a capacity to learn quickly and to adapt in new situations" (Ferlie and Pettigrew, 1998).

Careers are affected by these development, too. The changes in the macroeconomic context and the organisational design do affect the context for careers as well as their shape and crucial issues that emerge. example , new knowledge based occupational fields will replace more traditional occupations. The changing focus of industry in a post industrial context will require new skills of the human resources. Specifically for people with a background in business administration, there will be growing opportunities to work as "symbol analysts". These specialists look for specific data and transfer this data into information and, further on, into knowledge (e.g., Güldenberg et al., 1999). Furthermore, continuous upward mobility will be rather the exception than the rule. Through flatter hierarchies, new organisational forms and increasing economic pressures it will be more likely that there are gaps in the career advancement of persons, that organisations and occupational fields have to be changed more frequently and/or involuntarily, that alternatives to hierarchical advancement have to be developed (e.g., Domsch and Siemers, 1994). Likewise, traditional ties to an organisation are substituted by more fragile forms of employment. Full time employment with a spatially well defined working place is likely to be replaced by new forms of employment like fixed term contracts, part time employment, teleworking, or contracts for work leading to "patchwork careers". Thus, new self employed people will constitute an increasing proportion of the work force. Especially within the group of highly qualified specialists new forms of work will develop. The number of new self employed people that no longer work for one single employer but are involved in a number of projects for various employers at the same time will grow (e.g., Flecker and Schienstock, 1991).

After discussion the loss of security and an individualistic emphasis as two major effects of these changes for the new careers we will briefly outline the major requirements for the new careers in terms of personal capitals and introduce the career related work of Pierre Bourdie as a theoretical frame of reference for our analysis.

3.1.   Major changes

3.1.1. The loss of security

Quoted by Moss Kanter (1990), a manager of the Silicon Valley says: "The word career is an interesting one that I think is almost inappropriate to this industry and this Valley, because "career" to me implies some sort of planning. I think of people who graduated with an MBA and go to work for a large company and they have their career path laid out in front of them." So if notions like "security" or "planning" were good catchwords to define the "organisational career", "employability" becomes their pendant for the "post-industrial career". Employability means the capital of competence people have to own in order to be called for working on projects. The employability grows when someone goes from a project to another and by doing this, acquires a new competence. It is a personal capital constituted by the sum of disposable competence that everyone has to manage for himself. This notion of employability can

therefore be considered as a reflection of human capital theory which rests on the idea of the enterprising self, who takes responsibility for career development through seeking "opportunities in the market" (du Gay, 1996).

As Moss Kanter writes, "in a the post-entrepreneurial era in which corporations need the flexibility to change and restructuring is a fact of life, the promise of very long-term employment security would be the wrong one to expect employers to make. But employability security – the knowledge that today's work will enhance the person's value in terms of future opportunities – that is a promise that can be made and kept". In other words, if we're looking for something compensating the loss of the security of planning, it could only be seen in the gain of exciting autonomy. New career paths are therefore associated with notions like adaptability, mobility, improvisation, discontinuity, flexibility, and so on. The changes of the organisational forms leads to transformations and even disappearing of the traditional rigid hierarchical structures; this also means that the role of the managers changes. The military metaphor, typical for the industrial organisation (Weick, 1979), that gave the image of a clear chain of command, of unquestioned authority, of duties precisely defined for everyone and precisely determined criterion for promotion is now obsolete.

3.1.2. The individualistic career

Miles and Snow (1996) insist on the idea that the major shifts in career patterns have been shaped by the evolution of organisational forms. The two authors, using the time periods identified by Toffler (1981), argue that this evolution leads us until the so-called "fourth-wave organisation", defined as a multifirm network organisation (also called "cellular organisation"). In this – already existing – kind of organisation, individual and organisational roles are supposed to be reversed: The organisation will become a tool of its members. As Miles and Snow write, "its members will be very much like the self-directing professionals of the pre-organisational period. However, instead of acting as free-standing professionals, they will magnify their own competencies and resources by linking them to others of a similar mind and talent".

Most authors writing about career have analysed the recent changes in terms of decreasing importance of the organisation in the shaping of individual careers. Closely linked with this idea is a growing individualism due to the fact that people have to manage their career by themselves without the security offered by the traditional organisational frame. Their possibilities and opportunities may be more numerous, leading to the growing autonomy observed by Moss Kanter. The biggest difference between the two career patterns is the approach to promotion and future prospects. To sum up, the principal characteristics of the organisational career path are a job for life, a career with a visible promotion ladder with professional expertise conditioned by an enduring employment relationship founded on the notions of loyalty and commitment. By contrast, the new career patterns seem to be based on the notion of employability, individual responsibility, skill mix, limited promotion / sideways moving, market-driven values, individualism (Mulholland, 1998).

3.2. Key requirements

3.2.1. Acquisition of meta-skills

Managers, like others categories, are concerned by this evolution and changes. If the problems a manager may be confronted to in his/her work are often from a different nature than the problems of a blue-collar, the theme of exclusion because of the new career patterns may be relevant – even if with different intensity – for all social groups. Managers have to face the following questions: Are they able to accompany the changes that occur in the organisations ? Do they have the needed skills ? A first kind of answer to this questions would be to consider them as due to a problem of generation. Each generation, taken in its sociological sense, shares well defined historical experiences. In this particular case, we could talk about the "organisational career managers generation". This would signify for this group the existence of a particular identity type, which emerged along the specific social configuration of the industrial society. Baker and Aldrich (1996), giving some limits of the concept of "boundaryless career" (which will be taken here as an ideal-type of the new career patterns) insist on the advantage of people who are beginning their careers over people who are already established in organisationally bounded careers: "One reason for this advantage is that people who have spent large amounts of time in bounded careers are unlikely to have develop the "meta-skills" that are useful in learning from the experience of moving from employer to employer".

This psychological "meta-skills" (Hall, 1986) enable people to accommodate to new tasks and relationships, and to incorporate new roles and responsibilities into their personal identities. At the opposite, people who self-consciously and reflexively build boundaryless careers from the beginning are more likely to avoid inappropriate attitudes and orientations than others. Such people will be less likely to develop some of the characteristics associated with successful bounded careers, such as unconditional loyalty, personal identification with an employer, and the belief that an employer will provide adequate skill development and acceptable career paths. The absence of this learned characteristics will make people less likely to accentuate personal characteristics at a time when they are most dysfunctional, such as when they are faced with changing situational imperatives.

Following this considerations, the newcomers on the employment market have a clear advantage because they don't have to drag the burden of a socialisation with its specific norms and values which doesn't fit any more to the situation. Nevertheless, this generational interpretation does not give entire satisfaction. To consider the managers who have been socialised at work in the context of the "organisational career" leads to make artificially of them a very homogenous group. First, different level of responsibilities are reflected by the term of manager. Second, and this is the most important point to our topic, this kind of interpretation does not enough take in account the appropriate characteristics leading to success in the new career patterns.

3.2.2. Social networking

Because the most specific characteristic of the "new careers" is certainly the growing value of individualism, it also supposes the capacity for people to move successfully in a space without

the clear structures given by an organisation. That means in particular that an individual in such a career path will have to determine by himself his/her career goals and the ways to reach them in a far more bigger repertoire of possibilities than if linked to an unique organisation. The biggest problem one has to face in such a kind of figure is the urgent necessity to built his/her own social network. As Burt (1992) says, property capitals as financial capital and human capital (charm, health, intelligence...) do not have any value if one doesn't have the opportunity to use them. Generally speaking, this opportunities are permitted by contacts one may have, like friends, relatives, colleagues and so on. All this contacts form the social capital as defined by Burt, or in other words the relationships with other players in a social structure seen as a competitive arena. For the new careers, because you don't have the "natural network" given by an organisation, you better own a strong social capital allowing benefit-rich networks both for job seeking and for career attainment. The network has to be big, but has also to avoid redundant contacts (i.e. leading to the same people). It could be argued that the new generation who will already be confronted to many employers in a short time has more chances to develop such kind of networks than people used to work since years in the same organisation.

This is certainly true. But this approach has also its limits, for it uses a definition of social capital that seems to give the same chances to anyone. People just have to know the rules of the game and to built their own social networks the best they can. Because we think that this chances are not equally distributed, even between managers, we prefer adopt the theoretical frame of Bourdieu's sociological work.

4. <u>About habitus, capitals and fields: A framework</u>

4.1. The career related work of Pierre Bourdieu

The work of Bourdieu (e.g., Bourdieu 1984; Bourdieu 1986) allows a conceputalisation of careers and carer fields that includes various analytical levels. Central to Bourdieu's social theory are the concepts of capitals, habitus and fields. Social fields identify the 'space' within which actors struggle for potential gains, i.e., capitals, according to defined rules. These rules may be i nternalised, i.e. habitualised, by way of socialisation.

According to Bourdieu, social capital involves relationships of mutual recognition and acquaintance, resources based upon social connections and group or class membership. It might be legitimised and institutionalised by family-, group- or class-membership and works as a multiplier which enhances the effects of economic and cultural capital. Closely linked with this first form of capital, the cultural capital designates education, i.e. durable dispositions of the body. To attain these, an internalising process is necessary which consumes time (Bourdieu, 1983). One of the most important assumptions of Bourdieu is that capital is inheritable; this is easy to follow in the case of economic capital, but also allows to insist on the importance of the socialisation and more particularly the first socialisation during which structuring values are transmitted. This transmission strongly determines the possible repertoire of actions, thoughts, perception, and expression. The concept of *habitus*, central to Bourdieu's theory of practice, is characterised as a system of general generative schemes that are both durable (inscribed in the social construction of the self) and transposable (from one social field to another), function on an unconscious plane, and take place within a structured space of possibilities. With the *habitus*, Bourdieu seeks to transcend the opposition between liberty and determinism, or between conditionement and creativity (Bourdieu, 1980). Last but

not least, the social fields may be defined as the location of positions and the relationships between agents; this structure reflects the distribution of power based on the distribution of capital. Each social field is semi-autonomous, characterised by its own determinate agents, its own accumulation of history, its own logic of action, and its own forms of capitals. Because of the access conditions defined by a field, it tends to reproduce itself. This doesn't mean that it cannot change: new agents may acquire dominant positions if a new form of capital appears and is valorised. *Habitus*, field and capitals interact in a number of ways. *Habitus* and field both enable and determine each other: structures are (habitually) incorporated only in particular social fields, and social fields cannot exist without participants who have internalised the "rules of the game" in accordance with their social and habitual dispositions.

4.2. Typology of career fields

Careers can be regarded as (an agent's struggle for) a sequence of positions within one or several social fields that is determined by

- the career fields' structure, i.e. the rules concerning acquisition and transformation of capital and its specific value,

- the habitually incorporated capitals of the agent and

- his strategies and actions.

As far as *habitus* and *capital* are concerned, attribution theory (Herkner 1980, Kelley 1967, Heider 1958) helps to further specify our questions: Habitual characteristics will probably be attributed to internal/stable causes, whereas careerists' strategies and actions will rather be regarded as internal/unstable. As for the social and cultural capital at stake, social fields may prefer either stable and easily exchangeable forms (e.g. academic degrees, social class) or rather unstable forms (e.g. job commitment).

Because of the assumption of *incorporation,* the most important characteristics of social structure should be embodied into habitus. Thus even characteristics of organisational structure and social fields may partly be revealed by analysing members' habitus. The following figure summarises the four assumptions concerning habitus and the connections between habitus, career field, and capital.

As shown in Figure 1, most of the individual, interpersonal, and organisational factors relevant for careers and discussed in the state-of-the-art-chapter are integrated within our conceptual frame. Compared with most of former research, however, we look at these questions from a slightly different angle. Personal traits as a specific form of incorporated cultural capital, for example, may explain careers just because of their role within the rules and structure of social fields. In the same way the agents' political tactics and strategies must fit in with career rules.
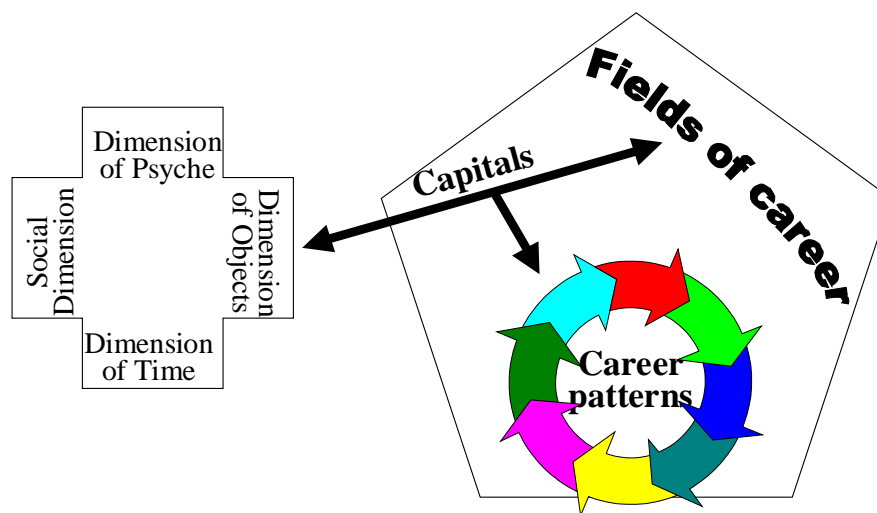
Fig. 1: A habitus based concept of career

One can conceptualise "managerial career fields" as social fields characterised by specific rules for the acquisition and transformation of capital with specific value for the career of an individual. Following what has been said above about the new career patterns, we assume that the field has experienced some changes recently. This may be observed through the new distribution of the different capitals. In particular the social capital seems to have gained in importance. Our purpose in using the work of Bourdieu is to go beyond this social capital by showing how closely the cultural capital is linked to it. This consideration is determinant to understand both the conditions of success in the new career patterns and the problems of exclusion that may occur through this new configuration of capitals in the field.

Two basic dimensions influence the kind of rules that emerge in these fields, both referring to the relationship between relevant actors in the field: the individual as the focal person pursuing a career, i.e. a sequence of positions, and relevant other actors that make such positions available. For the latter, organisations are the most prominent and widespread example. However, other individuals acting for example as single customers are also contained in this category.

The *first dimension* describing the relationship between relevant actors focuses on changes over time in the configuration of relationships between the focal person and other relevant actors. A *stable configuration* would mean that there is a low rate of change in the actor configuration. Vice versa, a *variable configuration* implies that there is a frequent change in the configuration, i.e. actors leave and enter the fields often. To be sure, this dimension does not say anything about the number of actors relevant for the focal actor but about the rate of change in the configuration.

The *second dimension* focuses on the closeness of relationships and the degree of mutual influence between the focal actors and the other actors in the configuration. In other words, it describes how integrated the actors in the fields are, i.e. how much actions by one of the relevant actors influence the decision room of the others. *Tight coupling* indicates that the actors in the field are closely intertwined in their decisions. On the other hand, *loose coupling* indicates a type of relationship between actors in a field where the decisions of one actor have only little consequences for the decisions of the other actors in the field. Thus, in a tightly coupled relationsship decisions of one partner reduce the other's degrees of freedom much more than in a loosely coupled relationsship.

Combining these two dimensions leads to a four-cell typology of career fields – not: actual career patterns:
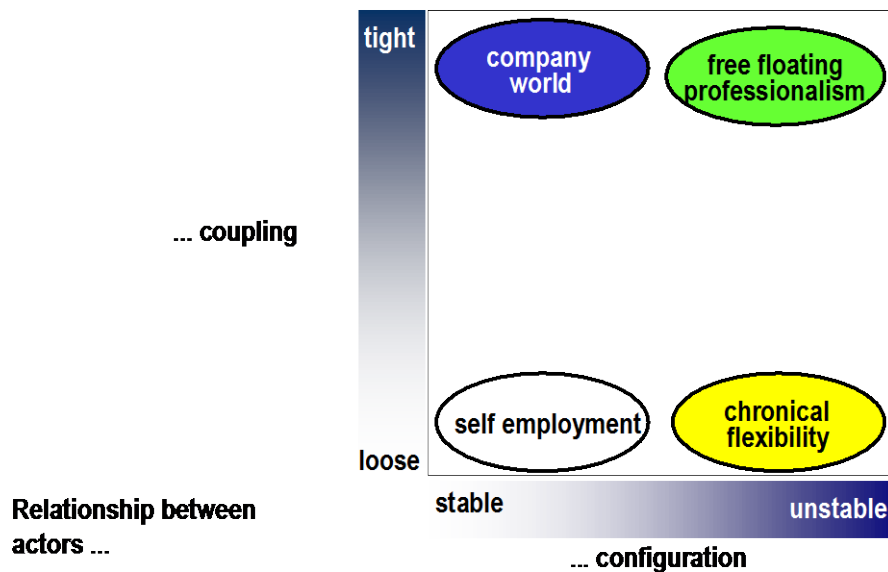
5. Exclusion effects of new managerial career fields

Baron and Markman (2000) In a recentpublished recently a paper about social capital and entrepreneurs' success. They Baron and Markman (2000) propose their own definition of social capital: "The actual and potential resources individuals obtain from knowing others, being part of a social network with them, or merely from being known to them and having a good reputation". What makesIn this paper interesting for our own topic is that the authors associate so-called social skills to the capital in order to answer their question "Hhow does a good reputation (so necessary for building networks) originate?". Four social skills are identified: Social perception, impression management, persuasion and influence, and social adaptability. As we can see, this frame of analysis goes one step forward in comparison withbeyond an exclusive focus on social capital. But However, the question asked by Baron and Markman is only partially answered. The four social skills are supposed to be relatively easy to learn, once they have been identified. Because this skills seem to play an important role in entrepreneurs' success, training should be offered to every entrepreneur, manager, and business school student. Per se, this is a legitimate claim. However, But once again, the dimension of the good or bad pre-dispositions to manage this skills is forgotten. Let us illustrate this with an example used by Baron and Markman: In the case of selection of new employees, the organisation tends to consider only candidates with high level of social capital ("persons with favourable reputation, an established record in the field, a degree from one of the right schools, work experience with good employers,..."). Among this first selection, only the few with high social skills – that mean who are able to interact effectively with others – do really have a chance to get the job. The social skills may appear in the way one talks, in the way he walks, in the way she eats, in the way he's dressed, and so on. In other words, having high social skills means the degree of knowing and mastering the unwritten behavioural codes in specific situations. You may certainly learn that you better not wear white socks with your black suit if you're invited for a job interview in a business bank. Nevertheless, our aim is to

show that the domination of such codes are part of the *habitus* as defined by Bourdieu. This mean in our theoretical framework that the dominant positions in the field of career will be held by individuals with both high social and cultural capitals. And because this capitals are very dependant of the biography and in particular the social origin, we argue that the new career patterns for managers entail a risk of increasingproduce a specific pattern of exclusion and inequalities.

5.1. The social selection within managerial career fields

A study by Hartmann (1996) shows how the recruitment of top-managers tended to become more and more elitist during the last decades. Despite a supposedly more democratic access to higher education through universities or business schools most of the higher positions are being held by individuals from the upper social classes . This phenomenon is observable in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, but less in the United States. Hartmann, like Baron and Markman, insists on the importance of social capitals and skills but also shows the determinant power of the social origin. What is surprising is actually not so the selection itself – remember that we're talking about top-managers, this means people who succeed in reaching a position through a high selective process – but more the fact that the selection has become event tighter. However, the mechanisms of selection increasingly seem to emphasise social skills and not so much the technical skills that are often being taken for granted. At least in some segments of the work force this can be done because of the increased supply of comparatively well educated people with some or even extensive tertiary education. For example, if two individuals with the same diploma are competing for the same job, the selection will be based on the social skills or on what Bourdieu calls the incorporated cultural capital.

The new managerial career fields require large(r) and efficient social network. One prerequisit for building these networks are high social skills. In turn, this constitutes a specific kind of social selection mechanism with a tendency for further increase that affects all the different levels of managers. In this perspective, the phenomena observed by Hartmann is supposed to expand from very top positions to lower management positions.

So if following this hypothesis that in the field of manager career the value of social and cultural capital becomes bigger, the field may reinforce its reproduction by privileging a particular type of *habitus*. To have the appropriate *habitus* signifies in this case the domination of the rules of the game, and more specifically the different codes mentioned above. This means that individuals who grow up in an environment where this codes are already well known and dominated, where solid social networks already exist have logically better chances to succeed in the field of manager career because they will have internalised the rules even before entering the field. An individual who still has to learn this rules faces several problems. In particular, she will first have to be conscious of the necessity to manage them; then, this specific rules may be very different from those learned in another environment, giving her a type of *habitus* very different from the one appropriate to the field (if the *habitus* is referring to an individual, it also reflects the class or group in which it develops). So learning specific social skills for example means in the same time forgetting or consciously suppress incorporated skills which were appropriate for another field. This adaptation problem is the same for someone used to a secure organisational environment for his work. By saying this, we would like to insist on the difficulty to learn social skills and therefore to underline the great advantage of those who acquire them almost naturally and unconsciously during their first socialisation.

5.2.   Filtering through socialisation

The exclusion mechanisms of the new career patterns may be better seen if we consider each level of socialisation as a filter. The first filter would be in the most cases the family. The capitals an individual acquires during this first socialisation are determinant in the formation of the *habitus* and therefore for the shaping of his/her future. The filter role of the first socialisation is easy to see in what numerous sociological studies contributed to show: That the access to top business-schools, i.e. the best way to start a managerial career, is highly socially determined. In other words, families in which the needed capitals are abundant give more chances to their children because it is easier to stay in the world you know and you're coming from than to enter a new one. A very important process of socialisation was traditionally permitted within the organisation. It allowed to acquire progressively new forms of capitals and therefore to adapt slowly to this specific field. That is not to say that everyone could succeed in this process: The primary inequalities between individuals didn't disappear, but the socialisation at work in the organisational structures gave a kind of second chance for the ones who didn't have since the beginning the appropriate capitals. This is actually the idea of the slow and regular climbing of the hierarchical ladder in the "organisational career". The new career patterns made this kind of socialisation far more difficult. Because of its individualism, the new career requires very soon the acquisition and the management of the capitals valued in its field. If one needs time to acquire them, he/she also looses time in the building of the social network which will have bad consequences on his/her employability and reputation. In this way, our hypothesis is that the filter of the first socialisation will become finer, meaning that it will become more difficult to succeed in the field of manager career if one does not acquire very soon the appropriate capitals.

6.   <u>Conclusions</u>

Management books for practitioners as well as scholarly books have a prescriptive and normative power because of their ascribed reputation, their potential use, and because they illustratie their hypotheses and assertions with examples. In the case of managerial careers, both kind of books focus on the changing role of the organisation for individuals in working life. Many authors describe the coming trend as consisting of a growing individualisation of the career, the membership with an organisations being just a temporary way of acquiring more competence and enlarging ones social network in order to be equipped for other interesting assignments in others organisations.

This process of individualisation seems to mean, at the first glance, that the chances of success will be fairer distributed: Because everyone is responsible for the building of its own network, each success is a pure personal success. The higher positions, the best projects will be held by the smartest persons, the ones who have understood the new rules of the game better and who worked harder to use them in an efficient way.

The enthusiastic advocates of the new career patterns (over-)emphasise the gain of individual liberty. However, there is as usually another, in this case dark side of the coin. As a tacit assumption they seem to consider the actors playing in this game as un-socialised entities, able to adapt easily to a changing environment with its new rules and new values. In this paper, we have stressed that socialisation is a long term process with quite stable results. If certain socialisation effects do not fit any more to a particular field because of the changing

values of capitals, the *hysteresis* effect, i.e. caused by practices adapted to conditions that doesn't exist any more (Bourdieu, 1980), is strong enough to make a rapid adaptation very difficult . Thus, the risk of exclusion is increasing.

Paradoxically, the new career fields, despite their supposed individualism, privileges particular forms of capitals for which inheritance of various capitals through various socialisation processes gains importance. As a consequence, because of the new requirements to succeed the new managerial career is characterised by increasingly strict access conditions to this particular social field. In turn, this means that newcomers not familiar with the rules of the field (ideally since their childhood) will have more difficulties to enter the field than in previous times. The exclusion effects can be seen in the fact that in the new managerial career fields new forms of capital which permit the entry of new *habitus* are not valued. On the contrary, the importance of already existing aspects of social and cultural capitals are emphasised, thus benefiting 'privileged' inheritors are clearly advantaged and reinforcing the social reproduction of the field.

7. <u>References</u>

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