

Hierarchical Order in Different Organisational Forms

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ABSTRACT

It is well known that orthodox /bureaucratic organisations are quite hierarchical. The emergence and introduction of new organisational forms (e.g. post-modern, participative, professional or network organisations) were based on high hopes that old-fashioned and paternalistic superior-/subordinate-relationships could be overcome.

However, this paper starts with the paradox that hierarchical superior-/subordinate-relationships seem to be quite flexible and can produce persistent hierarchical social order in many different organisational forms.

In order to interrogate this strange relationship systematically and in more detail, a dichotomical model of persistent hierarchical order has been developed which describes the rhetorical relationship(s) between managers and employees or, more generally speaking, between superiors and subordinates. The model will then be applied to different archetypical forms of organisations in order to investigate whether or not hierarchical order persists in different types of organisations.

The analysis will reveal that hierarchical order is much more widespread and persistent than thought. Particularly post-modern, participative and network organisations are much less alternative than their labels and common understandings may suggest. It therefore may be concluded that

1. the findings concerning both archetypical as well as existing types of organisations raise the question whether 'hierarchy - and dominance-free' organisations are rare instances which somewhere exist or completely absent from the contemporary organisational landscape;
2. we need to further develop our understanding of the necessary preconditions for truly hierarchy-free types of organisation, i.e. the relevant structural arrangements as well as the sets of values which guide individual attitudes, behaviour and social actions;
3. we need to understand better the theoretical as well as real-existing socio-cultural obstacles for the realisation of such types of organisations and how these can be overcome.

INTRODUCTION

There is a widely shared understanding that (almost all) human societies, social systems and organisations have been structured as group-based social hierarchies (e.g. Courpasson / Clegg 2006, Sidanius / Pratto 1999, Scott 1990, Mousnier 1973, Laumann et al. 1971). One way or another, most social systems are based on relationships of superiors and subordinates, master and servant, manager and employee – at least, so far. Because of their different status both have quite different views on the world in general, and the social system in particular. Nonetheless, although superiors' and subordinates' status and social positions, their interests and ideologies, power and social actions differ to quite some extent, *exactly this strange relationship and interaction seems to produce persistent social order.*

There has been already a broad range of quite diverse approaches investigating hierarchical social systems in general and superior/subordinate-relationships in particular.

- a) conservative / system-justifying concepts: new institutional economics (North 1991, Williamson 1975, Alchian / Demsetz 1972, Coase 1937), socio-biology (Wilson 1975), functionalistic / orthodox approaches in the fields of management and organisation theories (Chandler 1962, Drucker 1954, Fayol 1949, Taylor 1911/1967).
- b) socio-political, moral-philosophical, and critical concepts: Labour Process Theory and Industrial Relations (Friedman 1977, Braverman 1974), organisational politics (Mintzberg 1985, Burnes 1961, Thompson 1961), (Alvesson / Willmott 1992a, b), power and control, ideology critique (Clegg et al. 2006, Beetham 1991, Abercrombie 1980, Clegg 1979).
- c) sociological, socio-psychological, psychological and anthropological concepts: social

stratification and class society (Mousnier 1973, Laumann et al. 1971, Moore 1971, Wrong 1971, Mills 1956, Davis / Moore 1945, Mosca 1939), social identity theory (Musson / Duberley 2007, Elstak / Van Riel 2005, Turner 1999, Ashforth / Mael 1989, Tajfel / Turner 1979), social dominance theory (Sidanius et al. 2004, Sidanius / Pratto 1999), system justification theory (Jost / Hunyady 2005), anthropological approaches (Scott 1990).

All of these approaches have been applied to classical hierarchical organisations (bureaucracies, Tayloristic and Fordistic organisations, modern orthodox business organisations) to a great extent. What has been investigated comparatively less is whether hierarchical order is such an overarching principle that it is relevant to (almost) every type of organisation. In this sense, this paper addresses two questions:

1. How do superiors' and subordinates' differing social actions, identities and ideologies constitute together persistent hierarchical social order?
2. Is hierarchical order restricted to orthodox organisations or can it be identified in different types of organisations?

For interrogating these questions, this paper develops a theoretical model which describes how superiors' and subordinates' identities, ideologies and social action jointly constitute persistent hierarchical order. Secondly, the model will be applied to different archetypical forms of organisations in order to investigate whether or not hierarchical order persists in different types of organisations.

AM ODEL OF SUPERIORS' AND SUBORDINATES' HIERARCHICAL RELATIONSHIP

In order to interrogate these questions, a dichotomical model of persistent hierarchical order has been developed which describes the rhetorical relationship(s) between managers and employees or, more generally speaking, between superiors and subordinates. The following figure visualises this idea.

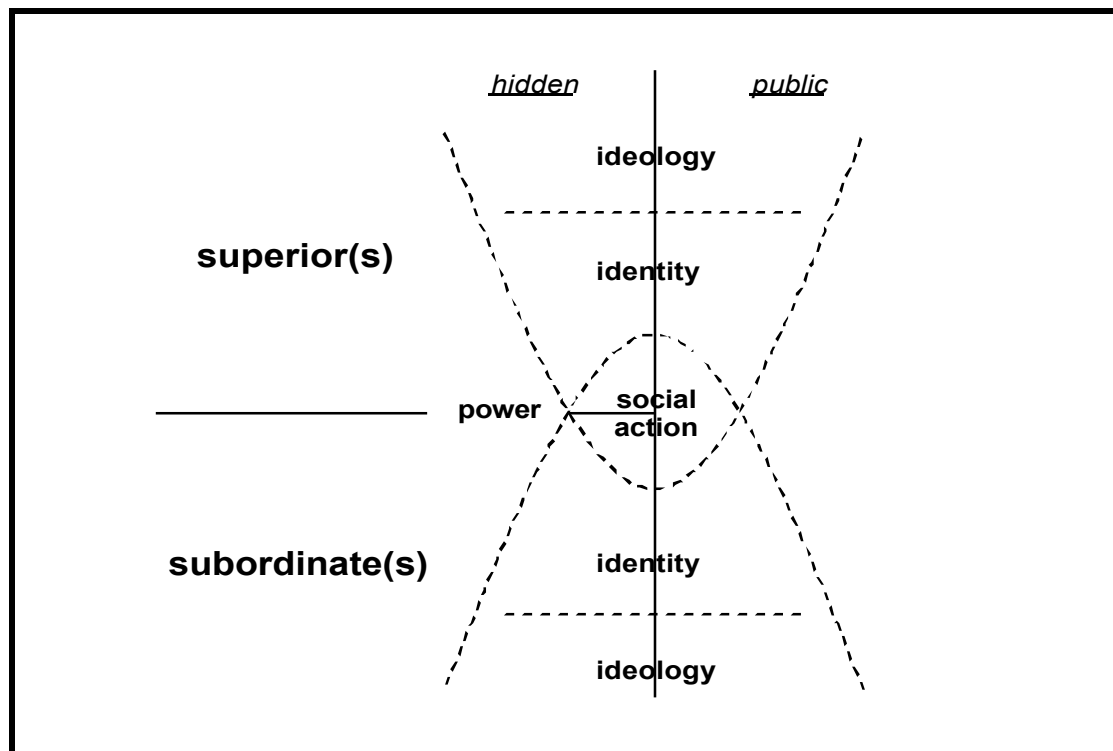


Figure 1: Model of persistent hierarchical order.

The model is based primarily on critical socio-philosophical approaches such as Mousnier's (1973) *social hierarchies*, socio-psychological approaches such as Sidanius et al.'s (2004, 1999) *Social Dominance Theory*, and core concepts of *power*, *ideology*, and *interests* (see Diefenbach 2009a). Of course, such a model does not capture the whole complexity of hierarchical social systems.¹ But it is sufficient to develop and explain the core idea of the persistency of hierarchical order because of the interplay between actors' social actions, identities and ideologies. Its main elements can be described as follows.

a) Superior(s) and subordinate(s), including their power-and-control relationship
'Superiors' are those actors within a given social system whose decisions and actions others have to take into account as a 'given'. 'Subordinates' are all these others, i.e. actors whose decisions and actions are influenced and changeable by superiors. The relationship between superior and subordinate is not only one of direct power in a Weberian sense, i.e. the ability to directly influence and control the actions and non-actions of others (Weber 1921/1980, p. 28). Power can be seen as a structural component of this social relationship (e.g. Spierenburg 2004, p. 627, Zeitlin 1974, p. 1090), as a multi-dimensional framework (Clegg et al. 2006, Lukes 1974) which institutionalises and legitimises this hierarchical relation and the roles and positions of the parties involved (Finkelstein 1992, p. 508, Willmott 1987, p. 253).

b) Social action
Based on this interplay between their two very different ideologies, superiors' and subordinates' aims and decisions produce *social action*. According to Max Weber (1921/1980, p. 11) social action means that one's action (or in-action or toleration) takes into account past, present or even (assumed) future actions and attitudes of others. Social action is the realm of (largely un-reflected) daily routines within institutions (rules, structures), interaction, and communication.

c) Social identity
Both superiors and subordinates have their socially defined *identities* (Elstak / Van Riel 2005, Ashforth / Mael 1989, Tajfel / Turner 1979). Social identity can be understood as that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups). Superiors and subordinates perceive and regard events to a great extent according to their work-related identities. Superiors, for example, have a strong interest in not only keeping and nurturing their roles and positions within the hierarchical order but also in defending and maintaining the whole system of power-and-control structures and processes. Even (most) subordinates have a pronounced interest in supporting and maintaining the hierarchical system, in actively contributing to the very social system which makes them subordinates. This might be even called a 'rational' interest and behaviour since there is a whole range of factual advantages for those who function smoothly (e.g. better treatment, higher valued tasks, privileges and promotion).

d) Ideology
Superiors' and subordinates' views, perceptions, actions and attitudes are largely shaped by (their) *ideology*. 'Ideology' can be understood as collectively held norms, values and beliefs (Hamilton 1987, p. 38) which provide explanations and justifications of the natural and social world, including the individual and its positions within it. In this sense, ideology is seen as a 'normal' part of our construction and sense-making of the world, as part of the social construction of reality (Berger / Luckmann 1966). Following Abercrombie et al.'s (1980) 'dominant ideology' thesis, Brookfield (2005, p. 67) defined ideology as a 'system of ideas and values that reflects and supports the established order and that manifests itself in our everyday actions, decisions, and practices, ...' Since this paper is about *any* belief system, 'ideol-

¹ For example, it will be abstracted from 'clashes of cosmologies at boardroom-level' (e.g. Hambrick 2007, Diefenbach 2005, Mintzberg 1985, Hambrick / Mason 1984) or the important roles middle management plays (e.g. Floyd / Wooldridge 1994 and 1992).

ogy' shall be defined as a *value-based belief system about the world, social systems and human beings as well as about their relationships and being in the world*. Dominant ideologies' main function is to justify established order whatever the factual situation is (or often even re-define factual phenomena), and, in doing so, reconfirm and strengthen both superiors' and subordinates' social position and social action.

Superiors' and subordinates' identities and interests, ideologies and social actions create a comprehensive and consistent *social system* - the hierarchical system of superiors' dominance and subordinates' obedience. In return, the system and social actions re-affirm and strengthen people's ideologies and identities – according to their position and roles. Within this system, managers' dominance is supported by their subordinates' calculated obedience. Both have vested interests in stabilising this unequal relation mainly because it provides them with a known structure of opportunities to pursue their own interests and it legitimates hierarchy as social order in cognitive as well as pragmatic ways (Suchman 1995). Altogether, superiors' and subordinates' identities, ideologies, and social action create and (re-) establish *persistent social order* or 'meta-order', a *structured cosmos of meaning and sense, dominance and obedience, ideologies and social actions*.

Hierarchical order in different types of organisations

In this section we will interrogate to which extent hierarchical order is present in different archetypes of organisations.

1) *Bureaucracy* and the *orthodox organisation* (both public and private) are quite clear in their design and layout; they are synonyms for hierarchy. They represent a formal and abstract bureaucratic order of clearly defined and marked off areas of responsibilities and accountability guaranteeing the continuing rule-bound execution of official duties (Weber 1921/1980, p. 125). Taylor's Scientific Management, the mother of all orthodox management concepts and modern types of organisation, is only the logical further development of bureaucracy towards mass-production. But it is not only about functional aspects, tasks and rules. According to Scientific Management *social relations* shall be organised in certain ways: 'Those in the management whose duty it is to develop this science should also guide and help the workman in working under it, ... And each man should daily be taught by and receive the most friendly help from those who are over him,' (Taylor 1911/1967, p. 26).

Since then little more than the vocabulary and rhetoric has changed in this type of organisation. Scientific Management and modern management concepts based on it do not question existing hierarchy and power relations, on the contrary; they are developed and designed for contributing to the strengthening and deepening of *social stratification and inequalities via functional differentiation*. For this, they try to 'explain' and 'justify':

- a) structural power asymmetries at institutional level, i.e. why the horizontal structure (division of labour) and vertical structure (the separation of rulers and ruled) are necessary (Shrivastava 1986).
- b) higher status and privileges of dominant groups (Abercrombie et al. 1980), i.e. 'why one group is dominant and another dominated, why one person gives orders in a particular enterprise while another takes orders.' (Chiapello / Fairclough 2002, p. 187).
- c) exclusion of lower ranks from participation in decisions, less opportunities, unequal distribution and allocation of resources, and why the well-functioning, collaboration, compliance, obedience, submissiveness, even infantilisation of subordinates is right (e.g. Stoddart 2007, Jost / Hunyady 2005, Deem / Brehony 2005, Sidanius et al. 2004, Levy et al. 2001, Willmott 1996, Pollitt 1990).

The orthodox organisation is the incorporation of the ideology of social dominance and hierarchy, in this case of management and managers. It is about to emphasize, establish, and guarantee the primacy and prevalence of management above all other activities and the primacy and prevalence of managers above all other groups of people (Diefenbach 2009a).

2) Since the 1990s there had been hope that 'hybrid' or 'post-modern' forms of organisation

tions can reform, if not to say replace bureaucratic and orthodox organisations. As part of management concepts such as lean management, business re-engineering, knowledge management, learning organisation or the virtual company 'anti-hierarchical' and 'non-bureaucratic' concepts have been introduced such as teamwork, projects, profit-centres, quasi-autonomous and decentralised work-units. These factual changes in the organisation of work were accompanied by rhetoric of 'team' and 'family', the 'psychological contract' and 'intrapreneurship'. In return for these changes, subordinates were and are expected to develop and demonstrate a 'strong commitment', 'intrinsic motivation' and a 'pro-active willingness to go the extra-mile'.

According to the proponents of post-modern organisations these concepts superseded old forms of hierarchical power and control. However, there is widespread evidence that teams, projects, empowerment, and so-called 'collaborative' work environments often mean *more* pressure and more "gentle" ways of control and punishment (Foucault) for the individual than most of the external methods (e.g. Courpasson / Clegg 2006, Jacques 1996, p. 112). One reason for this is that employees are now being expected to monitor, control, even manage each other's behaviour and input – which pushes team members and creates additional layers of formal and informal hierarchy. At the same time it relieves management from much of its need for direct control (Rothschild / Ollilainen 1999, p. 605) and provides managers with more opportunities to further develop indirect control of their employees via objectives, performance measurement and management systems, policies and procedures, regulatory and disciplinary devices. Together, these means of direct and indirect control aim not only at the actual and visible behaviour of employees, but more at their attitudes, their learning processes and skills development (Akella 2003, p. 51), their identities. Most subordinates, including their superiors who are very often also subordinates, have therefore internalised hierarchy and control and have transformed themselves into organisational automatons which demonstrate a constant pro-active submissiveness and self-control (Casey 1999).

All in all, even when new forms of work organisation are being introduced, superiors' previous rights and responsibilities remain largely intact (Hales 2002, p. 51, Rothschild / Ollilainen 1999, p. 594, Jermier 1998, p. 249). Hybrid organisations 'retain a need for the iron fist of strong and centralized control mechanisms, wrapped up in the velvet glove of consent.' (Courpasson / Clegg 2006, p. 324). All what has changed is the scope and range of control and domination; managerial direct line-control has been *complemented* (*not* superseded!) by indirect control (Kirkpatrick et al. 2005, p. 96, Kärreman / Alvesson 2004, p. 151); the hybrid organisation adds individualised and subjectivised forms of control and internalised hierarchical relationship to existing external control and punishment systems. In sharp contrast to the rhetoric, power and control, hierarchy and domination in contemporary organisations are simply more - and more sublime and sophisticated.

3) As the example of the hybrid organisation demonstrates, ideas and concepts like job enlargement and enrichment, empowerment and teamwork deliver, *at best*, mixed results. But they cannot solve the problems of dominance and obedience, unequal opportunities and hierarchical relationships in orthodox and hybrid organisation. People, therefore, were looking for more fundamental and far-reaching alternatives. One concept which has been developed since the second half of the 19th century is the *participative* or *democratic organisation*. Such organisations take the ideas of empowerment and workplace democracy seriously. Moreover, they embrace ideas like genuine worker participation (i.e. employee's participation in operational *and* strategic decision-making), autonomous work groups, profit-sharing, co-partnership, and share ownership (e.g. Gratton 2004, Wagner 2002, Wunderer 1999, Rothschild 1999, Case 1998, McLagan / Nel 1997, Poole 1996, Cheney 1995, Case / Bianchi 1993, Jones / Svejnar 1982). In one word: The participative organisation gets serious where the hybrid organisation remains in rhetoric.

However, the participative organisation is "only" meant to make decision-making processes, co-operation and participation within organisations more democratic, *not* to replace and overcome hierarchical structures per se. For example, most managers are still appointed and not elected, line responsibilities and hierarchical structures are kept in place, 'operational' decisions are made by superiors and carried out by subordinates. Democratic committees

and decision-making procedures are organised not instead of, but *alongside* hierarchy, democratic principles are being put *on top of* hierarchical principles. In this sense, the unequal relationship between superior and subordinate is perhaps even stronger since it is now being justified and institutionalised by even more and 'higher' values than mere business-like (profit-maximisation) or technocratic ones (efficiency).

Moreover, a *new* type or aspect of hierarchical control might be at work in participative organisations in addition to traditional hierarchical structures and processes; whereas in an orthodox organisation an employee was "only" subordinate to his or her line-manager, in a democratic organisation the employee must obey to quite a few superiors, i.e. the several collectives he or she belongs to (immediate co-workers, the larger functional unit and the organisation as a whole). This probably means an even greater pressure, and necessity to obey compared to the hybrid organisation since the values of democracy are not externally imposed by management but shared values of all employees representing the collective will. The additional norms (of participation, collaboration and peer-control) of the democratic organisation *rightly* expect obedience – total obedience. Erich Fromm (1956, referred to in Brookfield 2005, pp. 64 and 169) talked quite critically about "the tyranny of the majority" and the oppressive control it might exercise in a democracy. In both the bureaucratic and democratic organisation there is little room for deviance - in the former because of regulations, in the latter because of consensus.

4) Another alternative to orthodox organisation has been traditionally the *professional organisation*, i.e. where people of the same or complementing professions jointly run public or private sector organisations such as solicitor's offices, health care organisations, further and higher education institutions or accounting firms. There is quite a range of professional organisations differing particularly in the extent to which professionals dominate and are being involved in managerial tasks (e.g. Brock 2006). Either way, in its archetypical form, the values and design of the professional organisation represent a true alternative to the orthodox organisation – the question is, in what way.²

Usually, the professional organisation is portrayed as an institution based on democratic and collegial values stemming from a specific professional ethic as well as collective and consensual decision-making structures and processes which at the same time place high value on autonomy, participation and consultation (Brock 2006, pp. 159-160). The professional partners collectively govern the crucial operations based on a set of values which is very different to market-, managerial or other, mere 'functionalistic', if not to say 'egoistic' principles.

What is often less considered is the fact that the professional organisation is purpose-built – designed and built for the purposes of a specific group of people, the professionals. Strategic objectives as well as operational functions, prime values and purposes as well as related performance measures and management systems – literally everything is designed for the realisation of the specific interests and worldviews, work and practical necessities of the professionals. Most professions usually have managed to establish themselves as very powerful and well-organised interest groups within societies with the specific advantage of expert knowledge others don't have, but need (occasionally). Professions, therefore, have been quite in a strong position to establish their business and organisations as bastions others (government, customers, or competitors) cannot easily capture, if any. They are, hence, being regulated and organised largely according to their own values and interests - even when external bodies set and monitor standards and regulations. The professional organisation, is probably the most explicit and developed concept of institutionalised group-interests, i.e. one of the most extreme, thought-through, tailor-made and successful attempts to establish and

² Public-sector organisations all over the world have changed considerably since the early 1980s. With the introduction of New Public Management (NPM) professional organisations became 'managerial' and so-called 'business-like', i.e. performance-, cost-, efficiency- and audit-oriented (Diefenbach 2009a,b, Saunders 2006, Deem / Brehony 2005, Kirkpatrick et al. 2005, Kärreman / Alvesson 2004, Pollitt 1990). In this sense, they changed into fairly orthodox organisations (e.g. Dent / Barry 2004, McAuley et al. 2000). However, in this paper we will concentrate on the 'original idea' of professional organisations in order to interrogate whether or not in such organisations hierarchy matters.

secure social dominance of a certain group of people over others ('staff', 'administration', 'management' or external groups such as customers, suppliers, and society in general). Seeing from such a perspective it becomes clearer that hierarchy and dominance are constituting principles of the professional organisation – *with necessity*. Against the backdrop of the profession, professional services and professional organisation, 'the professional' is *by definition* of higher status compared to anyone else - whether it is administrative staff or any other non-professional people such as customers or clients. In addition, expert knowledge, formal degrees, status, symbols and rhetoric, codes of attitudes and behaviour typical for the profession contribute to the further establishment of this kind of group-based social dominance (Sidanius / Pratto 1999) at organisational as well as societal level.

But hierarchy is also the predominant principle *within* the profession. In most, if not all professions it usually comes in the form of the *principle of seniority*, more senior professionals *always* have a higher position, supervise and advise more junior colleagues and, if opinions clash, have the final say. And junior professionals only can become fully accepted if they obey to the written and un-written rules of the profession, if they accept their status as apprentice and the nature of the career path / rite de passage. Both amongst professionals and in their relations to others the principles of hierarchy, superiority and subordination are paramount and inherent to the idea of the professional organisation.

5) The probably most promising candidate for a hierarchy-free type of organisation is the *polyarchic or network organisation*. The main idea is that the network consists of autonomous, 'self-directed units based on decentralization, participation, and coordination.' (Castells 1996, cited in Ekbia / Kling 2005, p. 163). Hales (2002, p. 54) gave a good description of the network-idea within organisations: 'the internal network organization is conceived as a loose federation of informally constituted, self-managing, often temporary, work units or teams within which there is a fluid division of labour and which are coordinated through an internal market, rather than rules, and horizontal negotiation and collaboration, rather than hierarchy (...). Instead of a hierarchy of vertical reporting relationships there is a 'soft network' (...) of informal lateral communications, information sharing and temporary collaboration based on reciprocity and trust, ...'. 'According to Miles / Snow (1995, cited in Ekbia / Kling 2005, p. 163), the management of the network is viewed as 'a shared responsibility among colleagues, not as a superior-subordinate relationship.' In addition, networks are portrayed quite positively, even associated with ideas of 'community', 'family', 'communitarianism' or similar "warm", "harmonious" and "romantic" terms (e.g. Barker 2006, p. 12, Parker 2002, p. 70).

The reality of networks, though, is more complex and differentiated than these idealistic and romantic images suggest. For example, Ekbia / Kling (2005) provided evidence that the usually mentioned positive aspects of networks can be quite easily accompanied by negative ones; in addition to, or even instead of: *trust, flexibility, adaptability, deregulation, cooperation, voluntarism, decentralisation, team spirit, empowerment, and transparency*, there can be also: *deception, inflexibility, gaming behaviour, regulation, antagonism, coercion, concentration of power, individualism, oppression, and secrecy*. Networks per se are neither anti-hierarchical nor more ethical than other organisations.

Perhaps more worrying is evidence that even in the "best" and "well-intended" networks things are not quite like theory suggests. When investigating and analysing internal e-mail communication of an explicitly network-oriented and anti-hierarchically run company, Oberg / Walgenbach (2008) found hierarchical relationships between the organisational members. Hierarchical patterns had emerged over time both in communication structures (a clear centre-periphery structure) and in the content of the communication (systematic use of issues and rhetoric signalling superiority and submissiveness). This example shows that particularly networks - *because* of their formal anti-hierarchical and flexible design - are especially vulnerable towards patterns of informal hierarchical structures and processes. The causes for this can be found in attitudes and behaviour of individual members of the network. Whether intended or un-intended; already individual differences in style and intensity of communication (e.g. 'doer' and 'contemplator'), not to mention different worldviews, personal traits, aspirations and attitudes can create over time (informal) patterns of social dominance. Network members develop more and more traditional roles and corresponding behaviour of (informal)

superiority and subordination, domination and obedience. In addition, since very often members of a network have established it voluntarily, this community produces a strong moral justification (and corresponding peer-pressure) for obedience (Courpasson / Dany 2003, p. 1232). The outcomes and consequences are quite similar to the ones in the participative / democratic organisation outlined above. In this sense, it seems that in all of the main types of organisations hierarchy is present – at least the ones we know so far.

CONCLUSIONS

As the analysis has revealed, *none* of the five archetypes of organisations investigated is hierarchy-free. It seems that there are almost always similar patterns of hierarchical structures and processes present on which organisations are being based – whether these patterns are deliberately designed or have emerged over time, whether they are formal and / or more of an informal nature. Social differentiation almost always seems to transform into social stratification. This is immediately understandable for *bureaucracies* and *orthodox* as well as *hybrid* organisations since they are explicitly based on the principle of hierarchy. But it also became clear that within *democratic*, *professional*, and even *network* organisations hierarchy is at work – probably more than people would have expected or hoped for. Despite all lip-services of ‘pro-active’, ‘people-oriented’ and ‘horizontal’ organisations - most of our organisations are still designed according to very hierarchy-, power-and-control-oriented models. Organisations and management concepts are still based either on old-fashioned ideologies stemming from the 19th and early 20th century or their face-lifted versions of neo-liberalism and managerialism. Hierarchy and bureaucracy, superior/subordinate-relationships, domination and organisational politics are still the backbone and blood of organisations – even the post-modern ones. Domination remains at the core of superiors’ strategies, well-functioning and obedience remains at the core of subordinates’ attitudes and behaviour, even mindsets.

In this sense, the findings might be disappointing – particularly when it is about *participative* and *network* organisations:

In the case of the former, scholars perhaps have overestimated the importance of formal democratic structures and processes for organisations. To be clear: democratic decision-making structures and processes, far-reaching formal participation or employee-ownership are already quite a development compared to orthodox and hybrid organisations. Nonetheless, these arrangements are necessary but not sufficient preconditions for truly alternative types of organisations. In addition to these structural components, more arrangements would be needed which prevent other forms of formal and informal hierarchy, inequalities in opportunities, and social dominance.

And with regard to network organisations people probably have underestimated the steady force of the factual, i.e. how, for example, daily communication and routines – despite best intentions - can have opposite effects. Over a shorter or longer period of time, individual attitudes and behaviour can establish informal hierarchy and can create patterns of dominance and subordination which go against the spirit of power- and hierarchy-free discourses and decision-making. There would need to be many more arrangements in place which shape appropriate mindsets and attitudes, behaviours and social action.

These, and probably more, insufficiencies of the democratic and network organisation give some indications for future research.

4. The findings concerning both archetypical as well as existing types of organisations raise the question whether ‘hierarchy- and dominance-free’ organisations are rare instances which somewhere exist or completely absent from the contemporary organisational landscape.
5. We need to further develop our understanding of the necessary preconditions for truly hierarchy-free types of organisation, i.e. the relevant structural arrangements as well as the sets of values which guide individual attitudes, behaviour and social actions.
6. We need to understand better the theoretical as well as real-existing socio-cultural obstacles for the realisation of such types of organisations and how these can be overcome.

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