

Internationalization of managerial careers: three research articles

Thèse de doctorat présentée par

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en vue de l'obtention des titres de:

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Fribourg (Suisse), 2015

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Remerciements

Un grand nombre de personnes m'ont aidé et soutenu pour mener à bien cette thèse.

Je tiens à remercier mes codirecteurs de thèse, les professeurs Eric Davoine (Université de Fribourg) et Loïc Cadin (Paris Ouest Nanterre et ESCP Europe) pour leurs précieux conseils, leur disponibilité et pour toutes les opportunités qui m'ont été offertes au cours de ces dernières années.

Je remercie aussi les professeurs Akram Al Ariss, Alain Roger, Dirk Morschett et Eric Pezet d'avoir accepté de participer à mon jury de thèse.

Cette thèse de doctorat n'aurait pas pu être réalisée en cotutelle sans le soutien et la disponibilité des professeurs Hervé Laroche (directeur du programme PhD de l'ESCP, campus de Paris) et Eric Pezet (directeur adjoint du laboratoire CEROS de l'Université Paris Ouest Nanterre) que je remercie pour l'accueil dans leurs institutions respectives. Mes remerciements vont aussi à la Conférence des Recteurs des Universités Suisses (CRUS) pour avoir soutenu financièrement mon projet de thèse.

En me permettant de participer au projet de recherche sur les élites financé par le Fonds national Suisse, le professeur Thomas David et André Mach de l'Université de Lausanne ont contribué à une partie importante de cette thèse. Je les remercie sincèrement pour leur aide et leur disponibilité. Mes remerciements vont aussi aux membres de l'IP6 du Pôle de recherche national LIVES, plus particulièrement aux professeurs Nicky Le Feuvre et Felix Bühlmann.

Je remercie également mes collègues doctorants de Paris et de Fribourg avec une mention spéciale pour Xavier Salamin, qui a entre autres fortement contribué à la rédaction du troisième article de cette thèse.

Ces remerciements seraient incomplets si je n'en adressais pas à Alma pour sa présence inépuisable pendant l'écriture de ces pages et surtout à Angélique pour sa patience, ses *bons* conseils et pour avoir toujours tout fait pour moi : cette thèse et d'autres choses bien plus importantes n'existeraient et ne seraient pas imaginables sans elle.

Structure de la thèse

Cette thèse de doctorat compte un chapitre d'introduction-synthèse rédigé en anglais, trois articles (deux en anglais et un en français) et un résumé substantiel en langue française en fin de document.

Le premier chapitre d'introduction-synthèse permet d'apprécier la cohérence des trois projets de recherche en illustrant le champ de recherche de la thèse de doctorat et en montrant le positionnement des trois articles. Dans la dernière partie de ce chapitre d'introduction-synthèse, la contribution d'ensemble du projet de recherche est discutée et des pistes de recherches futures sont identifiées.

Ensuite figurent les trois articles, qui reposent sur trois terrains empiriques distincts et qui ont été publiés ou acceptés pour publication dans les revues à comité de lecture suivantes : *European Management Journal*, *Revue Economique et Sociale* et *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*.

Alors que le deuxième article (publié dans la *Revue Economique et Sociale*) comporte un seul auteur, dans le cas des deux autres, il s'agit d'articles collectifs pour lesquels la contribution individuelle de l'auteur de cette thèse de doctorat mérite ici d'être illustrée et éclaircie.

Le premier article (publié dans *European Management Journal*) a été co-écrit avec Eric Davoine. Le nom des auteurs apparaissent en ordre alphabétique indiquant une contribution égale des deux auteurs. L'auteur de cette thèse a créé le terrain empirique sur lequel repose cet article en construisant la base de données à travers la collecte et la classification des données. Les différentes analyses statistiques nécessaires pour tester les hypothèses ont aussi été faites par l'auteur de cette thèse qui s'est aussi chargé d'un important travail de révision du champ de recherche et de rédaction qui ont permis d'aboutir sur une première version de l'article. Le développement des hypothèses, l'identification et le choix du cadre conceptuel ainsi que la discussion des résultats ont été faits en collaboration avec Eric Davoine dont l'expertise et l'expérience de

recherche dans ce domaine ont rendu possible la réalisation et la publication de cet article.

Le troisième article (accepté pour publication dans *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*) a été co-écrit avec Xavier Salamin et Eric Davoine. Le nom de l'auteur de cette thèse apparaît en première position, indiquant le fait qu'il s'agit du principal contributeur. Plus spécifiquement, ce dernier s'est occupé des analyses statistiques, du développement théorique et conceptuel de plusieurs hypothèses, de la rédaction de plusieurs parties de l'article et de l'important travail de modification et d'amélioration qui a fait suite aux demandes et remarques formulées par les évaluateurs anonymes tout au long du processus de publication. Le développement du questionnaire qui a servi à collecter le matériel empirique, la discussion des résultats ainsi que la structure générale de l'article ont été faits avec la précieuse et indispensable collaboration des co-auteurs Xavier Salamin et Eric Davoine.

La dernière partie de cette thèse de doctorat est constituée d'un résumé substantiel en langue française qui synthétise les trois projets de recherche ainsi que le champ de recherche dans lesquels les trois articles s'inscrivent.

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I. Overview of the research project: synthesis, positioning, contribution, and future research directions.

1. Introduction

This doctoral dissertation examines the career of managers in an international context. Specifically, this research focuses on careers patterns in a changing environment using the case of international managers (i.e. managers with a career that develops globally) (Peiperl & Jonsen, 2007). More broadly, the research looks at the evolving nature of managerial careers, the organizational and global environments in which careers develop, and the reciprocal relationship between changing careers and changing environments, specifically in the context of those with global careers (Nicholson, 2007; Tams & Arthur, 2007).

The global economic environment and related career patterns have undergone significant changes and developments over the past decades that have, in turn, influenced how individuals pursue their careers and how organizations try to manage their employees' careers (Lazarova, Dany & Mayrhofer, 2012). Consequently, careers in an international environment are undergoing substantial changes at the individual, organizational and institutional levels (Cappellen & Janssens, 2010).

As the global economy continues to grow and international opportunities expand, careers that could be identified as more traditional or nationally-based have become potentially less attractive and less valued than their international counterparts. Indeed, new international career models and new means of engaging in managerial roles are now competing with national and/or traditional career models. In this research, we explore the strength of traditional career models, which are under the threat of being replaced, as they currently have to coexist with new international models.

A significant change is also occurring with regard to the actual process of internationalization of careers and the role played by institutional actors (e.g.,

multinational companies, national governments and supranational institutions) in this process. Multinational firms are still using traditional expatriation as a tool for developing global leaders, but new forms of global mobility are emerging (Collings, Scullion & Morley, 2007) and creating new models for global careers. The most important among these models is represented by self-initiated expatriation, as well as highly-qualified migration. The development of an international market for executive labor (Ruigrok & Greve, 2008) and the influence of multinational firms are explored in this doctoral dissertation.

We also observe a change in the actors that are pursuing international careers. Significant demographic changes have occurred in the profile of individuals pursuing international careers. This profile now includes a population with more women and dual-career couples, self-initiated expatriates and skilled migrants that are moving into new destinations (e.g. emerging markets). Within this context, we explore the international experiences of new actors in terms of international mobility as well as the ways in which organizations can support them.

All these aspects are explored in this doctoral dissertation with three research articles that use three different sets of empirical data centered on the same common denominator, namely careers that evolve in an international context.

The first article¹ analyzes the career profiles of top European managers in the context of increased internationalization. Data on profiles and careers of more than 900 top managers working for more than 100 multinational corporations in four countries (France, Germany, United Kingdom and Switzerland) has been collected and analyzed. The purpose of this article is to verify the hypothesis of stability in national career models and identify new elements related to internationalization.

¹ Davoine, E., & Ravasi, C. (2013). The relative stability of national career patterns in European top management careers in the age of globalisation : a comparison of France, Germany, Great Britain and Switzerland. *European Management Journal*, 31(2), 152-163.

The second article² focuses on the profiles of top managers at the biggest Swiss companies, firms with a significant presence of foreign top managers. We focused on the evolution of profiles, career features and patterns taken from a sample of about 600 top managers at the head of the 100 largest Swiss firms over a 30-years period (1980–2010). This article highlights the development of an international community of foreign top managers in Switzerland, and analyzes the changes in their profiles, careers and the role played by multinational firms in these changes.

The third article³ focuses on the cross-cultural adjustment of a population of 152 foreign employees (traditionally-assigned expatriates, self-initiated expatriates, skilled migrants) from Swiss-based multinational companies. Furthermore, data has also been collected on the adjustment of 126 spouses. This article studies different aspects of adjustment, focusing on local language proficiency and relocation support practices, as well as considering the degree to which relocation support practices are offered, used and perceived as necessary by foreign employees.

This first chapter illustrates the coherence of the three research projects, reviewing the research field of the doctoral thesis and positioning the three articles that are reported in the following chapters. In the last section of this chapter, the contribution of the overall research project will be discussed and ideas for future research are identified.

The following section examines existing frameworks proposed by researchers (Cerdin, 2004; Cerdin & Bird, 2007; Tams & Arthur, 2007) that make a contribution to organizing and classifying research within the international careers field.

² Ravasi, C. (2013). Les top managers internationaux des grandes entreprises suisses : profils et parcours de carrière. *Revue Economique et Sociale*, 71(4), 107-119.

³ Ravasi, C., Salamin, X., & Davoine, E. (2015). Cross-cultural adjustment of skilled migrants in a multicultural and multilingual environment: an explorative study of foreign employees and their spouses in the Swiss context. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* (in press).

2. International HRM research and international careers

International careers have been investigated in numerous studies within the international human resource management field and efforts to organize the literature have been undertaken by some researchers. In particular, the conceptual articles of Cerdin (2004), Cerdin and Bird (2007) and Tams and Arthur (2007) are very useful for clarifying the theoretical and conceptual frameworks in which the three articles of the doctoral thesis are rooted. By revising and organizing existing research in the field of international careers, these authors propose two distinct frameworks with several similarities that offer a significant and purposeful structure for positioning the three articles and highlighting their contribution.

Cerdin (2004) and successively Cerdin and Bird (2007) state that, within the international human resource management field, international careers are studied through two different perspectives. The first perspective adopts a cross-country comparative approach of career practices and models. According to this perspective, differences exist regarding the way careers are perceived and managed in different countries, and this perspective focuses on illustrating and explaining these differences. This perspective may concern, for example, national differences in managerial career development models, meanings of career success and in organizational career support or career anchors (Cerdin, 2004).

The second perspective encompasses studies that focus on the international mobility of employees and the management of expatriation. Hence, this second perspective focuses on the study of the careers of internationally-mobile individuals, global mobility organizational practices and, in general, the management of expatriation. Topics of interest within this perspective are, for example, the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates, the willingness to pursue an international career and the impact of an international assignment on one's career, as well as considering the impact of repatriation of internationally mobile individuals (Cerdin, 2004).

In a very similar vein, Tams and Arthur (2007) identify three perspectives through which international careers are studied. The first perspective, referred to the

international careers perspective, encompasses the topics of international career development and international human resource management and can be compared to the *international mobility and expatriation management* research axis of Cerdin (2004) and Cerdin and Bird (2007). The second perspective is labelled the careers across cultures perspective and can be compared to the *cross-country comparative approach* perspective of Cerdin (2004) and Cerdin and Bird (2007).

Table 1. Research perspectives on international careers

<i>Cerdin (2004), Cerdin and Bird (2007)</i>	<i>Examples of Themes</i>
Cross-country comparative approach of career practices and models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National career models - Differences in meaning of career success - Cross-country career anchors comparison
International mobility and expatriation management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cross-cultural adjustment - Willingness to accept an international assignment - Link between international assignment and career - Repatriation
<i>Tams and Arthur (2007)</i>	<i>Examples of Themes</i>
Careers across cultures perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objective and subjective career success - Career aspirations - Social networks and career strategies - Meanings of career and life success - Women's career experiences
International careers perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Success and failure of expatriation - Cross-cultural adjustment - Recruitment, selection, training and development - Support of expatriates and their families - Repatriation and career management - Self-initiated expatriates
Globalization and career perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Influence of global economic interdependencies - Global knowledge flows - Sources of cultural change and convergence

Source: Cerdin (2004); Cerdin and Bird (2007); Tams and Arthur (2007)

Finally, Tams and Arthur (2007) added a final axis that they named the globalization perspective. This third perspective suggests investigating careers within the context of globalization and considers career-related choices and behaviors as a reflection of their adaptation to the process of globalization. However, careers are not only influenced by a changing environment but they have also an impact on it. Hence, these authors propose to examine the reciprocal relationship between careers of individuals and macro factors associated with globalization on an economic, political, social and environmental basis. More precisely, this perspective is interested in discovering how global interdependencies shape the careers of individuals, how actions of people pursuing international careers impact the globalization process and how the processes of career internationalization and globalization are translated in the processes of cultural change and convergence.

A selected literature review within this first introductory chapter is organized along these research perspectives and the three research projects will be synthesized and positioned within these research domains. It is important to note that these perspectives are not mutually exclusive and the three articles of this doctoral research make contributions to all three approaches.

However, the first article on careers and profiles of European top managers principally adopts and makes contributions to the cross-country comparative approach of career practices and models of Cerdin (2004) and Cerdin and Bird (2007) and the careers across cultures perspective of Tams and Arthur (2007). We can also state that the second article on the historical evolution of top managers of large-scale Swiss firms belongs principally to the globalization perspective of Tams and Arthur (2007). Finally, the third article on the adjustment of foreign employees belongs principally to the international mobility and expatriation management perspective of Cerdin (2004) and Cerdin and Bird (2007) as well as to the international careers perspective of Tams and Arthur (2007).

The next section illustrates and discusses the *cross-country comparison of career practices and models* perspective and summarizes the first article of this doctoral thesis.

3. Cross-country comparison of career practices and models

This line of research encompasses studies in which national cultures are considered an explanatory variable when considering the differences between several career-related features. Within this perspective, careers are structured by national, institutional and cultural factors (Thomas & Inkson, 2007). The primary purpose of this stream of research relates to finding cultural variations (differences across countries) and universal concepts (international commonalities) (Tams & Arthur, 2007).

Several studies positioned within the cross-country comparative perspective have covered career-related issues, such as the meaning of career success (Chudzikowski et al., 2006; Lirio et al., 2007); career experiences (Burke, 2001); career aspirations (Malach-Pines & Kaspi-Baruch, 2008); career capital (Cadin, Bender, de Saint Giniez, & Pringle, 2000) or the organizational practices relating to international careers (Stahl & Cerdin, 2004; Tungli & Peiperl, 2009).

Overall, this research examined career issues of different types of employees (as well as students). Other, rarer studies have adopted a comparative approach that focuses on the career issues of top managers, specifically managers at the head of their organizations. Analyzing and studying top managers' career paths and educational backgrounds within different cultures allow researchers to highlight and evaluate the extent of the impact of cultural values and national institutions on management and career development practices in a cross-country comparative perspective.

3.1 Differences in national top management career models

Countries differ in the ways they adopt the practices of identifying, selecting and developing their business leaders, leading to the consequence that top managers in one country differ from those in other countries in terms of personal characteristics, cultural values, educational and functional backgrounds, work experience and managerial values and practices (Myers, Kakabadse, McMahon, & Spony, 1995). National differences in the identification and development of top managers further reveal differences in internal

priorities and decision processes at the firm level and highlight cultural institutional values at the national level (Evans, Lank, & Farquhar, 1989).

How top managers attain top positions within the hierarchy of an enterprise is highly affected by cultural concerns and institutional settings, and thus it varies from country to country. The process of legitimization occurs throughout the professional career of top managers and sometimes even while a candidate is still in school, especially when a particular degree is considered important.

The most prominent contribution in the field of career models of top managers is a study carried out by Evans et al. (1989) that reported on four national models of management development that are different in terms of potential identification, potential development, inter-enterprise mobility and inter-functional mobility. The models include the Japanese model (or Elite Cohort approach), the Latin model (or Elite Political approach), the Germanic Model (or Functional approach) and the Anglo-Dutch model (or Managed Development approach).

Despite relatively little research devoted to the study of the national and cultural impact on top management career models, some research studies have empirically tested the validity of the models of Evans et al. (1989) at different dates.

In the mid-1990s, Bauer and Bertin-Mouroit (1996) investigated the process through which top managers establish legitimized authority at the head of an enterprise in French, German and British firms in order to verify if a single European model existed or different national models were predominant. Specific national characteristics emerged, such as the high percentage of holders of doctoral diplomas and the lowest rate of inter-enterprise mobility among German top managers, or the importance of the role played by the *Grandes écoles* and the state for French top managers. Overall, the principal features of the models were confirmed and the authors of the study determined that a single European career model did not exist at that time and they stressed the difficulties in its development due to the social and historical roots of these models.

The potential integration of top managers in Europe was also studied by Mayer and Whittington (1999), who analyzed data collected at two times, 1983 and 1993, and

showed that patterns of legitimization were different across cultures and countries while remaining relatively stable over time. Hence, they demonstrated that differences among British, German and French top managers in terms of educational, functional and family backgrounds didn't disappear and continued to exist throughout the 1980s and the 1990s. These differences survived despite important national shocks (privatization and deregulation in the United Kingdom, nationalizations and denationalizations in France and the re-unification in Germany) and major international pressures, such as globalization and European integration.

The influence of culture on career systems and job promotion (mainly with regard to the choice between internal or external promotion systems) was investigated by Segalla, Rouzies and Flory (2001). These authors confirmed the existence of cultural influence on career systems and promotion choices, and they agreed and supported the existence of three cultural groups in Europe (Latin, Germanic and Anglo-Saxon). However, they inverted the assumptions of the national models of Evans et al. (1989), which stated that Latin enterprises prefer external over internal promotion, while the opposite is true for Germanic firms. Indeed, they observed in their sample that German managers preferred to hire external candidates while Latin firms preferred to promote internal candidates.

The preference of German firms for internal promotion compared to Latin or Anglo-Dutch firms was refuted in a study by Klarsfeld and Mabey (2004) too. This suggests a certain convergence in the field of manager identification and development in the three countries (France, Germany United Kingdom) considered in the study. However, this study has indicated other specific and distinct characteristics of national models. For example, the study located the identification of high-potential external candidates in the Latin model and the importance of long-term and internal development of managers in the Germanic model. Overall, their findings confirmed that firms in Germany, France and the United Kingdom continued to be characterized by distinctive approaches several years after national patterns in management development were identified (Klarsfeld & Mabey, 2004).

3.2 Convergence through internationalization?

Most of the authors cited above confirmed the persistence of national models and, at the same time, recognized a certain degree of convergence toward a European model. The relative stability over time of national institutions and managerial values may weaken the effect of internationalization on the distinctive processes that allows top managers in different countries to be identified and selected. However, the internationalization or Europeanization of business and the consequent increased presence of foreign top managers among top management team members, coupled with the increased mobility of managers across Europe, represents the most powerful threat to the national models of top management careers.

The creation of the Single Market in 1993, created through the agreement on the Single Act, represented the passage from a national to a European market for several European firms. Competition became wider and more intense and European companies were obliged to follow strategies of local production, mergers, acquisitions, joint-ventures and strategic alliances in a European level in order to improve their market position or enter new markets (Mercado, Welford, & Prescott, 2001). Moreover, the creation of the Single Market and the ensuing creation of a single European employment market forced European firms to structure the career programs of their employees to a European level in order to attract and retain talented managers (El Kahal, 1998).

Regardless, in the early 1990s, there was not a general consensus among European firms about the necessity and convenience of recruiting nationals from other European countries for executive positions. At this time, Bournois (1992) observed that only a few European firms showed a strong commitment to encouraging geographical mobility and hiring foreign top managers. A large majority of firms were much less open to the possibility of recruiting and developing top managers on a European basis.

Other authors supported the idea that, during the 1990s, enterprises were already aware of the fact that hiring non-national top managers would bring several advantages to an organization, such as ease of communication with local representatives and government officials, the development of corporate identity by representing national diversity, or the

benefit of having global citizenship (Tasler, 2001). Hence, companies that are increasingly international are forced to recruit top managers with skills, networks, and legitimacy associated with international experience. Such international exposure, therefore, seems to benefit the emergence of an international market for executive labor whose actors distinguish themselves through careers, profiles and signs of legitimacy that reflect their international orientation. Several studies (Heijltjes, Olie, & Glunk, 2003; Ruigrok & Greve, 2008; Staples, 2007) have also showed an increasing internationalization of executive committees at multinational corporations over the past two decades.

Furthermore, some researchers have recently questioned the effect of globalization on national managerial elites (David, Davoine, Ginalska, & Mach, 2012; Froud, Savage, Tampubolon, & Williams, 2006; Godelier, 2005) as well as the new global factors that are producing legitimate authority: education in economics, management and finance, MBA degrees, international experience and skills, previous experience in international audit and consulting firms (Morgan, 2001).

The resistance of distinctive national patterns of career development has been empirically tested in the first article of this doctoral thesis through the collection and analysis of data concerning a wide and recent sample of European top managers. The topicality of the national models of management development has been analyzed and the effects of internationalization and Europeanization of business activities has also been assessed.

3.3 Synthesis of the first article

Concerning the first article, we were interested in investigating the stability of national models of top management careers and identifying new elements related to internationalization. Hypotheses of the study are listed in table 2.

An important set of empirical data has been collected through publicly available information on 916 top managers working for 111 European companies based in

France, Germany, Great Britain, and Switzerland. Biographical and career-related data collected have shown that twenty years after the formulation of Evans et al. models (1989), some features of the national models of selection and development are still present.

In each country studied, these features still account for between one-third and one-half of the top managers of the biggest market exchange-listed companies; companies that are expected to be the most open to international changes. The identified elements are specific to the different national institutional frameworks, such as the *grandes écoles* and the senior civil service for French top managers, the “mountain climber” careers and doctoral degrees for German top managers, professional institutes for British top managers.

Otherwise, the study shows an evolution concerning several other criteria that can be described as international. Compared to the Bauer and Bertin-Mouroit (1996) research, the percentage of foreign top managers is now far more important. International experience, so highly valued in today’s executive labor market, is more common and concerns more than half of all managers.

British and Swiss companies have far more top managers with international profiles compared to German and French companies. We also found the highest presence of MBA graduates among the executive committees of British and Swiss companies. A significant percentage of these MBA graduates are found to be foreign top managers or top managers with important international experience: an MBA degree seems to be an important element of legitimate managerial authority relevant for pursuing international careers. More generally, educational degrees in fields like economics, management or finance seem to have gained importance in the education of European top managers.

In conclusion, results of our research show, on the one hand, there has been some erosion of the national model due to the gradual arrival of foreign top managers in leadership positions. On the other hand, the erosion seems very slow, despite the very strong international dimension of the activities and assets of the companies studied.

Table 2. Hypotheses of the first article

H1a. French top managers will be more likely to have attended one of the most selective academic institutions of their country than German and British top managers.	Supported
H1b. French top managers will be more likely to have worked in senior civil servant positions than their German and British counterparts.	Supported
H2a. German top managers will be more likely to have a doctoral degree than their French and British counterparts.	Supported
H2b. German top managers will be more likely to have worked for fewer companies throughout their careers (“mountain climber career”) than their French and British counterparts.	Not supported
H3a. British top managers will be less likely to be university-educated than their French and German counterparts.	Supported
H3b. British top managers will be more likely to hold a professional qualification than their French and German counterparts.	Supported
H4a. Swiss top managers will be more likely to have an international work experience than their French, German and British counterparts.	Supported
H4b. Swiss top managers will be more likely to hold a MBA or similar executive program qualification than their French, German and British counterparts.	Supported
H4c. Swiss top managers will be more likely to have previously worked for international auditing and consulting companies than their French, German and British counterparts.	Not supported

The next section illustrates and discusses the *globalization and careers* perspective and summarizes the second article of this doctoral thesis.

4. Globalization and careers

A second perspective for studying international careers is proposed by Tams and Arthur (2007). This perspective suggests investigating careers within the context of globalization. More precisely, these authors propose examining the reciprocal relationship between careers of individuals and macro factors associated with globalization on an economic, political, social and environmental basis.

This approach is in line with the coevolution approach (Nicholson, 2007), which suggests that the study of a career, tying individuals to organizations and institutions, allows for a focus on several aspects of the changing global environment (Duberley, Mallon, & Cohen, 2006; Jones & Dunn, 2007). The theoretical framework of the coevolution and its application in the field of international careers will be more deeply discussed in the final section of this chapter, where contributions of this research, as well as future research possibilities will be illustrated through the lens of a coevolution approach.

The first sub-stream of research within this approach aims at investigating how global interdependencies shape individual careers. In particular, this perspective is interested in understanding how different institutional actors (technology, political, multinational corporations) in the context of globalization influence the kinds of jobs that are available and the kinds of careers that people can undertake (Tams & Arthur, 2007).

For example, Cappellen and Janssen (2010) clearly showed that individual (international) career actions are highly influenced by both the organization and the global economy. Results of their research show that organizational career development practices do not always correspond to what international managers expect. In these cases, where the role of organizations in developing international careers seems weak and where there is divergence between the organizational and the global context, individuals act independently in order to pursue international careers. According to the authors, while the organizational context remains an important factor to study in order to understand careers, features of the global economy are also a crucial factor in explaining career choices of international managers.

A second sub-stream of this approach considers careers as carriers of global knowledge and highlights the co-evolutionary characteristic of the globalization approach. Hence, in this sub-stream it is stressed that relationship between the process of globalization and those of an individual career is not unidirectional but rather reciprocal.

By adopting this approach, Tams and Arthur (2007) observe that the investments of individuals pursuing international careers have profound impacts on the economy, the political and social environment of home countries as well as host countries. For example, self-initiated expatriates and qualified migrants with the potential to become influential through their boundary-spanning movements and the creation and development of regional clusters and geographic hubs, specialized in IT services (Silicon Valley in the US), financial services (London in the United Kingdom), the pharmaceutical industry (Basel in Switzerland) or fashion (Paris in France) and design industries (Milan in Italy).

Using this perspective, it is interesting to observe that some countries and even some regions seem to be particularly favorable in attracting and developing international careers, and thus they are at the forefront in the development of an international market for executive labor (Ruigrok & Greve, 2008). That being said, the international market for executive labor develops at different speeds in different parts of the world, and firms go to different lengths to recruit top foreign managers. These differences are explained by differences in the degree of the firms' internationalization or the degree of economic internationalization in the country of origin (Van Veen & Marsman, 2008). Variances also include their presence on international markets (Greve, Nielsen, & Ruigrok, 2009), as well as national institutional characteristics, such as the legal framework of corporate governance (Van Veen & Elbertsen, 2008).

The third sub-stream of this approach sees careers as sources of cultural change and convergence (Tams & Arthur, 2007), and the general hypothesis of this third perspective is that internationalization of careers leads to the convergence of corporate cultures and career patterns.

Fioole, Van Driel and Van Baalen (2008) discuss the notions of Americanization or Europeanization to describe changes in the profiles of the top German and Dutch

managers sampled in their study. Other authors refer more explicitly to the existence of new transnational spaces (Morgan 2001) and the emergence of transnational communities (Djelic & Quack, 2010) populated by global cosmopolitans (Brimm, 2010). The latter are characterized by common values and culture formed by a new transnational group of top managers that is substantially different from “more national” groups of top managers (Djelic & Quack, 2010; Morgan, 2001).

Morgan (2001) argues that transnational communities share “interests within a specific transnational space, interests that are distinctive from nationally based interests”. Developing this definition, Djelic and Quack (2010) emphasize the importance of a common culture in transnational communities, expressed by “common meanings”, “references”, and “identity markers”. However, both these forms of interactional and cultural coordination between business elites are also described as “fluid” and “fragile” (Djelic & Quack, 2010).

4.1 Synthesis of the second article

In the second article, the case of Switzerland has been chosen as a field of investigation, a country with a population of top managers highly internationalized and composed of managers from different countries (Davoine & Ravasi, 2013). Hence, the results of the first article showed that the executive committees of large Swiss companies are highly internationalized: 64% of managers in the sample are foreigners and 75% had professional experience in a foreign country. Furthermore, participation in executive education programs (MBA or equivalent) was higher in Switzerland than elsewhere. Finally, the first article shows that this country is characterized by a hybrid national model for management selection and development.

The focus of this second article is the historical development of top managers of Swiss corporations through the study of changes that occurred between 1980 and 2010. On the basis of a sample of corporate executives (Chairman of the Board and/or Chief Executive Officers) of the 110 largest companies in Switzerland, we collected data on 189 individuals in 1980, 184 in 2000, and 200 in 2010.

This study has adopted a comprehensive approach that aims to do the following: describing in a quantitative manner the profile (in terms of education and nationality) of top managers in our sample; describing in a qualitative and more detailed way the variety of career profiles of international top managers in our sample; classifying these patterns into categories explaining the process of top managers' internationalization.

The analysis of the career paths of top foreign managers and the resulting classification allowed for some answers to questions concerning the construction of transnational communities, especially regarding the role of various institutions (the multinational firm in this case) in the development of an international market of executive labor and the internationalization of top management careers.

Overall, a number of relevant and interesting results have been found. First, research results show a strong increase in foreign top managers (the proportion of foreign top managers increased from 4% in 1980 to 24% in 2000 and 35% in 2010) and an increase in educational backgrounds in the fields of economics and business, as well as an increase in MBA degrees.

Second, a qualitative and more detailed analysis of our database allowed for the identification of four categories of career logics among foreign top managers of the Swiss business elite. The first category identified is *founders/owners* (i.e. foreign top managers who settled in Switzerland and created a firm or foreign top managers belonging to the family of the founder). The second category is *mountain climbers within Swiss multinational companies*: foreign top managers who integrated in the firm very early and climbed one by one all the corporate levels. The third category is *Mergers & Acquisitions (M&A) mountain climbers* (i.e. foreign top managers who come from companies that have merged with or been acquired by a Swiss company). The last category identified is *externally recruited international managers*: foreign top managers who have no ties with the firm they manage, either through ownership (through family ties with the founder or through a merger/acquisition) or through professional career experience within the firm. It is important to mention here that an important portion of managers that we have classified in the category *externally recruited international managers* are French or German top managers who are in fact more accurately

characterized by a career that is *cross-frontier* (i.e. a career that develops in two neighboring countries) rather than international (several different countries).

By analyzing the careers of top international managers, the analysis concluded that the process of internationalization of top managers' careers does not cause a standardization of their profiles. Indeed, a large heterogeneity characterizes the careers of international top managers. Furthermore, our findings show that the influence of the multinational as an institutional actor in the internationalization process seems to have weakened during the last decades. In 2010, a foreign top manager out of two built his international career outside the multinational firm that he leads today (they were only 20% in 2000): in our sample of foreign top managers international boundaryless careers (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Cadin, Bender, & de Saint Giniez, 2003) are relatively frequent.

The next section illustrates and discusses the *international mobility and expatriation management* perspective and summarizes the third article of this doctoral thesis.

5. International mobility and expatriation management

Studies belonging to this research perspective focus on the study of the career of internationally mobile individuals, global mobility organizational practices and, in general, the management of expatriation.

The number of expatriates from multinational firms has continuously increased over the past decades (PWC 2010), as these kinds of companies still view expatriation as an important tool for sharing and transferring knowledge, controlling subsidiaries and developing workforce competencies (Harzing, 2002). Furthermore, as international companies continue to expand globally they need to attract, develop and retain an increasing number of global managers in order to compete in the global business arena.

Hence, foreign assignments remain one of the most frequently used tools for developing global leaders (Caligiuri & Di Santo, 2001), and for controlling subsidiaries and transferring knowledge throughout corporate value chains that are increasingly international (Tungli & Peiperl, 2009). For an individual, an international assignment or a global experience can be translated in the development of global management competencies that are highly valued in the contemporary (executive) labor market (Daily, Certo, & Dalton, 2000).

However, expatriate management is an increasingly costly and complex task for multinational companies. When the latter is not managed in a proper way, companies face negative consequences, such as increasing reluctance to undertake international assignments, higher refusal rates, loss of expatriates at the end of an international transfer and waste of personnel competences and skills. While career-related issues of expatriate and repatriate employees may have severe impacts on companies' talent management, the success of international assignments is equally important since failure rates of international assignments are still significant and the costs associated are high.

5.1 Cross-cultural adjustment

An international experience involves positive but also negative aspects for an individual that decides to pursue an international career, or who is exposed to a global work experience (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012). Exposure to a foreign culture involves high levels of stress and uncertainty and this may lead to, for example, a professional performance that can be rated as insufficient because of problems in adjusting to a foreign environment.

The need for understanding why some expatriates adjust well to foreign environments while others do not has led to an important body of research focused on expatriate adjustment (Bhaskar-Schrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer, & Luk, 2005; Takeuchi, 2010). Hence, in the expatriate research, the theme of adjustment is recurrently investigated (Dabic, González-Loureiro, & Harvey, 2015).

Cross-cultural adjustment refers to a person's psychological comfort and the familiarity individuals feel with various aspects of a foreign environment (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). The concept of adjustment, highlighting the benefits and costs for individuals, and for organizations, in terms of their exposure to a foreign environment is of key importance for understanding the expatriation experience (Bhaskar-Schrinivas et al., 2005).

Expatriation research has highlighted the importance of the concept of adjustment by showing the impact of the latter on an important set of factors. In general, the expatriate adjustment has, for example, a positive impact on an individual's intention to complete an assignment (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Black & Stephens, 1989; Gregersen & Black, 1990), on job satisfaction, and performance-related tasks (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Kraimer, Wayne & Jaworski, 2001; Shaffer & Harrison, 1998; Takeuchi, Yun & Tesluk, 2002), as well as on commitment to foreign subsidiaries (Gregersen & Black, 1992).

5.2 Family and spouse issues

Numerous researchers have emphasized the influence of the spouse's role on successful expatriation in general, and on the expatriate's adjustment in particular (Black & Stephens, 1989; Merignac & Roger, 2005).

At the beginning of the 1980s, the awareness of the importance of family and spouses on adjustment (Tung, 1981) led to the first studies with a specific focus on the conditions of expatriate families and spouses during an international assignment. In particular, the seminal contributions of Harvey (1985) and Adler (1986) shed light on the consequences of an international assignment on expatriate partners: disruption or interruption of social ties and routines, loneliness, isolation, social role modification, loss of identity and self-esteem.

Hence, for expatriate partners, adjustment to the host country culture can be longer and harder compared to expatriate employees (Suutari & Brewster, 1998), as the latter is less exposed to the culture of the host country and he/she generally continues to work in a context that is relatively familiar. Expatriate partners are usually in charge of dealing with several practical and administrative issues tied to the relocation process and the settling-in of the family: finding a house and moving furniture, identifying providers of services, such as doctors, dentists and food shops, enrolling the children in local or international schools, and so forth. All these tasks are usually performed in a rather unknown environment, often without knowing and understanding the local language while the partner works long hours (Davoine, Ravasi, & Cudré-Mauroux, 2011; McNulty, 2012; Merignac & Roger, 2012).

Recent studies have focused on a comprehensive description of the spouse's role, especially on the positive impact a spouse may have on expatriation (Mäkelä, Käsälä, & Suutari, 2011), also adopting a gender perspective (Cole, 2012; Davoine, Ravasi, Salamin, & Cudré-Mauroux, 2013). However, most research has principally considered the expatriate partner primarily as a facilitator or a barrier to expatriation success, focusing especially on the notion of spouse adjustment.

5.3 New forms and new actors of global mobility

Difficulties related to the management of the expatriation cycle, from selection to repatriation, led multinational corporations to explore new forms of global mobility alternatives to classical expatriation (Shaffer et al., 2012). With the aim of developing global managerial skills and conducting business in an increasingly global arena, international firms have at their disposal tools such as short-term assignments, commuter assignments, international business travel and virtual assignments (Collings et al., 2007). Hence, global firms can partly substitute the use of traditional international assignments by turning to an extended use of communication technologies in order to organize work in virtual global teams (Kayworth & Leidner, 2000). Use of traditional expatriate assignments seems to be accompanied by more short-term assignments, as well as frequent international business travelers (Tahvanainen, Welch, & Worm, 2005).

Furthermore, in a global context that is increasingly uncertain, organizations are becoming weaker, less and less able to direct and influence individual careers (Cappellen & Janssens, 2010). Individuals interested in a global experience self-initiate their global careers through pursuing foreign work assignments on their own terms (Suutari & Brewster, 2000). Not only self-initiated expatriates but migrants and highly qualified migrants have become an important part of a globally mobile workforce (Peiperl & Jonsen, 2007) that is increasingly researched in management literature (Al Ariss, 2010; Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010; Cerdin, Abdeljalil Dine, & Brewster, (2014), and upon which both employers and states depend to maintain a competitive advantage (Helbling, 2011).

From a demographic and sociological point of view, during the last years two main changes have occurred that make the actual picture different when compared to the traditional context, when an expatriate was typically a male accompanied by a wife, who almost always had the role of homemaker. Hence, the participation of women in international assignments has significantly increased in the last decades (GMAC, 2008; Salamin & Hanappi, 2014) as has the number of dual career couples in society in general and among expatriates in particular (Harvey, 1996; Permits Foundation, 2009).

As a result of this evolution, female-led dual career couples (Harvey, 1997) are increasingly frequent in the expatriation population.

5.4 Corporate relocation support

During and before an international assignment, multinational companies can help their employees by offering support and implementing several practices that may facilitate the relocation process, integration in a foreign country, and the degree of adjustment to several aspects of a new life in the host country. The seminal works on antecedents of expatriate adjustments of Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) showed that in the expatriation field, organizational support as a whole has a positive impact on the adjustment of an expatriate and his/her partner (Black & Gregersen, 1991). Other studies (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004; Shaffer, Harrison, & Gilley, 1999) showed that organizational support, for example in the form of logistical help, relates positively to expatriate adjustment.

With regard to expatriate career issues, organizational (international) career-related support has been shown to be significantly and positively related to expatriate performance (Feldman & Thomas, 1992; Van der Heijden, van Engen, & Paauwe, 2009) and significantly and negatively associated with intentions to leave (Naumann, 1993; Van der Heijden et al., 2009). Career-related practices in the field of expatriation are, for example, pre-departure career development planning, re-entry counseling, employee debriefings, and home-country mentoring (Handler & Lane, 1997; Riusala & Suutari, 2000). Studies on availability and perceived necessity of career-related practices revealed a gap between their availability and their perceived importance or necessity according to both concerned parties: expatriates (Riusala & Suutari, 2000) and HR departments of multinational companies (Handler & Lane, 1997).

In the third article, we explore all of these issues in an empirical study in which the cross-cultural adjustment of a population of foreign employees (traditionally-assigned expatriates, self-initiated expatriates, and skilled migrants) and its relationship with corporate support is investigated.

5.5 Synthesis of the third article

This research focuses on the adjustment of a population of 152 foreign employees from Swiss-based multinational companies and the adjustment of 126 spouses. We studied different adjustment dimensions and measured the impact of local language proficiency and the relationship with different kinds of relocation support practices (administrative and financial support practices and information and training practices). Hypotheses of the study are listed in table 3.

The study has been conducted in the Lemanic region where there is a mixed population of assigned expatriates and highly skilled migrants and where MNCs are faced with the challenge of integrating a heterogeneous international workforce, as well as their partners and families, into the host country. The Swiss context is particularly interesting to study because of the strong presence of multinational companies and a situation where the difference between qualified migrants and assigned expatriates is increasingly ethereal. Furthermore, the Swiss economy is highly dependent on qualified immigrants and attracts an impressive number of migrants to counteract the national shortage of skilled workers.

In light of the highly multicultural and multilingual Swiss environment, we expected an easier adjustment compared to other locations. But our data analysis highlighted relatively low cross-cultural adjustment scores for foreign employees and partners. Our results show that the ability to converse in the local language (French) facilitates interaction adjustment and that the adaptation process was more challenging for partners than for foreign employees, as we found higher scores of cross-cultural adjustment for the latter compared to the former. We uncovered the degree to which relocation support practices are offered, used, and perceived as necessary by foreign employees and showed which support practices could be used to improve the adjustment of migrants. Hence, our study showed that some of these support practices are correlated with the adjustment of foreign employees and their spouses. Administrative and financial support practices are the most frequently offered measures by organizations. They are mostly perceived as more necessary by foreign employees. In the category of information and training practices, cross-cultural training is the most rarely offered

measure for foreign employees and is rated as the least necessary measure by the employees themselves, though it is positively correlated with adjustment, especially spousal adjustment. The results of our study show that even though all these measures, including spousal employment support, are positively correlated with general spousal adjustment, they are perceived as less necessary by most foreign employees.

Table 3. Hypotheses of the third article

H1a: For foreign employees in Switzerland, interaction adjustment will not differ significantly from the other adjustment dimensions.	Not supported
H1b: For partners of foreign employees in Switzerland, interaction adjustment will not differ significantly from the other adjustment dimensions.	Not supported
H2a: Local language proficiency will be positively related to general adjustment of foreign employees.	Not supported
H2b: Local language proficiency will be positively related to interaction adjustment of foreign employees.	Supported
H2c: Local language proficiency will be positively related to work adjustment of foreign employees.	Not supported
H3a: General adjustment will be lower for foreign employees' partners than for foreign employees.	Supported
H3b: Interaction adjustment will be lower for foreign employees' partners than for foreign employees.	Not supported
H3c: Work adjustment will be lower for foreign employees' partners than for foreign employees.	Supported
H4a: Use of information and training support will be positively related to the adjustment of foreign employees and partners.	Partially supported
H4b: Use of administrative and financial support will be positively related to the adjustment of foreign employees and partners.	Partially supported

In the next section of this chapter, the contribution of the overall research project is discussed and ideas for future research are identified.

6. Contribution and future research

The three articles of this doctoral dissertation have several implications and make some important contributions to the field of international career research. When these research findings are observed from the perspective of a coevolution approach (Nicholson, 2007), some interesting directions for future research emerge. In the following sections, the practical and methodological implications of the three research articles and the overall contribution of this doctoral research project (according to a coevolution perspective) are illustrated, the perspective of the coevolution approach is presented, and some ideas for future research are proposed.

6.1 Practical and methodological implications

With regard to the study of top managers' career profiles, it is important to note that, in a context characterized by an exceptional degree of internationalization of business activities, the cross-country comparison and the diachronic analysis of this research offer very important and useful information to practitioners. With the emergence of an international market for executive labor, all those individuals involved in the field of human resources (people responsible for recruiting and management development and head-hunters) need to know and understand the process by which top managers in different countries are identified and shaped and how this process has evolved over time. This information is also important to managers with the motivation to reach a top corporate position in an international environment, as well as to those in charge of corporate strategic decisions (for example, the board of directors). These groups may find valuable information in this research on indicators that can be used to signal superior management talent (which are different in the four countries considered in this research) so that they can make better choices in the international market for executive labor in a context of internationalization of careers and potential lack of information due to national differences.

The research on cross-cultural adjustment of foreign employees may help multinational firms more adequately support foreign employees since the results provide important information for international organizations on how to support their foreign employees in their adjustment to a new host country. This is particularly important because some of the relocation practices (for example, cross-cultural training) that are strongly correlated with adjustment are not perceived as necessary by foreign employees. In particular, our study draws attention to low levels of interaction adjustment and shows the necessity for Swiss-based multinational firms, as well as multinational firms elsewhere, to work harder to integrate foreign employees and their families more effectively into the local community. Corporate-sponsored initiatives and activities can be implemented to promote a more favorable relationship between the local and foreign workforce with consequential advantages in terms of the work environment as well as for the image of (Swiss and foreign) multinational firms' subsidiaries and headquarters. This research highlights how international organizations can calibrate and adapt their mobility programs and provide support that is tailored to different countries, as adjustment problems and difficulties are highly embedded in national contexts.

From a methodological point of view, several other aspects of this research should be mentioned. Concerning the population studied in the first two research articles (i.e., top managers) it is important to note that there are only a few studies that focus on career issues of top managers (specifically managers at the head of their organizations) using a comparative approach. Studying the career of this particular population of managers within different cultures allows researchers to highlight and evaluate the extent of the impact of cultural values and national institutions on management and career development practices from a cross-country comparative perspective. This is important because how top managers attain top positions within the hierarchy of an enterprise is greatly affected by cultural concerns and institutional settings and thus varies from country to country. Moreover, the study of these issues through the collection of official biographies published by MNCs constitutes an original approach and has important consequences for research. Executive portraits are developed by top managers themselves in cooperation with communications and public-relations experts in their firms with the aim of building the figure of a credible, legitimate, and acceptable leader.

These portraits will thus include all the information that is considered important within a certain country and culture, which can help top managers display their credibility as leaders of a business organization. As a result, they reflect the different features which are characteristic of distinctive models of management development. This research demonstrates that official CVs and executive portraits can be meaningful and powerful research instruments. It is interesting to note that empirical data of the first article has been used in a following research project that analyzed careers of international managers through the Bourdieusian concepts of field and capital (Bühlmann, Davoine, & Ravasi, 2015).

Furthermore, the second research article benefits from an extensive database which consists of an impressive collection of archival data that covers a period of more than 30 years and which allowed for a diachronic analysis (these kind of databases are quite rare in management research in which the temporal dimension is not always taken into account to the degree that it deserves).

It is important to mention that focusing on a very specific and limited category of managers (i.e. top managers) of certain countries and certain industries could limit the generalizability of the findings of this research. It would be interesting to investigate the characteristics of younger top managers, female top managers, and top managers working for companies outside Europe (for example, MNCs in emerging markets) and in industries that are less represented in this research including high technology industries (for example, computer science or information technology companies). Although studies on the characteristics of top managers of companies in other regions of the world and in these new and disruptive industries do not currently exist (to the knowledge of this author), it is reasonable to expect that top management career paths there would be quite different and would follow different logics.

Concerning the research article on the cross-cultural adjustment of foreign employees, two important methodological aspects need to be mentioned. First, most studies show that organizational support as a whole is significantly related to the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates. However, very few studies have examined the relationship between the use of particular practices and the adjustment of employees and their

partners. From a methodological point of view, this research demonstrates the interest of separating and investigating the different practices individually as some of them seem to be more important than others. Second, it is important to emphasize that in this research different categories of internationally mobile individuals (in particular, self-initiated expatriates and migrants) have been merged in our sample. In doing this we attempt to overcome the (unwarranted) boundary between individuals considered ‘migrants’ and those considered ‘expatriates,’ merging these two types of internationally mobile individuals into a single category.

In the next section the most important findings and the overall contribution of this doctoral research project (according to a coevolution perspective) are illustrated.

6.2 Relevant findings and overall theoretical contribution

The coevolution approach proposed by Nicholson (2007) implies the necessity of linking persons and institutions through the concept of a career (Jones & Dunn, 2007) in order to document stability and change that may occur within institutions and organizations. The findings of the three articles of this doctoral research shed light on the development of an international market for executive labor and a community of international corporate executives through illustrating how the internationalization of careers and career profiles is linked to multinational firms.

The first article investigates notions of stability and change, and shows the (slow) erosion of national and traditional career models, which have been challenged by the arrival of international and foreign top managers. In this research, some new signs of international managerial legitimacy (such as an MBA or a university education in a field of study like management or economics) have been identified and are further confirmed in the second article, which uses a different research sample.

Our research results also stress the fact that classical, traditional career patterns are increasingly challenged by the presence of international managers, such as those who hold MBA degrees. We show that, for example, those with an MBA in Germany

experience a higher rate of mobility and reach top management positions more rapidly than national top managers. Furthermore, the will to couple national signals of legitimacy with more international signals of legitimacy is rare. For example, within the sample of top managers in our first article, there were only a few cases in which MBA degrees were coupled with a degree indicating national educational elite status, such as a doctoral degree in Germany or a diploma from a *grande école* in France.

Results of the first article also showed that Switzerland is highly internationalized concerning the executive committees of its large companies; this finding directed our research efforts to Switzerland for the following two research projects. Focusing on the Swiss case allowed for the discovery of some interesting facts with regard to the role of multinational firms in the process of internationalization of careers and of executive committees. Using Switzerland, we were also able to analyze the process of internationalization and the resulting local community of international managers.

The second article illustrates the weakening role of multinational firms as institutional actors. Indeed, the article shows that during the last 30 years, multinational firms have increasingly resorted to the external labor market in order to recruit international managers instead of identifying, developing, and selecting internal (and international) candidates. Similarly, in the third article we show that, among the international workforce employed by the multinational companies in our sample, an important proportion (more than half) are self-initiated expatriates or highly qualified migrants and not traditional organizational expatriates that are internally identified, selected, and supported for an international assignment. Furthermore, this third article shows that organizational support that is put in place by multinational firms seems to be inadequate (at least in the eyes of employees and their families) when observing results concerning the importance of certain organizational practices and the extent to which these practices are effectively offered. Linked to this perceived inadequate corporate support, it is interesting to note that the second article shows that in general international and multinational corporate talent management programs seems to be limited to the selection and recruitment of international top managers rather than also focusing on their (internal to the firm) development. In a context of internationalization of careers

and business environments, multinational firms tend to recruit and select top managers within the external (international) executive labor market, suggesting that structuring and developing corporate talent management programs on an international level is an increasingly complex and difficult task.

In a context in which multinational firms seem less able to direct and manage the process of internationalization of their workforce and their executive committee, it is important to note that the arrival of top international managers does not typically occur in a linear and standardized manner. However, the results of the first article suggest a certain convergence with regard to some features of top managers' careers (such as an MBA and a management/economics education) as a response to the internationalization of careers and business environments. However, the second article shows a quite different picture: by analyzing the careers of top international managers, the analysis concludes that the process of internationalization of top managers' careers does not cause a standardization of their profiles. Hence, the second article shows that a large heterogeneity characterizes the careers of international top managers and so it is not realistic that resulting local communities of top foreign managers should be expected to share the same common values, references, and identity markers. Moreover, the results of the third article show that the adaptation of foreign employees to a local (but highly internationalized) environment is much more difficult than what is reasonable to expect. By taking a multilevel perspective, this research shows that in a context in which the organizational level (i.e., the multinational firms) appears to be weaker, national models of top management careers on an institutional level and career-related choices and investment on an individual level seem to react in different ways to internationalization and to adopt divergent rather than convergent behaviors.

Jones and Dunn (2007) stress the need to link individuals to institutions through the study of careers, and so they suggest that institutional and organizational stability is maintained through stable career models, patterns, and routines that tend to reproduce similar individuals within firms and labor markets. Otherwise, change occurs when individuals with different understandings, training, and relations are selected and appointed to powerful positions. Within the context of international careers, linking

careers and institutions allows for observation of how institutional and organizational environments influence careers, how individuals react to challenges and opportunities, and how individual careers and the process of internationalization influence one another (Tams & Arthur, 2007).

An even more dynamic perspective is proposed by the coevolution approach (Nicholson, 2007), which sees the intersections between individuals' careers and institutions constantly transforming, in turn forcing people to find new pathways and to question established organizations and institutions. Hence, for Nicholson (2007) coevolution is a “cyclical relationship between A) people selecting, adapting to, and changing environments to achieve an optimal fit with them and B) environments selecting people who will fit into the culture” (p. 569). Consequently, this perspective has the potential to explain mobility patterns, the convergence of business models, and values and orientations around the world. Finally, this perspective can inform the way industries and organizations evolve and transform their systems and practices to “accommodate the orientations of the human assets to which they have access and seek to retain” (Nicholson, 2007, p. 569).

6.3 Ideas for future research

Consequently, future research should explore the effects of the internationalization of managers' profiles and careers, as these aspects are increasingly developing outside of organizational boundaries. In particular, it would be worthwhile to question the impact of internationalization on firms' output and practices, as well as on traditional national institutions and individual careers. Furthermore, future research efforts should seek to document how concerned actors positioned at different levels of analysis (individual, organizational, and institutional) respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by internationalization.

On the institutional level, it could be interesting to document how local and national institutions are affected by the process of internationalization of careers and how they react to the challenges represented by this process. Davoine, Ginalski, Mach and Ravasi

(2015) show how the growing presence of foreigners and internationalized local managers in Switzerland has weakened national specificities (such as the army and politics) when identifying, selecting, and developing of top managers. The decline of the Swiss army, which was long recognized as an important institutional actor in the formation, development, and network building of top managers of Swiss firms, is an interesting example of changes occurring at a macro-level (institutional level) as a consequence of decisions and actions that are mainly located at an individual level. Individuals now tend to make choices concerning education (such as taking an MBA or economic/management studies in—often foreign—business schools) and professional experience (work experience in foreign countries in certain firms or industries) because of their value in the contemporary executive labor market. As a result, experiences and networks related to the army have become relatively obsolete.

It would be, therefore, worthwhile to discover the face and the role played by new, emerging institutions that are operating at a supranational level and that could replace the more traditional and local institutions, as research on these institutional players in the global economy is lacking. Strategies employed by the more traditional and local institutions in other parts of the world should be investigated as well.

At the organizational level, there should be further investigation of human resource management practices implement by firms with the aim of attracting and retaining global talent in the context of increased internationalization of careers and profiles.

Furthermore, it could be interesting to investigate the consequences of a more diverse workforce (in terms of nationality) and the impact of employees that are increasingly international in their careers and profiles and increasingly heterogeneous regarding their patterns and models of international mobility. Concerning output, Nielsen and Nielsen (2013) have shown that national diversity at the head of Swiss firms is beneficial (especially for highly internationalized firms) for their performance. The presence of foreign top managers in the executive committees of firms in several countries could be more deeply analyzed, not only in terms of performance but also in relation to other forms of output, such as internationalization strategy decisions or offshoring choices.

Top managers have different experiences, capabilities, values, and personalities, and thus they interpret strategic stimuli from within and without the organization in a myriad of different ways with the consequence that different behaviors and choices are adopted. Firms become a reflection of their top managers and their distinctive characteristics in terms of age, educational background, functional tracks, and other career experiences (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Important choices, which can be decisive in determining the success or failure of the firm, are made not only at the top level of the firm's hierarchy but also by people that are at a lower level. However, no other small group within an organization has the same power in determining and influencing the actions of the organization that they belong to. Moreover, top managers (even if they do not control every decision) are those individuals in the best position to inspire, incentivize, and determine the choices of other people and the behavior of the organization as a whole. Top managers' careers can have an impact on their firms' strategies. Equally, firms' strategies can influence the careers of top managers in terms of, for example, choice of a certain type of CEO and the promotion of particular career logics and career paths. In a context of increased internationalization of top managers' careers and profiles, as well as the increased internationalization of corporate strategies and the link between these strategies and top managers' careers, it would be interesting for future research to investigate this connection by integrating models and theories from the field of international management.

Finally, it would be interesting to study the risks as well as the opportunities for firms of having top managers with international careers. The international careers literature tends to highlight the opportunities rather than the risks, emphasizing that as international companies continue to expand globally they need an increasing number of managers with international careers in order to compete in the global business arena. For this reason, an international assignment or global experience and global management competencies are highly valued within multinational firms. Future studies should examine the impact of highly internationalized executive committees (in terms of experiences as well as nationality) on corporate strategies such as abandoning activities and production in the home countries in favor of offshoring and outsourcing. These negative consequences could be investigated in a country like Switzerland where the

large firms rely less and less on national or local top managers. On the individual level, it would be interesting to investigate the effects of the arrival of foreign managers and highly qualified migrants and the subsequent development of an international community of managers on a local population of national managers. It could be worthwhile to document how managers with a less internationalized profile and career react to various challenges and to illustrate possible adaptation strategies. For example, data on top managers of Swiss firms in a sample from David, Davoine, Ginalschi, Mach and Ravasi (2012) show a rapid adaptation of national top managers to the new globalized economic environment and a high degree of internationalization with regard to their education and professional experience. The individual responses of national managers to the process of internationalization of careers should be documented, too. Furthermore, it could be interesting to shed light on the relationship between international and local employees in work and non-work environments, looking for examples in the interactions between organizational expatriates, self-initiated expatriates, skilled migrants, the local workforce, and host country nationals in general.

7. References

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II. The relative stability of national career patterns in European top management careers in the age of globalisation: A comparative study in France/ Germany/ Great Britain and Switzerland⁴

Summary

While top management career patterns are highly embedded in national institutional contexts, the phenomenon of globalization has recently called into question the future of these patterns. In this article we discuss the stability of certain features of national top management profiles as well as the emergence of a new globalized managerial elite characterized by new elements legitimating top management authority. We collected biographical and career related information from 916 top managers employed by 111 companies located in France, Germany, Great Britain and Switzerland. Our data shows a certain erosion of national models due to the gradual arrival of non-national top managers, but this process occurs very slowly despite the strong international dimension of the companies studied.

Keywords: top management profiles, national career patterns, international careers, managerial elite.

⁴ Davoine, E., & Ravasi C. (2013). The relative stability of national career patterns in European top management careers in the age of globalisation: a comparison of France, Germany, Great Britain and Switzerland, *European Management Journal*, 31 (2), 152-163.

1. Introduction

The influence of the national context on the career paths of top executives has been investigated by numerous studies since the late eighties. By observing the careers of top managers of large European multinational companies, researchers of the INSEAD (Evans, Lank, & Farquhar, 1989) stressed the existence of national characteristics in the career paths, especially for France, Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands. By examining the careers of CEOs from the 200 largest French, British and German firms, French sociologists Bauer and Bertin-Mouroit (1996) identified national models of top management careers related to elements of the institutional contexts, e.g. the national educational systems. Mayer and Whittington (1999) published a longitudinal analysis of the top management elites of these three countries and confirmed a certain stability of national management elite profiles between 1980 and 1990.

In the last 20 years, the phenomenon of globalization has led to the transformation of certain national institutional configurations, such as a certain convergence of governance practices and the domination of North-American management models (Djelic, 1998). Recently, several authors have questioned the effects of globalization on national managerial elites (David, Davoine, Ginalski, & Mach, 2012; Froud, Savage, Tampubolon, & Williams, 2006; Godelier, 2005) and on the new factors legitimating top management authority in a globalized business environment, e.g. post graduate education in finance and management such as MBA degrees (Byrkjeflot, 2003), international experience and competencies (Evans, Pucik, & Barsoux, 2002) or previous experience in international Anglo-Saxon audit and consulting firms (Godelier, 2005). Several recent studies raised the question of the impact of globalization on the internationalization of top management teams (Heijltjes, Olie, & Glunk, 2003; Ruigrok & Greve, 2008; Van Veen & Marsman, 2008) or on the evolution of national elite profiles (Maclean, Harvey, & Chia, 2010).

The principal objective of this article is to empirically test the continuity of distinctive patterns of national career models determined by cultural and institutional factors, in spite of the increasing internationalization of top management profiles. With this aim we compared data from four countries on the educational backgrounds and career paths

of 916 European top managers. We used data published in 2009 by 111 companies located in France, Germany, Great Britain and Switzerland. Switzerland was added to the study because some authors (David et al. 2012; Davoine, 2005; Dyllick & Torgler, 2007; Ruigrok, Peck, & Tacheva, 2007) have underlined the specificity of this country: the number of foreign managers in Switzerland is particularly high, which makes it an exemplary case of a country with a globalized managerial elite.

In the first part of this paper, we will present the traditional national models of top management careers and their institutional embeddedness. Afterwards we will discuss the potential convergence of national models and the emergence of a new global managerial elite. Hypotheses on the stability of national models will then be formulated and the methodology of our study will be explained. In the final part we will present and discuss the results of our study by testing our hypotheses on the stability of some distinctive national features and by showing points of convergence in the internationalization of profiles.

2. Four national embedded top management career models

A career can be seen as both a property and a process that is highly embedded in different contextual layers. As stated by Mayrhofer, Meyer and Steyrer (2007), individual career patterns and profiles depend on the work context (i.e. external labor market), the context of origin (i.e. education and work history) the context of society and culture (i.e. societal ties) and the global context (i.e. internationalization of businesses and companies). Furthermore, careers are not only influenced and designed by social and national institutions, but they are able, in turn, to shape these institutional factors. Careers and institutions are thus highly tied through a process of creation, reproduction and transformation (Jones & Dunn, 2007).

By analyzing the career paths of European top managers, Evans et al. (1989) identified and isolated three distinctive national models of top management career paths that are represented in Figure 1.

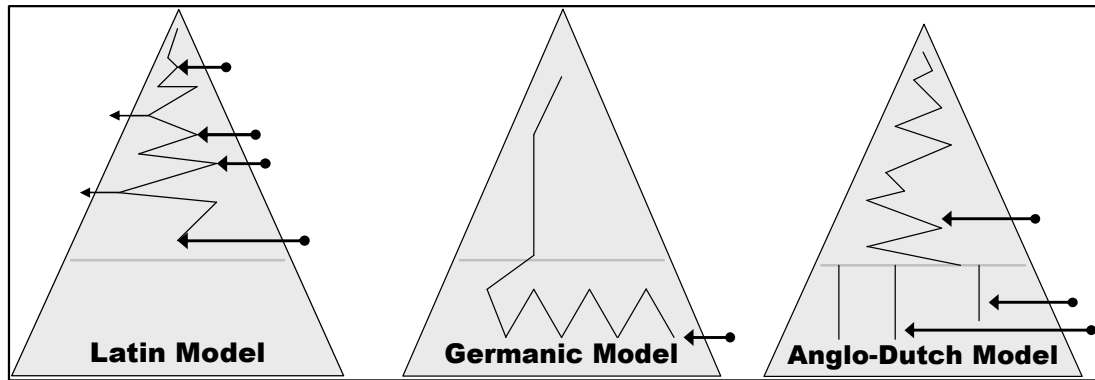


Figure 1: National models of top management careers (Source: Evans et al., 1989).

Bauer and Bertin-Mouroit (1996) collected data on the educational and professional backgrounds of the CEOs from the 200 largest companies in France, Germany and Great Britain, which confirmed the accuracy of the models of Evans et al. (1989). The data was collected in the following years: 1985, 1989 and 1993 for the French enterprises, 1989 and 1994 for the German enterprises and 1992 for the British enterprises. The study aimed to identify the main national characteristics that legitimize top management authority and to assess the emergence of a single European model of top management careers. The data collected was related to the career paths and the time spent within the actual enterprise and with previous companies, or the type of asset that funds a legitimate authority (Bourdieu, 1986). Regarding the legitimate authority, the “shareholder asset” seemed to be a common legitimizing mechanism in all three countries. Belonging to a shareholder family was an important profile element for about a third of the French sample, for a quarter of the German sample, and for one fifth of the British sample. Bauer and Bertin-Mouroit’s study (1996) also pointed out the importance of other assets, such as the “education asset”, the “corporate career asset” and the “civil service asset” which are strongly embedded in the national institutional contexts.

2.1 The French top management career model

According to the Latin model, French managers are usually identified as high potentials outside of the company they are managing. In France, the selection of potential top managers seems to occur on the basis of elite educational qualifications from the French *Grandes écoles*. This is best illustrated in the 1993 sample from Bauer and Bertin-Mouroit. According to this sample, the percentage of alumni from the École Nationale d'Administration (ENA) was 25%, 25% also came from the École Polytechnique (a prestigious military engineering school also called “X” because of the school symbol of two crossed canons), and the percentage of alumni from the Hautes Etudes Commerciales (HEC) was 7%. In the French system, the *Grandes écoles* are elitist and hierarchically arranged institutions that select their students by means of an entrance examination (Albouy & Wanecq, 2003). In the preparatory classes for the entrance exam and in these institutions, some skills such as the ability to think in an intellectual, abstract way or the rapid and synthetic understanding of complex subjects are particularly valued. Not surprisingly, French firms' top managers are often generalist managers and strategic as well as conceptual thinkers (Alexandre-Bailly, Festing, & Jonczyk 2010; Barsoux & Lawrence, 1991; Lawrence, 2000). The path to top management positions typically occurs in a rapid and non-regulated career progression through managerial positions in different functional areas. High potential is considered a more important criterion than managerial competence or professional achievements (Segalla, Rouzies, & Flory, 2001). In addition to the high rate of inter-functional mobility, the Latin model is characterized by a high rate of inter-company mobility. Managers are often recruited externally and appointed to the top positions of companies that they do not know from the inside. Bauer and Bertin-Mouroit (1996) describe these managers as *helicoptered* or *catapulted*.

Furthermore, Bauer and Bertin-Mouroit's study from 1996 shows the importance of the “civil service asset” in France: 44.5% of top managers had previous experience in the senior civil service. It seems that in 1996, the “senior civil service asset” was the main and most specific source for legitimizing top management authority. This phenomenon is not only linked to the important role that the State played in the economy, but also to

the specific career paths of the young civil servant members of the *Grand corps de l'État* (mainly the best students of the École Polytechnique and the ENA). Early in their careers the members of the *Grands Corps* receive demanding assignments and strategic responsibilities within the state apparatus. Bauer and Cohen (1981) showed that beyond the academic elite legitimacy, it is this state elite development path that allows members of the *Grands Corps* to develop skills and networks that will later be essential for occupying top management positions in private companies.

2.2 The German top management career model

In the Germanic model, educational elitist recruitment (related to the possession of a doctoral degree) also seems to exist to a certain extent (Opitz, 2005). However, in contrast with France, being part of the academic elite does not allow an automatic access to the managerial positions of a company. The identification of managerial potential takes place within the companies, during a long integration phase in which new employees are observed. During this phase, e.g. in extensive vocational or trainee programs, potential managers can hold positions in various functions within the company in order to develop a general overview of the firm's work procedures. After this phase, the manager's career progresses within a single area of expertise, in which the potential top manager continually develops function-related and firm-related competencies that play a crucial role in the legitimization of his/her position and authority (Stewart, Barsoux, Kieser, Ganter, & Walgenbach, 1994). Bauer and Bertin-Mouroit (1996) describe these as "mountain climber careers"; several German authors (e.g. Walgenbach, 1994) use the term *Kaminkarrieren* to describe these careers within the "chimney" of an area of expertise.

Bauer and Bertin-Mouroit highlight the importance of the "corporate career asset" for nearly two thirds (65%) of the German top managers from the sample. As indicated by the model proposed by Evans et al. (1989), they are typical "mountain climbers". A high degree of legitimacy is given to the *Fachwissen* (the technical expertise gained within the company) in the "mountain climber career" model. This high value given to

technical expertise is firmly rooted in the dual vocational training system that influences its development and transfer. Lawrence (1980) and more recently Stewart et al. (1994) use the expression *Management by Fachwissen* to describe how German management as *Fachwissen* constitute, more than anywhere else, the structuring principles of German organizations. The strong legitimacy of professional knowledge and skills acquired within the company explains the high frequency of *Kaminkarrieren* among German top managers. It also explains why the *Vorstand* (the German executive committee) has to operate with a cooperative team approach. The members are often specialists (*Fachexperte*) unlike the French or English who are usually generalists. Another specificity is the high rate of doctorate holders (Joly, 1996), which shows that German society and its companies value the expertise of the academic elite that is selected by universities based on the Humboldtian principle of educating by researching. In contrast to France, the members of the German academic elite have to go through more steps before being appointed to top managerial positions. Moreover, a large number of them also go through dual professional training between the achievement of the general baccalaureate and the beginning of their university studies (Joly, 1996).

2.3 The British top management career model

The Anglo-Dutch model described by Evans et al. (1989) seems to have less educational elite recruitment, although the role of secondary schools, particularly the “public schools”, has been emphasized by Bauer and Bertin-Mourot (1996). The detection of potential top managers is done within the firm through the use of assessment centers and standardized tools of performance appraisal (Klarsfeld & Mabey, 2004). In comparison to the Germanic model, the managerial function is not as strongly linked to a specific technical expertise. Therefore, managers are supposed to be able to manage any kind of team, even without a sound expertise of the function. In this model, managerial skills are considered to be generic. After their selection, the potential top managers experience a certain inter-functional mobility. They are supposed to be able to manage different types of teams in different functional areas. Management

review committees then regularly monitor them, and their performance is constantly verified.

Bauer and Bertin-Mouroto noted a significant presence of graduates from Oxford and Cambridge (32%). However, according to their data, university does not seem to be a decisive institutional element of top management profiles in the United Kingdom. Indeed, in their sample of managers, they found a high percentage of “self-made men” (36%), i.e. managers without academic education. Moreover, they highlighted the importance of public schools in the reproduction of the economic elite: 36% of managers of the largest 200 companies are alumni from the most prestigious public schools in the country. In comparison to France and Germany, British managers are less often engineers as engineering is less prestigious in Great Britain (Mayer & Whittington, 1999). The British “self-made” managers are often “mountain climbers”. However, in contrast to the Germanic model, they only progress in a single area of expertise during the first phase of their careers (the potential identification phase). Once identified as having managerial potential, managers experience a bigger inter-functional mobility than in Germany. Professional institutes play an important role in the United Kingdom since they train managers for management jobs (human resource management, marketing, finance, etc.) within the frame of a dual vocational training, which lasts several years. These professional institutes do not impose strict academic requirements and are an important source of competencies, legitimacy and networks for managers. The tie to the institute is maintained through associations in which members can take the prestigious title of Fellows once they become directors in their companies. The Institute of Chartered Accountants, related to jobs in finance and audit, is particularly prestigious. In this context, MBA programs conceived for experienced managers regardless of their previous studies are popular in the United Kingdom (Wilson & Thompson, 2006).

2.4 Swiss top managers: an exemplary case of a globalized business elite

Evans et al. (1989) state that the Germanic model of top managers' careers is valid for Switzerland as it presents several institutional similarities with the German context. For example, a common institutional element is the developed system of dual vocational training that attests to the prestige conferred to professional skills and technical knowledge. Moreover, the Swiss university model of academic elite selection also highly resembles the German one. A longitudinal study of Swiss top management profiles between 1980 and 2000 (David et al., 2012) shows that the ideal, typical career model in Switzerland is probably the "mountain climber career", but many national and international influences make this model less frequent than in the German context. This latter study underlines the recent effects of the globalization of the Swiss business environment, leading to remarkable changes in the capital ownership of companies as well as in their international strategies. Furthermore, these changes have triggered an important internationalization of the Swiss managerial elite, which was particularly remarkable at the end of the century (David et al., 2012), and seems to have grown since the beginning of the new millennium (Davoine, 2005; Dyllick & Torgler, 2007; Ruigrok & Greve, 2008). Due to the lack of raw material and the small domestic market, the Swiss economy has been particularly open since the 19th century (Bairoch, 1990), and Swiss firms have thus very early integrated a global vision of their strategic environment (Schröter, 1993). Switzerland is indeed characterized by a long history of economic internationalization and by an important presence of multinational firms. Top managers of big Swiss firms were already strongly internationalized at the beginning of the 20th century (Lüpold, 2008). The impact of the institutional environment on the recruitment and selection practices of multinational companies (Dowling, Festing, & Engle, 2008) is clearly observable in the Swiss context. Indeed, large companies located in Switzerland often resort to foreign executives in order to deal with the small size of the Swiss internal labor market with regard to managerial positions.

The Swiss case is also particularly interesting because of the coexistence of two sets of institutional factors. On the one side we have a significant presence of foreign capital, a high number of foreign managers and the central importance of a business education

institution like the IMD. The latter was created by Swiss multinational companies like Nestlé and Novartis and developed in accordance to the Anglo-Saxon business school model. On the other hand, Switzerland has an academic education model of Humboldtian tradition and a dual vocational training system that promotes professional skills and knowledge. As a small country, Switzerland is certainly more sensitive and responsive to international openness than bigger European countries (Katzenstein, 2003). Along with the significant increase in the appointment of foreigners to top managerial positions within Swiss firms, the top managers of Swiss firms have shown a prompt and rapid adaptation to the new globalized business arena. As is shown in the sample studied by David et al. (2012), top managers of Swiss companies seem to have a more internationalized profile in terms of citizenship, educational background and career experience abroad. We therefore add Switzerland to our study to confirm the trend of former observations (David et al., 2012; Davoine, 2005) and to compare the Swiss top manager profile to other profiles.

3. The emergence of a new global managerial elite? Hypotheses of our study

The data regarding the three national models was sufficiently contrasting amongst the countries and stable over time that Bauer and Bertin-Mouroit finally stated, in 1996, that the creation of a single European model would be quite difficult due to the social and historical roots of these national models. However, 15 years later, as a result of the internationalization of markets, organizations and capital, an increased number of authors focused their attention on the hypothesis of convergence towards a single European (or international) model of the managerial profile (Djelic & Quack, 2003). This internationalization is reflected in the increased mobility of managers across Europe, the presence of foreign top managers in top management teams and the development of an international market for executive labour (Ruigrok & Greve, 2008). Multinational firms develop career programs at a European level in order to attract, internationalize and retain the most talented national managers (Evans et al., 2002). The need for managers who have skills, networks and legitimacy related to international

experience probably represents the most serious threat to the national models. As a result of the increased importance of the image transmitted to financial markets and the shareholder value within the firm's strategy, it seems that the legitimacy of top managers is more often associated with competencies in economics or management. This is also the case in countries where legitimacy is associated with a law or engineering academic background (Mayer & Whittington, 1999). A new global managerial elite seems to be emerging (Godelier, 2005). The signals of legitimacy are more international: for example, MBAs, experience in foreign countries, experience in international firms, especially in Anglo-Saxon audit or consulting firms that are known for training high potentials in the first phase of their career. Nearly 20 years after the identification of the INSEAD models, these trends should have impacted the profiles of French, German and British top managers. The issue of stability or convergence of national career models can be addressed empirically by studying recent top management profiles in the largest companies of these three countries.

The brief synthesis of the literature on national top management career models shows a strong national institutional embeddedness of top management career paths in Europe in the 1990's. Top management profiles in each country show characteristics that correspond to elements of every institutional context and that are often deeply rooted in the country's history. The relative stability of national institutions and managerial values over time should thus weaken the effect of internationalization on the distinctive processes by which top managers are developed, identified and selected in different countries. Even though the emergence of a global managerial elite tends to promote a certain convergence of profiles and favour international signals of legitimacy, we expect that some distinctive characteristics of the different national models of top management career still remain.

Within the French hierarchically arranged education system (Albouy & Wanecq, 2003), the most outstanding individuals continue to signal their potential by attending a few elitist schools that are at the top of the hierarchy (especially the École Polytechnique, the ENA and HEC) (Dudouet & Joly, 2010). Furthermore, the French State still validates the ranking of educational institutions and the superior prestige conferred to

the most selective *Grandes écoles* by recruiting their best students. Graduates who are hired by the public administration and who benefit from excellent opportunities, training programs and networks in the early stages of their career will be better prepared for high managerial positions in large French companies (Bauer & Cohen, 1981; Dudouet & Joly, 2010). Therefore we formulate the following hypotheses:

H1a. French top managers will be more likely to have attended one of the most selective academic institutions of their country than German and British top managers.

H1b. French top managers will be more likely to have worked in senior civil servant positions than their German and British counterparts.

In our hypotheses and throughout our article, we use the expression “French top managers” which is to be understood as top managers from our sample of French firms. The same logic is applied when we use the expressions “German, British or Swiss top managers” in the next hypotheses.

In Germany, doctoral studies offer two important assets to those interested in pursuing a career in management: a scientific, research orientated education as well as an elitist signal, as only the most prominent students are selected and hired to prepare a doctoral thesis in German universities (Joly, 1996; Opitz, 2005). Technical expertise is an important criterion for the legitimization of managerial career progression. It is usually developed within a single company and it is not easily transferable to other organizations (Stewart et al., 1994; Walgenbach, 1994). This phenomenon promotes “mountain climber careers” and limits inter-enterprise mobility. Therefore we formulate the following hypotheses:

H2a. German top managers will be more likely to have a doctoral degree than their French and British counterparts.

H2b. German top managers will be more likely to have worked for fewer companies throughout their careers (“mountain climber career”) than their French and British counterparts.

Following an individualistic and achievement-orientated approach, based on the hypothesis that managerial competencies and professional achievements are more important, British firms put less emphasis on academic degrees (Klarsfeld & Mabey, 2004). Thus, British managers have traditionally tended to be less university-educated than their European counterparts. They have filled this educational gap through professional qualifications offered by professional institutes that support the development of competencies, legitimacy and networks (Wilson & Thompson, 2006). Therefore we formulate the following hypotheses:

H3a. British top managers will be less likely to be university-educated than their French and German counterparts.

H3b. British top managers will be more likely to hold a professional qualification than their French and German counterparts.

Top management teams from Swiss firms traditionally have a high degree of internationalization in comparison to other European companies (David et al., 2012; Davoine, 2005; Dyllick & Torgler, 2007; Ruigrok & Greve, 2008). In order to be successful in the Swiss internationalized labour market, managers of Swiss companies have, more than elsewhere, careers and signs of legitimacy with an international dimension (MBAs and other executive programs, working experience abroad and previous experience in international firms). Therefore we formulate the following hypotheses:

H4a. Swiss top managers will be more likely to have an international work experience than their French, German and British counterparts.

H4b. Swiss top managers will be more likely to hold a MBA or similar executive program qualification than their French, German and British counterparts.

H4c. Swiss top managers will be more likely to have previously worked for international auditing and consulting companies than their French, German and British counterparts.

4. Sampling and data collection

The data collection took place in 2009. In order to compare top management profiles and test our hypotheses, we followed the sampling recommendations of Joly (2007). We chose to collect data from the largest companies listed on the stock exchange market of our four countries. We avoided collecting data from the 200 largest companies of every country because they would have represented a too large and diverse sample. Our study sample therefore consists of executive board members of the SMI companies in Switzerland, the CAC 40 companies in France, the DAX companies in Germany and the 30 largest firms (in order to maintain a sample of comparable size) of the FTSE 100 in the United Kingdom. Some firms were excluded from the sample because of their lack of biographical information (for example Essilor, Salzgitter or Diageo) and, in rare cases, because of the impossible task of determining their “nationality” with accuracy (for example EADS, Arcelor-Mittal or Xstrata). Finally, a total of 916 top managers working for 111 firms were selected in order to form the study sample (272 managers and 32 firms in France, 177 and 29 in Germany, 266 and 30 in the United Kingdom, 201 and 20 in Switzerland).

The choice of focusing on listed companies offers several advantages for a comparison but also several methodological limitations, as mentioned by Joly (2007). Listed firms are comparable in terms of turnover, number of employees, corporate governance and in terms of international strategy. Listed firms are obliged by corporate governance legislation to publish biographical data on their executive committees and to make this information available in a relatively standardized manner. In all four countries, the sample companies represent a relatively important variety of economic sectors. However, it is possible that this sampling method might exclude some country-specific companies such as the German *Mittelstand* companies. Simon (1996) described these companies, characterized by family ownership, provincial identities and global strategies, as the “hidden champions” and the backbone of the German economy. The limitations of using our sampling method could have reinforced the impact of standardization/globalization of profiles.

The data collected on the board members concerned their citizenship, sex, age, higher and postgraduate education (degree, field of study, name of the institution, country of the institution), career steps (number of positions within and outside the company, number of employers), job positions abroad (in a country which does not correspond to the nationality of the manager), as well as previous work experience in international audit or consulting firms and in the senior civil service. Data related to top managers was collected over a period of two months (from October 1st 2009 to November 15th 2009), and was retrieved exclusively from official corporate sources like corporate websites or annual reports. To preserve standardized information, no complementary source was used (e.g. the *Who's Who*). To respect this standardized approach, biographical information was always selected from the English biographies in order to collect the information that firms and managers chose to present to an international environment. It is therefore possible that some country-specific information would not be published in the company's official biographies addressed to an international public. This is the case for the public school education of British managers, which is very rarely mentioned in the CVs of board members. In a way, our data collection method could again have reinforced the impact of the standardization/globalization of profiles.

5. Results and discussion

5.1 A stability of national models

In France, the *Grandes écoles* and the public sector continue to play an important role in the identification and selection process of potential top managers. The three most frequent schools appearing in the backgrounds of top managers of French companies in our sample are the most prestigious ones: the École Polytechnique, HEC and ENA. Thirty-eight percent of university-educated top managers are graduates from at least one of these schools. Among managers who completed at least a part of their studies in France, the percentage is 53%. These percentages are significantly higher than those found in Germany (14% and 25% respectively), where no institution seems to be definitely associated with the top management elite. Also in the United Kingdom, where

almost a third of the British managerial elite earned a degree from Oxford or Cambridge, the percentages are lower than in France (14% and 34% respectively). Furthermore, in France, a civil servant experience is more common than in the other countries. This phenomenon concerns only 1% of top managers in Switzerland and 3% in Germany and the United Kingdom. In France, roughly one fifth of the top managers and a third of the CEOs from our sample have previous experience as senior civil servants. The latter are usually graduates of the *Grandes écoles* mentioned above. Hypotheses 1a and 1b are supported (see Table 1.)

In Germany, a doctorate is used as a signal marking individuals with high potential in an educational system in which educational institutions are not hierarchically arranged (Opitz, 2005). At the same time, the doctoral title confirms one's membership to the educational elite (Barmeyer & Davoine, 2007). In the German Humboldtian academic system, the development of a PhD expertise in a specific area seems to play a similar role than the role of the *Grandes écoles* in France. In our sample of German firms, nearly every second manager (45%) had a doctoral degree (compared to 6–7% in France and in the United Kingdom). Hypothesis 2a is supported.

The persistence of another German characteristic, the “mountain climber career” (Joly, 1996) is confirmed by data regarding the number of positions occupied before reaching a top managerial position and by figures on intercompany mobility. While the average time required to reach a top management position is similar across all four countries, top managers from German firms give more details about the stages of their career than their counterparts (an average of 8.3 positions compared to 4.9 in France and 5.4 in the United Kingdom) before being appointed to a top management team. These figures seem to confirm the importance of the career path in the Germanic model as a way of acquiring competences and legitimacy. The top managers of German firms are also characterized by the lowest rate of inter-company mobility, having worked on average for 2.4 firms (compared to 2.44 in Switzerland, 2.51 in the United Kingdom and 2.72 in France).

Table 1. Significance of differences: Pearson's chi-square tests

	France (%)	Germany (%)	UK (%)	Switzerland (%)	France vs Germany		France vs United Kingdom		France vs Switzerland	
					x ²	ρ	x ²	ρ	x ²	ρ
Three most frequented schools	38	14	14	18	28.901	.000	52.268	.000	27.461	.000
Senior civil service	19	3	3	1	26.458	.000	38.552	.000	38.457	.000
					Germany vs France		Germany vs United Kingdom		Germany vs Switzerland	
					x ²	ρ	x ²	ρ	x ²	ρ
Doctoral degree	6	45	7	25	98.598	.000	91.111	.000	17.227	.000
Mountain climber	52	61	57	59	3.101	.078	.791	.374	.129	.720
					United Kingdom vs France		United Kingdom vs Germany		United Kingdom vs Switzerland	
					x ²	ρ	x ²	ρ	x ²	ρ
University educated	95	90	72	86	49.662	.000	20.821	.000	13.552	.000
Professional qualifications	2	1	13	6	29.995	.000	19.327	.000	5.982	.014
					Switzerland vs France		Switzerland vs Germany		Switzerland vs United Kingdom	
					x ²	ρ	x ²	ρ	x ²	ρ
International experience	56	56	62	74	16.315	.000	12.247	.000	6.972	.008
MBA and similar program	10	12	20	29	26.770	.000	15.221	.000	5.507	.019
Audit/consulting firm	9	15	14	14	3.081	.079	.044	.833	.012	.913

However, these statistics hide a differentiated situation. In reality, one third of German top managers spent their entire career in a single company. Two thirds worked for a higher number of employers but they usually spent a large part of their career in the company they are leading today. The percentage of top managers from German companies who worked for up to two firms during their career does not significantly differ from those of French and British firms. Hypothesis 2b is not supported. A longitudinal study published in 2009 (Freye, 2009) brought evidence that the model of the “mountain climber” working for a single firm is gradually being replaced by top managers who have only climbed the last steps of their career within their company and spent part of their career with other employers.

The British model of the management career is characterized by a significantly smaller percentage of university graduates. It ranges from 90% in Germany to 95% in France, whereas it is less than 72% in the United Kingdom. This gap is usually filled thanks to participation in MBA and other executive education programs, as well as training offered by professional institutes. Compared to their counterparts in France and Germany, where 10% and 12% (respectively) of top managers have completed a MBA or another executive program, top managers from British firms seem to be more familiar with this kind of management education (20%). Similarly, the percentage (13%) of top managers holding a professional qualification is significantly higher than in France (1%) and Germany (2%), confirming the importance of professional institutes in Great Britain. Hypotheses 3a and 3b are supported. The role played by the elites, who graduated from public schools could not be evaluated, as information on this type of education is not mentioned in the profiles published by companies. The intersection of our data with other sources (such as the *Who's Who* or biographies published in the British press) seems to confirm that education in public schools is still a distinctive feature of the British economic elite. A further confirmation is provided by recent studies (Kerr & Robinson, 2011; Maclean, Harvey & Chia, 2010) on UK and Scottish corporate elites. The CVs of the members of the British government show that it also applies to the conservative political elite. The lack of this kind of data in corporate biographies suggests that this element of the selection and development model of

British economic elites does not play an explicit role of legitimacy as do professional institutes or MBAs.

Finally, our data presents Switzerland as a hybrid national model of top management careers. The top managers of Swiss companies are highly internationalized and typically come from several different countries. Thus, they have gone through other national models of management careers and that makes it difficult to identify a Swiss model. A more detailed study by David et al. (2012) found that Swiss top managers traditionally have an international profile (foreign experience, degrees acquired abroad, etc.). Results regarding Swiss top managers have been found to be similar to those of their German counterparts; however their features are less pronounced. The importance of the doctoral degree, the limited inter-company mobility, the promotion of a step-by-step career before being appointed to a top management position are typical features of the Germanic model (Evans et al. 1989). Nevertheless, the observation of some distinctive features highlights the opportunity to consider the Swiss case as a laboratory for the new global managerial elite (David et al. 2012). The top management teams of Swiss firms are highly internationalized, as 64% of top managers are foreigners. This percentage is remarkably high, not only in comparison to France (22%), Germany (27%) and the United Kingdom (46%) but also compared to the Netherlands and Sweden (Heijltjes et al. 2003), which are small and highly internationalized countries. In the Swiss sample, we have 126 foreign top managers representing 22 different nationalities, and, among them, the most represented country is Germany with 22 individuals (17%) followed by the United Kingdom with 21 (17%), the United States with 19 (15%) and France with 14 (11%). Similarly, the percentage of top managers with professional experience in a foreign country (75%) is higher than those found in France (56%), Germany (56%) and the United Kingdom (62%). On average, top managers of Swiss firms have worked and lived in two foreign countries. The most represented countries are the United States, in which 56 top managers out of 148 have worked (38%), Germany with 33 (22%), the United Kingdom with 29 (20%) and France with 15 (10%). Hypothesis 4a is supported. Finally, participation in executive education programs (MBA or similar) is higher in Switzerland (29%) than in France (10%), Germany (12%) and even the United Kingdom (20%). Hypothesis 4b is supported. In

contrast to what we expected, the percentage of top managers with experience in international consulting and auditing firms is not significantly higher in Switzerland than in other countries. Hypothesis 4c is not supported.

5.2 Some common trends

The first point of similarity between the samples is related to the low number of women in top management positions. In the sample of 916 top managers, only sixty-seven (representing 8% of the total population) were women. The percentage of women in top management positions differs across countries. Their presence is highest (11%) in the United Kingdom (the only country in which women were CEOs or CFOs, with one case for each), followed by France (8%), Switzerland (4.5%) and finally Germany with only one female top manager (less than 1%) (Table 2).

Within our sample, a high number of top managers obtained a degree in business, management or economics (53.5% in Germany, 49.5% in France and the United Kingdom and 42.5% in Switzerland), which were the most common fields of study. The second most represented field was engineering, with percentages that varied from 18% in Switzerland to 43% in France. This data underlines the increasing importance of knowledge in economics and management that is necessary to reach top management positions in European firms. Despite the fact that important differences exist between countries, an increase in the number of foreign top managers was observed in comparison to the 1996 Bauer and Bertin-Mourore study. Top managers are more often foreigners in Switzerland (64%) and in the United Kingdom (46%) than in Germany (27%) or France (22%).

Table 2. European top managers: demographics

	France (n = 272)	Germany (n = 177)	United Kingdom (n = 266)	Switzerland (n = 201)
Mean (actual age)	52.5	52.5	50	51.5
Younger than 50	30%	33%	46%	41.5%
60 and older	17.5%	13%	3.5%	12.5%
Mean age (appointment)	48	48	46	47
Younger than 50	62%	62%	70%	67%
Female	8%	0.5%	11%	4.5%
Foreign nationality	22%	27%	46%	64%

We noticed that a high number of top managers completed an MBA or a similar executive education program (17.5% of the total sample). However, this percentage remains low in France and Germany. These MBA programs were achieved in prestigious educational institutions, mostly in the United States and in Europe. The highest percentage of MBA graduates was found in those countries (Switzerland and the United Kingdom) which have a higher number of non-national top managers. Furthermore, the proportion of foreign top managers among those who hold MBA degrees or post graduate management program certificates is high in all four countries: 43% in France, 68% in Germany, 77.5% in the United Kingdom and 74% in Switzerland. The MBA, at the origin a part of the American education system, was introduced in Europe in the late 1950s' and has been diffused to different degrees. Three institutions played the role of pioneers in implementing MBA programs in Europe: the INSEAD in France (1959), the LBS in the United Kingdom (1965) and the IMD in Switzerland (1971) (Byrkjeflot, 2003). The United Kingdom is the European country that has been the most willing to adopt the MBA and to establish business schools following the US model (Lock, 1996). As a consequence, in 1999, there were in Great Britain 271 institutions offering MBA programs, compared to 75 in France and 37 in Germany (Byrkjeflot, 2003). Indeed, Germany seems to be, compared to other western

countries, less prone to the adoption of MBA degrees (Randlesome, 1993). In light of this, we could question if attending a MBA program is really a new element of international management profiles or perhaps simply the reflection of the local presence of MBA programs in the different national educational systems. After a deeper analysis of our data, we tend to believe that the MBA is a clear sign of an international career, since in our sub-sample of foreign top managers in all four countries (foreign nationality and international experience), the presence of individuals holding a MBA degree is significantly higher. It seems that MBAs are particularly important to legitimize the competencies of international managers outside their national context. The beholders of MBA degrees in our study seem to question some of the specificities of national models, for example, they experience a higher rate of mobility and reach top management positions more rapidly in Germany than in other countries. The will to couple national signals of legitimacy with more international signals of legitimacy is rare but it exists. In a few cases, MBA degrees were coupled with a degree indicating membership to a national educational elite such as the doctoral degree in Germany (this was the case for only two top managers in our sample) or a diploma from a *Grande école* in France (this was the case for two managers in our sample).

The percentage of top managers with experience in international consulting and audit firms was limited, but far from insignificant. It was slightly less than 10% in France, almost 15% in Germany and 14% in the United Kingdom and Switzerland. These percentages, although low, confirm the role of internationally recognized audit or consulting firms in career development of top managers, the development of networks and the building up of legitimacy. To our knowledge, there has not been any scientific study attesting to the role of international auditing and consulting firms in top management careers. However, it is widely recognized that professional experience in these firms can be viewed as an excellent springboard for corporate careers. David, Ginalska, Rebmann and Schnyder (2007) for example drew up a list of CEOs of Swiss companies that are former managers of McKinsey and that “had – and still have – a tremendous influence on the functioning of the Swiss economy and actually played a prominent role in the promotion of Anglo-Saxon management methods” (David et al.,

2007). Even if in our study, the figures are not statistically significant, we believe that they still remain important (10–15% of the sample) and interesting for future research.

Overall, these results show the emergence of international characteristics in the profiles of top managers, which are more common in Swiss and (at a lower degree) British top management profiles than in French and German ones. Regardless, international and national signs of legitimacy are not mutually exclusive and we expect a certain stability of distinctive national features to go along with the growing internationalization of managerial career paths.

6. Conclusions

The biographical data collected on European managers shows that some features of the models by Evans et al. (1989) were strongly present in 2009. In each country, these factors concerned one third to half of the managers working for the companies in our sample, which were characterized by a high degree of openness to international changes. These features were specific to the different national institutional frameworks, e.g. *Grandes écoles* and senior civil service for French managers, “mountain climber careers” and doctoral degrees for German managers and finally, public schools and professional institutes for British managers. They were often associated with institutions whose functions were to select and train the country’s elite. However, even if these institutions allow the development of skills, networks and legitimate authority, they do not always have identical functions in all countries. For example, the doctoral degrees of German managers confirm their membership to the academic elite, but do not provide the same networks as the French *Grandes écoles* or the British professional institutes. Being educated in a public school is certainly important for the habitus and networking of British managers, but it is rarely mentioned in the official biographies of their companies. In the British, Swiss and German models, the manager’s legitimacy is more strongly associated with the company itself, and with technical and professional skills acquired within the company.

Furthermore, our study shows an evolution of several other international criteria. When compared to the research of Bauer and Bertin-Mouro, the percentage of foreign managers (today it exceeds 20% in Germany and France) is significantly higher. In their 1996 study, non-nationals were but a few exceptions that were often highly publicized, such as Daniel Goeudevert and Jose Ignacio Lopez at Volkswagen in Germany or Lindsay Owen-Jones at L'Oreal in France. International experience, which is highly valued, is also more common and concerns more than half of the managers. Surprisingly, nearly 50% of French and German managers do not have such experience. British and Swiss companies have a higher number of managers with international profiles. Therefore, it does not come as a surprise that there is a higher percentage of managers in British and Swiss companies with MBA degrees. A large percentage of them are non-national managers or managers with international experience. MBA diplomas seem to be elements of legitimacy that are useful for international careers but seem unnecessary for managers who possess national/local signals of legitimacy. More generally, economic and management studies seem crucial to the education of European managers, regardless of their country of origin.

Finally, our data presents Switzerland as a hybrid national model of top management careers. The population of top managers in Swiss companies is highly internationalized and composed of many nationalities, with a lot of international experience, which makes it difficult to identify a Swiss model. There are features of the Germanic model such as the doctorate, the dual vocational training and the "mountain climber career". However, we noticed a strong presence of international elements too, such as MBA programs and international work experience, even among managers of Swiss nationality.

In the academic field there has been an increased awareness of cross-national and cross-cultural management issues but little research has been undertaken to study national models of top management careers. The career patterns of Evans et al. (1989) represent a noteworthy exception as well as a milestone for research in this field. In the past 30 years, few empirical studies have tested the continuity of these national models. Our study brings updated empirical evidence on this topic. Our data shows, on the one hand,

a certain erosion of national models due to the gradual promotion of non-national managers to top management teams, which clouds the issue of signals of national models of legitimacy. On the other hand, this erosion is slow despite the strong international dimension of the activities and capital structure of the companies studied. The national models, which were developed 20 years ago, seem to be highly relevant in revealing specific national institutional configurations that continue to mark the career representations and practices of each European country. Our evidence shows that there are still clear national limits to the rise of an international market for executive labour (Ruigrok & Greve, 2008).

By showing the increasing importance of international career steps and international MBAs in European top management characteristics, our study brings new evidence to the internationalization process of top management profiles of these four countries. Switzerland certainly shows the strongest internationalization of its elite profiles and might be considered as a laboratory for future elite globalization in Europe (David et al., 2012). As highlighted by Katzenstein (2003, p. 27) who states that “large states are growing slower”, the experience of small countries can be interesting as it could allow to anticipate future changes in the bigger countries, in a context of growing globalization. Future research should examine the continuity and the consequences of this internationalization process, the increasing importance of MBAs, the growing importance of international career mobility as well as the importance of international consulting and auditing company experience in top management careers. Moreover, further comparative studies, especially longitudinal studies are needed to examine this globalization process of top management profiles in more countries, in Europe as well as in the rest of the world.

7. References

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Appendix A: Table 3. Firms in the sample

	France	Germany	United Kingdom	Switzerland
1	Accor	Adidas	Anglo American	ABB
2	Air liquid	Allianz	AstraZeneca	Actelion
3	Alcatel-Lucent	BASF	Aviva	Adecco
4	Alstom	Bayer	BAE Systems	Credit Suisse
5	AXA	Beiersdorf	BG Group	Holcim
6	Bouygues	BMW	BHP Billiton	Julius Bär
7	Carrefour	Commerzbank	BP	Lonza
8	Crédit agricole	Daimler	Barclays	Nestlé
9	Danone	Deutsche Bank	BAT	Novartis
10	EDF	Deutsche Börse	British Sky	Richemont
11	France Télécom	Deutsche Lufthansa	BT Group	Roche
12	GDF Suez	Deutsche Post	Cadbury	SGS
13	Lafarge	Deutsche Telekom	Centrica	Swatch Group
14	Lagardère	E.ON	ENRC	Swiss Life
15	L'Oréal	Fresenius	GlaxoSmithKline	Swiss Re
16	Michelin	Fresenius MC	HSBC	Swisscom
17	Pernod-Ricard	Henkel	Imperial Tobacco	Syngenta
18	Peugeot	Infineon	Lloyds Banking	Synthes
19	PPR	K+S	National Grid	UBS
20	Renault	Linde	Prudential	Zurich
21	Saint-Gobain	MAN	Reckitt Benckiser	
22	Sanofi-Aventis	Merck	Rio Tinto Group	
23	Schneider Electric	Metro	RBS Group	
24	Société générale	Munich Re	Royal Dutch Shell	
25	Suez Environnement	RWE	SABMiller	
26	Technip	SAP	SSE	
27	Total	Siemens	Standard Chartered	
28	Unibail-Rodamco	ThyssenKrupp	Tesco	
29	Vallourec	Volkswagen	Unilever	
30	Veolia		Vodafone	
31	Vinci			
32	Vivendi			

III. *Les top managers internationaux des grandes entreprises suisses : profils et parcours de carrière*⁵

Résumé

Dans cet article, nous nous sommes intéressés aux profils de carrière des top managers des grandes entreprises suisses, entreprises dont les comités de direction sont caractérisés par une présence importante de top managers étrangers avec un parcours très international. Nous avons collecté et classé des données de type biographique et des informations sur le parcours de carrière des dirigeants des 110 plus grandes entreprises suisses en 2010. Nous les avons mises en perspective historique avec les données de 1980 et 2000 et avons observé plusieurs résultats : une augmentation du nombre de managers étrangers, de plus en plus de formations en économie et management et la coexistence de profils de managers internationaux très diversifiés.

Mots clés : managers internationaux, parcours de carrières, élites managériales, Suisse.

⁵ Ravasi, C. (2013). Les top managers internationaux des grandes entreprises suisses: profils et parcours de carrière, *Revue Economique et Sociale*, 71(4), 107-119.

1. Introduction

Les comités de direction des plus grandes entreprises suisses sont caractérisés par une présence importante de top managers étrangers avec un parcours très international. Dans cet article nous analysons de façon détaillée leurs profils et leurs parcours de carrières. Quelle est leur formation? Quels sont leurs parcours professionnels? Assistons-nous à l'émergence d'un marché international de dirigeants d'entreprise? Quel est le rôle de l'entreprise multinationale dans ce processus?

Les entreprises européennes actives dans un environnement international doivent recruter et développer des managers avec une vision, une expérience et des compétences internationales (Evans, Pucik, et Barsoux, 2002). Plusieurs études démontrent une internationalisation croissante des comités exécutifs des entreprises multinationales pendant les dernières décennies (Heijltjes, Olie, et Glunk, 2003; Ruigrok et Greve, 2008). Les comités de direction de grandes entreprises allemandes et françaises ont encore un fort pourcentage de dirigeants nationaux (mais ce pourcentage a tendance à diminuer), les entreprises suisses sont par contre caractérisées par un taux d'internationalisation très élevé de leurs dirigeants (Davoine et Ravasi, 2013). Si les chiffres sont connus, très peu d'études se sont focalisées de façon détaillée sur les profils et les parcours de carrière des top managers internationaux qui dirigent actuellement les entreprises européennes.

Dans notre étude, nous nous sommes intéressés aux profils de carrières des dirigeants des entreprises suisses et nous avons collecté des données biographiques dans un échantillon de 200 top managers travaillant pour plus de 100 grandes entreprises suisses. Les résultats nous ont permis de confirmer certaines tendances observées dans l'étude de David, Davoine, Ginalski et Mach (2012) et de donner une image détaillée des parcours de carrière de managers internationaux.

Après une première partie présentant brièvement la littérature sur la figure du manager international, nous décrirons la problématique de notre étude liée à l'émergence d'un marché international de dirigeants et d'une communauté managériale internationale. Ensuite nous présentons l'intérêt du cas de la Suisse et la méthode adoptée. Avant une

partie finale de discussion, les résultats de notre étude seront présentés en deux temps : le profil des dirigeants, puis les parcours de carrière des top managers internationaux.

2. La figure du manager international dans la littérature académique

Plusieurs paradigmes de recherche, issus de disciplines différentes, s'intéressent depuis plusieurs années aux carrières internationales, à la figure du manager international, à l'émergence d'un marché international des dirigeants et à l'existence d'une élite managériale globalisée.

Une première approche s'est intéressée aux leaders globaux dont les entreprises multinationales ont besoin pour gérer leurs opérations globales et rester compétitives dans l'arène internationale (Evans, Pucik, et Barsoux, 2002). La plupart de ces études se sont focalisées sur deux aspects : la définition des compétences nécessaires pour être reconnu comme leader global et les méthodes employées par les entreprises multinationales pour développer ce type de compétences auprès de leurs managers (Brewster et Suutari, 2005). Les compétences qui caractérisent les leaders globaux sont par exemple la curiosité, l'ouverture d'esprit, la sensibilité aux différences culturelles ou la capacité d'adaptation. Ces compétences sont généralement développées par les entreprises multinationales à travers différents outils qui ont pour finalité d'exposer les managers à un environnement international afin de développer un *global mindset* : des séjours à l'étranger, du travail dans des équipes multiculturelles et internationales, des programmes de préparation aux différences culturelles (Suutari, 2002).

Plusieurs études ont adopté une autre perspective et se sont intéressées à la dimension internationale des comités exécutifs des entreprises. La plupart des études appartenant à cette deuxième approche ont analysé la relation qui existe entre le degré d'internationalité des comités exécutifs, en termes de nationalité et d'expérience à l'international de ses membres, et la stratégie internationale de l'entreprise. Ces études ont, par exemple, découvert un lien entre le degré d'internationalité du comité exécutif d'une entreprise, la modalité d'entrée, la performance commerciale dans les marchés

étrangers et la capacité de former des alliances internationales de type joint-venture (Olie, 2010).

Enfin, une troisième approche de recherche semble s'établir autour de la figure du manager international, de son profil et de son parcours de carrière. Les études appartenant à ce troisième groupe s'intéressent de plus près aux parcours de carrière des managers internationaux et, en particulier, aux facteurs et aux éléments qui semblent propres à ce type de managers. Ces premières études s'intéressent surtout à une comparaison des profils et des parcours de carrière des managers sans poser d'hypothèse explicite à propos de l'émergence d'un profil unique de manager international. Evans, Lank et Farquhar (1989) ont été les premiers à observer des différences nationales dans les carrières managériales en ce qui concerne l'identification et le développement du potentiel des managers. Ils ont identifié quatre modèles différents de carrières managériales en mettant en évidence plusieurs caractéristiques propres à chaque modèle : éducation, mobilité interentreprises et inter-fonctionnelle entre autres. L'existence de différences nationales dans les profils et les parcours de carrière des top managers sera confirmée quelques années plus tard par l'étude de Bauer et Bertin-Mouro (1999) et de Mayer et Whittington (1999) sur les dirigeants des entreprises françaises, allemandes et britanniques.

D'autres études plus récentes se sont focalisées sur les profils et parcours de carrière des managers internationaux en s'intéressant à l'hypothèse d'une convergence des différents modèles nationaux. Fioole, van Driel et van Baalen (2008) évoquent même les notions d'eupéanisation ou d'américanisation pour décrire les changements intervenus dans le profil des top managers allemands et hollandais de l'échantillon de leur étude. Davoine et Ravasi (2013), en étudiant le profil de top managers européens en 2010, constatent une certaine stabilité des modèles nationaux de carrière mais observent aussi l'émergence de profils de formation et de carrière plus internationaux qui sont caractérisés par de nouveaux facteurs produisant de l'autorité légitime, en soulignant que les formations de MBA, les expériences d'expatriation ou le passage par de grandes sociétés internationales d'audit ou de conseil sont aujourd'hui plus fréquentes dans cette population.

3. Une communauté internationale de dirigeants d'entreprise ?

Bien que la croissante internationalisation des comités directifs ait été observée dans plusieurs pays, pendant différentes périodes et par plusieurs auteurs (David et al., 2012; Ruigrok et Greve, 2008; Van Veen et Marsman, 2008) l'internationalisation du marché de l'emploi managérial est un processus lent dans lequel les modèles nationaux de carrière, de formation et de développement des dirigeants sont toujours présents. Ruigrok et Greve (2008) observent l'émergence d'un marché international de l'emploi des dirigeants mais, en même temps, soulignent l'existence de plusieurs obstacles importants qui limitent la mobilité géographique des top managers : barrières culturelles, politiques et linguistiques ajoutées à l'absence de réseaux et la non reconnaissance de qualifications dans les pays étrangers ou les difficultés liées à la mobilité de la famille et des enfants. De plus, le marché international des dirigeants se développe à différentes vitesses dans le monde avec des entreprises qui font plus ou moins recours à des top managers étrangers en fonction de leur degré d'internationalisation ou du degré d'internationalisation de l'économie de leur pays d'origine (Van Veen et Marsman, 2008). L'émergence et l'existence même d'une élite managériale globale a été longuement débattue par les chercheurs spécialisés dans l'étude des réseaux transnationaux de dirigeants dans les conseils d'administration d'entreprises multinationales (Kentor et Jang, 2004).

Mais plus que sur la question de l'existence d'une élite managériale globale, le débat se cristallise plutôt autour des éléments de légitimité, des profils et des parcours de carrières de ce type de managers. Les auteurs qui font référence au concept de modèles nationaux de carrières (voir par exemple Bauer et Bertin-Mouro, 1999; Davoine et Ravasi, 2013) tendent à affirmer que les éléments institutionnels nationaux tels que l'éducation ou les processus de sélection et promotion de dirigeants spécifiques à chaque pays sont encore fortement présents bien qu'ils soulignent dans leurs études que les dirigeants d'entreprises ont un profil de plus en plus international en termes de nationalité et d'expérience professionnelle dans des pays étrangers. D'autres auteurs semblent se distancer en évoquant de façon beaucoup plus explicite l'existence d'espaces transnationaux nouveaux et l'émergence de communautés transnationales

peuplées par des cosmopolites globaux. Ces derniers, étant caractérisés par des intérêts et une culture communs, formeraient une catégorie nouvelle de top managers transnationaux substantiellement différente de celle formée par les dirigeants qu'on pourrait qualifier de nationaux (Djelic et Quack, 2010; Morgan, 2001).

Au regard de l'hétérogénéité des recherches existantes sur les dirigeants internationaux et aux débats qui caractérisent ce domaine de recherche, nous adoptons dans notre étude une démarche compréhensive, visant à :

- décrire de façon quantitative le profil des dirigeants des entreprises de notre échantillon;
- décrire de façon qualitative et détaillée la diversité des profils de carrière des dirigeants internationaux de notre échantillon;
- classer ces profils en plusieurs catégories expliquant le processus d'internationalisation.

Les données ainsi collectées grâce au dispositif de recherche de notre étude et leur mise en perspective historique nous permettront d'apporter des éléments de réponse à plusieurs questionnements qui caractérisent le débat né autour de la figure du top manager international.

Premièrement, les critères quantitatifs concernant la formation et la nationalité nous permettront de confirmer les tendances observées dans d'autres études, dans d'autres pays et dans d'autres périodes concernant la présence de comités de direction de plus en plus internationaux. Cela nous permettra donc de prendre position sur le sujet et de mesurer dans notre cas spécifique l'effective émergence d'une population managériale internationale.

Ensuite, nous nous intéressons aux logiques et aux forces qui sont à la base du processus d'internationalisation des carrières des dirigeants. La catégorisation des profils des dirigeants étrangers nous permettra de montrer le rôle de l'entreprise multinationale dans l'internationalisation des comités de direction des entreprises, ce qui nous permettra de mieux illustrer l'existence d'un marché international des dirigeants et de discuter des différents facteurs qui en favorisent le développement.

Enfin, en illustrant de façon détaillée les parcours de carrière internationaux nous voulons mettre en lumière les différentes expériences et les éléments de légitimité associés qui caractérisent ces parcours à l'international et ainsi montrer si les dirigeants étrangers sont caractérisés par un profil homogène standardisé ou s'ils sont plutôt marqués par des expériences et des parcours différenciés.

4. Contexte et méthode de l'étude

Il est intéressant de constater que un certain nombre des études qui se penchent sur les profils des managers internationaux choisissent comme champ d'étude la Suisse (Bühlmann, David, et Mach, 2012, 2013; David et al., 2012; Davoine, 2005). En effet, la population des dirigeants des grandes entreprises suisses est très internationale selon les résultats de plusieurs études récentes. Dans les 500 plus grandes entreprises suisses, la proportion de top managers d'origine étrangère est de 24% (Dyllick et Torgler, 2007) alors que, dans les plus grandes entreprises cotées à la bourse suisse, un top manager sur deux est étranger (Davoine, 2005). Cette internationalisation est très élevée non seulement en comparaison avec d'autres grands pays d'Europe comme la France, l'Allemagne ou le Royaume-Uni (Davoine et Ravasi, 2013) mais aussi avec d'autres petits pays européens très internationalisés comme la Suède ou les Pays-Bas (Heijltjes et al., 2003 ; Ruigrok et Greve, 2008).

Les résultats de l'étude de Davoine et Ravasi (2013) présentent la Suisse comme un modèle national de formation-sélection hybride, dont la population de dirigeants est extrêmement internationalisée et composée de managers de différents pays qui ont pu passer par d'autres modèles nationaux de formation-sélection. On y trouve des éléments du modèle germanique (le doctorat, l'apprentissage dual, les carrières de montagnard) et des éléments internationaux (MBA, séjours professionnels à l'étranger) y compris chez les managers de nationalité suisse de l'échantillon. L'étude de David et al. (2012) montre en effet une adaptation rapide de ces derniers au nouvel environnement économique globalisé et un haut degré d'internationalisation pour ce qui concerne leur formation et expérience professionnelle.

David et al. (2012) ont aussi constaté une forte augmentation des dirigeants étrangers et une nette augmentation des formations de type économique entre 1980 et 2000. En analysant le parcours professionnel des dirigeants de leur échantillon, en particulier les top managers étrangers et les top managers suisses avec MBA, ils remarquent aussi une grande hétérogénéité dans les parcours professionnels.

Notre recherche utilise une base de données importante qui a été constituée dans le cadre d'un projet de recherche sur les élites suisses au 20^e siècle (« Les élites Suisses au XX^e siècle : un processus de différenciation inachevé? ») financé par le Fonds National Suisse de la Recherche Scientifique et dirigé par Thomas David et André Mach de l'Université de Lausanne. La base de données de ce projet de recherche inclut plus de 14'000 personnes exerçant une fonction dirigeante dans les sphères politique, économique et administrative de la Suisse à différentes dates-clés réparties sur tout le 20^{ème} siècle et début du 21^{ème}.⁶

En ce qui concerne l'échantillon nous avons décidé de sélectionner les 110 plus grandes entreprises suisses pour les trois années considérées (1980, 2000 et 2010) sur la base de trois critères : chiffre d'affaire, capitalisation boursière et nombre d'employés. Au final, les entreprises de notre échantillon représentent les entreprises les plus importantes des secteurs industriels, banques, assurances et services. Enfin nous avons inclus dans notre échantillon, pour chaque entreprise, le président du conseil d'administration et le président-directeur général (PDG).

Pour notre recherche, nous avons utilisé les données collectées par d'autres chercheurs dans le cadre de la base de données sur les élites suisses pour les années 1980 (189 personnes pour 208 fonctions exécutives) et 2000 (185 personnes pour 199 fonctions exécutives). Nous les avons ensuite mises en perspective avec les données collectées pour l'année 2010 (200 personnes pour 207 fonctions exécutives).

Pour tous les individus de notre échantillon, nous avons collecté d'un côté des données de type biographique telles que par exemple l'âge, la nationalité ou la formation. De l'autre nous avons récolté des informations sur le parcours professionnel comme les

⁶ Pour plus de détails : <http://www.unil.ch/iepi/page54315.html>.

étapes de carrière ou les séjours à l'étranger. Ces données ont été récoltées à travers différentes sources telles que les sites web, les rapports annuels et les communiqués de presse des entreprises, les portraits publiés dans les journaux et dans les magazines spécialisés. Cette triangulation des données nous a permis d'assurer l'exactitude et la conformité des informations recueillies et de minimiser les probabilités d'interprétations erronées (Flick, 2004).

Nous avons effectué une analyse du contenu de cet important matériel collecté dans le but d'identifier des catégories et d'attribuer les profils des dirigeants à ces différentes catégories. Nous avons suivi les recommandations méthodologiques de plusieurs auteurs (King, 2004; Miles et Huberman, 1994), afin d'employer une méthode d'analyse rigoureuse assurant la qualité et fiabilité des résultats de notre recherche. Nous avons commencé l'analyse avec des catégories pré-identifiées issues de la littérature et, tout au long de l'analyse, des nouvelles catégories ont émergés. Nous avons comparé ces nouvelles catégories avec la littérature sur les managers internationaux et nous les avons intégrées dans notre recherche. Pour renforcer la qualité et la fiabilité des résultats, un deuxième chercheur a analysé et codifié tout le matériel collecté sur la base des catégories précédemment identifiées et confirmé les résultats de l'analyse du premier chercheur.

5. Evolution du profil des top managers

La première partie de notre recherche se focalise sur la comparaison des profils (nationalité et formation) des dirigeants exécutifs des 110 plus grandes entreprises suisses en 1980 et en 2000 avec les données collectées pour l'année 2010, afin de mettre en évidence les changements intervenus durant cette période et de les mettre en relation avec les résultats de David et al. (2012).

5.1 Formation

Nous avons voulu analyser deux aspects liés à la formation : le niveau de formation et le domaine d'étude choisi. En ce qui concerne le niveau atteint, nos données indiquent une élévation globale du niveau de formation entre 1980 et 2000, après quoi nous constatons une certaine stabilité dans les dix années suivantes. Plus précisément, tout au long des trente dernières années, entre 7 et 8 top managers sur 10 obtenaient un diplôme universitaire (69% en 1980, 79% en 2000 et 2010) et entre 4 et 5 sur 10 suivaient une formation postgrade, tel qu'un doctorat ou un MBA (40% en 1980, 47% en 2000 et 50% en 2010).

Toutefois, le deuxième critère, c'est-à-dire le domaine d'étude choisi, montre les changements les plus remarquables. En ce qui concerne la période 1980-2000, David et al. (2012) constatent un déclin des études en droit, plus importantes en 1980. Parallèlement, ils observent une augmentation des études en sciences économiques. Une certaine stabilité au cours des deux décennies marque les sciences techniques et le génie alors qu'en 2000, ce domaine d'étude est le plus fréquemment choisi par les top managers des grandes entreprises suisses. Un nouveau changement majeur se produit entre 2000 et 2010 : alors que le déclin des études en droit se confirme, les études en sciences économiques prennent de l'importance et les diplômés en sciences économiques représentent désormais la majorité de l'échantillon (Tableau 1).

Tableau 1. Formation universitaire : domaines d'études

	Sciences ingénieur (Polytechniques)	Autres sciences (Universités)	Droit	Sciences économiques	Autre	Inconnu
1980 (130 p.)	28,5%	2,3%	33,8%	18,5%	1,8%	16,9%
2000 (145 p.)	29,0%	3,4%	22,8%	24,8%	2,8%	17,2%
2010 (157 p.)	24,5%	5,4%	16,7%	48,1%	10,2%	1,3%

Source : Base de données sur les élites suisses au 20^e siècle

Au niveau de la formation postgrade, les changements sont encore plus marquants. Durant la période 1980-2000, les études en droit déclinent et, parallèlement, les formations en sciences économiques augmentent fortement. Pendant la période 2000-2010, ces tendances sont confirmées : les études postgrade en droit continuent leur déclin, les formations complémentaires en sciences techniques sont moins fréquentes et les formations en sciences économiques deviennent nettement prépondérantes (Tableau 2). Cette évolution s'explique surtout à travers le nombre toujours plus important de managers ayant suivi un MBA, souvent dans les *business schools* les plus prestigieuses des Etats-Unis ou d'Europe : 11 personnes en 1980, 33 personnes en 2000 et 59 personnes en 2010.

Tableau 2. Formation postgrade : domaines d'études

	Sciences techniques	Droit	Sciences Economiques	Autre	Inconnu
1980 (76 p.)	15,1%	52,0%	26,0%	2,7%	6,8%
2000 (86 p.)	15,1%	26,7%	55,8%	5,6%	3,5%
2010 (99 p.)	11,1%	17,2%	71,7%	5%	1%

Source : Base de données sur les élites suisses au 20^e siècle

Le profil de formation des managers a donc considérablement changé au niveau de la formation supérieure pendant les 30 dernières années et les tendances observées pour la période 1980-2000 deviennent encore plus importantes pendant les dix dernières années. L'évolution au niveau du domaine d'étude choisi peut être interprétée comme une « professionnalisation managériale de la fonction de dirigeant » (David et al., 2012). Cette dernière est, en effet, de plus en plus considérée comme une profession et les compétences nécessaires pour l'exercer peuvent être apprises dans les universités et les *business schools* spécialisées en gestion d'entreprise et en management. En particulier, le MBA, de plus en plus fréquent au fil des années, reflète d'une part la croissante professionnalisation de la fonction et, de l'autre, l'internationalisation du profil des top managers.

5.2 Nationalité

La proportion d'étrangers parmi les dirigeants des 110 plus grandes entreprises suisses a fortement augmenté pendant la période 1980-2000 en passant de 4% à 24%. Cette proportion n'a pas cessé de progresser pendant les premières années du 21^{ème} siècle. En effet, en 2010, un dirigeant sur trois est d'origine étrangère (Tableau 3). Parmi ceux-ci, les Allemands représentent à la fin du siècle la première nationalité étrangère (11 dirigeants soit 5,8% de la population des dirigeants observée), suivis par les Français (6 dirigeants soit 3,2%) et les Autrichiens (3,2% aussi). Dix ans plus tard, on observe, d'une part, l'augmentation des dirigeants provenant de l'Allemagne (28 dirigeants soit 14% des dirigeants), la stabilité des Français (7 soit 3,5%) et, d'autre part, une présence plus importante de dirigeants d'origine américaine (8 soit 4%) et anglaise (5 soit 2,5%).

Tableau 3. Répartition des top managers suisses et étrangers

	Suisses	Etrangers
1980 (189 p.)	96,3%	3,7%
2000 (184 p.)	76,1%	23,9%
2010 (200 p.)	64,5%	35,5%

Source : Base de données sur les élites suisses au 20^e siècle

6. Les parcours de carrière des top managers internationaux

Après avoir observé l'augmentation d'études en sciences économiques et gestion, la plus large diffusion des diplômes de type MBA et l'internationalisation toujours plus importante des profils pendant la période 2000-2010, nous avons décidé de procéder à une analyse qualitative plus fine et détaillée des parcours de carrière des managers internationaux et nous avons classé leurs profils en différentes catégories.

La première catégorie identifiée est celle des fondateurs/actionnaires : ils étaient déjà présents en 1980 et ils constituent la catégorie la plus représentée en 2000 (environ 30%) mais leur proportion décline fortement en 2010 (environ 15%). Les entreprises

créées par les dirigeants étrangers de notre échantillon en 2010 appartiennent généralement à des secteurs d'activité qu'on pourrait qualifier de traditionnels pour la Suisse : la banque et la finance (le Canadien Paul Desmarais et le Belge Albert Frère de Pargesa ou l'Italien naturalisé suisse Edgar de Picciotto de la banque UBP), l'horlogerie (l'Américain naturalisé suisse Nicolas Hayek de Swatch), le secteur pharmaceutique (le Français Jean-Paul Clozel du groupe Actelion). Alors que des liens presque virtuels forment la relation entre la Suisse, Paul Desmarais et Albert Frère (Pargesa), d'autres dirigeants ont des liens beaucoup plus étroits (Nicolas Hayek est même considéré le sauveur du secteur horloger suisse). D'autres ont développé des réseaux importants et une connaissance approfondie des spécificités suisses du secteur dans lequel ils sont actifs avant de créer leur propre entreprise : Jean-Paul Clozel dans l'industrie pharmaceutique bâloise en travaillant plus de dix ans chez Roche ou Edgar de Picciotto en travaillant presque quinze ans sur la place financière de Genève. Dans cette première catégorie, nous retrouvons également des personnes qui appartiennent à la deuxième voire troisième génération de la famille du fondateur : c'est le cas par exemple du Français Benjamin de Rothschild, président de la Banque Edmond de Rothschild. Ces dirigeants ont souvent passé la quasi-totalité de leur carrière à l'intérieur de l'entreprise familiale avant de la diriger et ont donc un « atout capital » dû à leurs liens familiaux avec le fondateur de l'entreprise mais aussi une légitimité de « carrière ».

La deuxième catégorie identifiée est celle des montagnards des entreprises suisses multinationales. Cette catégorie de manager était aussi déjà présente en 1980 et elle représentait 10% de l'échantillon en 2000. Sa proportion a légèrement augmenté pendant la dernière décennie et, en 2010, ils représentent presque 17% de l'échantillon. Ce type de carrière est typique de certaines multinationales suisses dont le modèle de développement managérial est fondé sur le recrutement interne des dirigeants. C'est le cas, par exemple, de Nestlé où l'Autrichien Peter Brabeck-Letmathe (président) et le Belge Paul Bulcke (PDG) ont intégré très tôt l'entreprise et ont gravi un à un tous les échelons dans un parcours caractérisé par une forte mobilité internationale. Ces dirigeants sont souvent recrutés à l'étranger dans une des filiales de l'entreprise comme, par exemple, l'Allemand Reinhard Lange qui a commencé sa carrière chez Kühne&Nagel en Allemagne pour devenir PDG après plusieurs séjours à l'étranger,

notamment en Asie, en Allemagne et au Canada. Les dirigeants étrangers de cette deuxième catégorie associent donc une légitimité liée à la dimension internationale de leurs profils et parcours à une légitimité de carrière venant d'une connaissance approfondie de l'entreprise qu'ils dirigent. Le Français Richard Lepeu, directeur général adjoint de Richemont et l'Allemand Willy Strothotte, président de Glencore à titre d'exemples ont intégré leurs entreprises respectives à la fin des années '70.

Tableau 4. Profils des top managers étrangers

	Fondateurs et actionnaires	Montagnards multinationales	Montagnards M&A	Managers internationaux	Inconnu
1980 (7 p.)	30%	15%	-	-	55%
2000 (44 p.)	30%	10%	20%	20%	20%
2010 (71 p.)	15%	17%	5%	50%	13%

Source : Base de données sur les élites suisses au 20^e siècle

La troisième catégorie est celle des montagnards M&A : dans notre échantillon, ce type de manager a fait son apparition en 2000 (ils étaient un peu plus de 20%), mais leur proportion a fortement diminué en 2010 (5% de l'échantillon). Ces dirigeants ont généralement commencé leur carrière dans une entreprise localisée dans leur pays d'origine. Certains dirigeants appartenant à cette catégorie peuvent avoir une légitimité qui est liée au capital, car ils représentent une société actionnaire ou partenaire dans la fusion. Mais, ils peuvent aussi avoir une légitimité de carrière, car ils ont longtemps travaillé dans une entreprise qui a été rachetée par le groupe qu'ils dirigent aujourd'hui. Dans la première catégorie, nous retrouvons, par exemple, les Irlandais Owen Killian et Denis Lucey (respectivement PDG et président de Aryzta) qui proviennent de l'entreprise irlandaise IAWS qui, en 2008, a fusionné avec l'entreprise suisse Hiestang pour former le nouveau groupe Aryzta. Dans la deuxième catégorie, nous pouvons donner l'exemple de l'Allemand Hariolf Kotmann qui a intégré l'entreprise allemande Hoechst pour finalement devenir PDG de Clariant après que cette dernière ait acheté en 1997 la division chimique de Hoechst.

Enfin, la dernière catégorie identifiée est celle des managers internationaux : elle a été relevée pour la première fois en 2000 quand ce type de manager représentait environ 20% de l'échantillon et pendant la décennie 2000-2010, la proportion de cette catégorie a fortement augmenté et, en 2010, elle correspond à presque 50%. Nous retrouvons dans cette catégorie les dirigeants étrangers qui n'ont pas de liens avec l'entreprise dirigée ni en ce qui concerne la propriété (à travers des liens familiaux avec le fondateur ou à travers une opération de fusion/acquisition), ni en ce qui concerne une expérience professionnelle à l'intérieur de l'entreprise actuelle. Il s'agit de managers qui bénéficient d'une légitimité liée aux réseaux qu'ils ont su créer et aux compétences qu'ils ont su développer tout au long de leur carrière. Cependant, leurs profils, leurs parcours de carrière et leurs expériences professionnelles sont loin d'être homogènes. Dans certains cas, ils ont fait toute leur carrière dans une autre entreprise avant d'être appelés à diriger l'entreprise suisse. Prenons l'exemple de l'Américain Joseph Hogan qui a passé presque 25 ans chez General Electric avant de devenir PDG de ABB en 2008. D'autres ont connu une plus forte mobilité interentreprise comme, par exemple, le Danois Morten Hannesbo qui a travaillé pendant plus de 20 ans dans le secteur automobile chez Toyota, Nissan et Ford avant de devenir CEO de AMAG. Alors que ce dernier a aussi été exposé à une forte mobilité internationale en travaillant au Danemark, en France et au Royaume-Uni avant d'arriver en Suisse, d'autres ont fait une carrière de montagnard dans une seule entreprise et un seul pays avant d'assumer un poste de responsabilité à la tête d'une entreprise suisse. Il s'agit, par exemple, de l'Allemand Manfred Gentz qui a fait toute sa carrière chez Daimler-Benz en Allemagne avant d'être nommé président de Zurich Assurances.

7. Conclusions

Avec l'analyse quantitative des profils des top managers de notre échantillon et la mise en perspective avec les résultats de l'étude de David et al. (2012) nous constatons une internationalisation des comités directifs qui a aussi été observé dans d'autres pays et d'autres périodes. Concernant la nationalité des dirigeants, les résultats de notre étude (où un top manager sur trois est de nationalité étrangère) soulignent la spécificité suisse

en tant que pays dont les top managers sont fortement internationaux et l'intérêt de considérer ce pays comme un laboratoire pour étudier la globalisation des élites managériales. Nous n'avons cependant pas uniquement observé une augmentation des top managers étrangers mais aussi une augmentation des formations dans une discipline économique (souvent en gestion d'entreprise et finance) et de formations postgrade telles que le MBA.

La diffusion de formations en sciences économiques/gestion d'entreprises et celui des MBA semble donc être une caractéristique du processus d'internationalisation des comités directifs et des carrières des top managers. En ce qui concerne le MBA, nos données permettent d'illustrer concrètement l'hypothèse selon laquelle le MBA serait un outil puissant permettant de surmonter les différences de systèmes éducatifs nationaux et ainsi promouvoir la mobilité géographique des managers. Le diplôme de MBA, fortement valorisé dans le marché de dirigeants international par les entreprises multinationales (Godelier, 2005), semble être particulièrement important pour légitimer les compétences de managers internationaux en dehors de leur contexte national. Dans notre étude les diplômes MBA sont surtout détenus par les managers de nationalité étrangère et par les dirigeants avec des parcours de carrières plutôt internationaux, ce qui pourrait corroborer la proposition de Morgan (2001) de les considérer comme un élément spécifique des profils des top managers internationaux en mesure même de certifier l'appartenance de certains types de manager à une communauté managériale transnationale.

L'analyse des parcours de carrière des dirigeants d'origine étrangère et la classification que nous en avons faite nous a permis d'amener des éléments de réponse au questionnement autour de la construction de ces communautés transnationales (Djelic et Quack, 2010; Morgan 2001), en particulier au rôle joué par différentes institutions dans le développement d'un marché international de dirigeants (Van Veen et Elbertsen, 2008).

Dans notre étude nous remarquons qu'en 2000 l'entreprise multinationale jouait un rôle primordial car plus de deux tiers des dirigeants étrangers se retrouvaient à la tête d'une entreprise suisse soit parce qu'ils l'avaient créée ou héritée, soit parce que l'entreprise

dans laquelle ils étaient employés avait fusionné avec une entreprise suisse, soit parce qu'ils avaient intégré une filiale étrangère d'une entreprise suisse pour en gravir tous les échelons et se retrouver à la tête en Suisse.

La mise en perspective avec les catégories identifiées pour l'échantillon de 2000, nous a permis de constater des changements dans l'importance de certaines catégories par rapport à d'autres et au rôle de la multinationale dans le développement de ce marché international de dirigeants. En effet, la proportion de deux catégories décline assez fortement : les fondateurs actionnaires passent de 30% en 2000 à 15% en 2010 et les montagnards M&A de 20% à 5%. Réciproquement, les deux autres deviennent beaucoup plus importantes : les montagnards des entreprises suisses multinationales passent de 10 à 17% et les managers internationaux de 20% à 50%.

En 2010 donc l'influence de la multinationale en tant qu'acteur institutionnel semble s'affaiblir : parmi les dirigeants étrangers, un top manager sur deux fait partie de la catégorie managers internationaux, signifiant qu'il a réalisé son parcours de carrière à l'international en dehors de l'entreprise multinationale dont il se retrouve à la tête aujourd'hui. Ce résultat semble illustrer une évolution qui va vers le développement d'un marché globalisé des dirigeants, bien qu'une analyse plus fine de nos résultats permette de nuancer cette hypothèse. En effet, il est important de noter qu'une grande partie de managers que nous avons classés dans la catégorie managers internationaux sont des dirigeants de nationalité française et allemande qui forment donc un marché de dirigeants qui est plus transfrontalier que transnational dans lequel les entreprises multinationales ont tendance à recruter des profils qui sont internationaux mais pas trop éloignés d'un point de vue culturel (Van Veen, Sahib et Aangeenbrug, 2013).

L'analyse des parcours de carrières des top managers internationaux nous permet d'apprécier la diversité qui caractérise ces parcours et ces séjours à l'étranger, ce qui nous permet de conclure qu'encore aujourd'hui, il ne semble pas exister une standardisation de la figure de manager international ni de l'expérience à internationale acquise par ce type de manager. En effet, les parcours s'internationalisent de façon assez variée en ce qui concerne les pays où les séjours ont eu lieu, la mobilité inter-

entreprises et intersectorielle dont certains top managers ont jouit, les durées des séjours à l'étranger et l'étape de carrière dans laquelle le manager se trouve.

Dans notre étude, ni le MBA, ni un passage dans un cabinet international d'audit ou de consulting (Morgan, 2001) n'ont été clairement identifiés comme signes distinctifs des top managers internationaux. Les signes de légitimité et les éléments de carrière internationaux ne semblent pas s'être installés dans ces profils au détriment de critères strictement nationaux (Godelier, 2005) mais ils semblent plutôt coexister dans une grande hétérogénéité de profils. Nous pouvons ainsi conclure que aujourd'hui les top managers internationaux ne forment pas un groupe complètement distinct des top managers nationaux (Hartmann, 2011). Notre analyse relève une grande diversité qui montre que les signes d'appartenance à cette communauté managériale transnationale sont loin d'être clairement définis et que la coordination et la structure de cette communauté, si elle existe, sont plutôt fragiles et caractérisées par une grande hétérogénéité interne voire du conflit (Djelic et Quack, 2010).

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Annexe I : Tableau 5. Liste des entreprises et des dirigeants

La raison pour laquelle une entreprise ne fait pas partie de l'échantillon pour certaines dates est indiquée entre parenthèses (par exemple elle a été créée à une date ultérieure ou elle a été rachetée par une autre entreprise). Dans le cas où aucune raison n'est indiquée l'entreprise en question ne fait pas partie de l'échantillon parce que elle n'a pas été retenue comme une des 110 plus grandes entreprises selon les critères du chiffre d'affaires, de la capitalisation boursière et du nombre d'employés. Les étrangers sont indiqués par une * après leur nom.

	Dirigeants		
Entreprises	1980 (108 entreprises)	2000 (108 entreprises)	2010 (107 entreprises)
Accu Oerlikon	Eigenheer Karl ; Haegen, van der Pierre L.	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
ACMV	Baudraz Philippe ; Fankhauser Walter	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
Actelion	Non retenue (créée en 1997)	Cawthorn Robert E.* ; Clozel Jean-Paul*	Cawthorn Robert E.* ; Clozel Jean-Paul*
Adecco	Non retenue (créée en 1996)	Foriel-Destezet Philippe* ; Bowmer John P.*	Dörig Rolf ; Maeseneire, de Patrick*
AFG Arbonia Forster	Non retenue		Oehler Edgar
Allg. Finanzgesellschaft	Alther Peter	Non retenue	
Alpiq	Créée en 2009 (voir fusion ATEL, EOS et MOTOR-COLUMBUS)		Leonardi Giovanni ; Schweickardt Hans E.
Alusuisse	Meyer Emanuel Richard ; Müller Paul Heinrich	Ebner Martin ; Marchionne Sergio*	Non retenue (rachetée partiellement par un groupe étranger et création de LONZA)
AMAG	Non retenue		Haefner Martin ; Hannesbo Morten*
Ammann	Non retenue		Schneider-Ammann Johann Niklaus
Aryzta	Non retenue (créée en 2008)		Killian Owen* ; Lucey Denis*
Ascom	Non retenue (créée en 1986)	Schroeder Hans-Ulrich ; Wittlin Felix Max	Anttila Juhani* ; Cadonau Riet
ASUAG	Brüesch Marco ; Renggli Pierre	Fusion avec SSIH et SMH et formation du groupe SWATCH	
ATEL	Kohn Michael ; Trümpy Ernst	Bürgi Walter ; Sala Alessandro	Fusion avec EOS et Motor-Columbus et formation du groupe ALPIQ
Attisholz	Berg Truls David* ; Eng Franz	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
Axpo	Créée en 2001 (voir fusion EGL et CKW)		Karrer Heinz ; Lombardini Robert
Bachem	Non retenue	Grogg Peter	Non retenue
Bâloise	Iselin-Mylius Félix Emmanuel ; Leepin Peter	Schäuble Rolf	Schäuble Rolf ; Strobel Martin*

Banca del Gottardo	Deucher Adolf Heinrich	Rachetée par BSI	
Bank Bär	Bär Hans Julius	Bär Rudolf Erik ; Bär Thomas	Bär Raymond J. ; Collardi Boris F.G.
Bank Leu	Roesle-Schnyder Eugen ; Stopper Edwin	Rachetée par CREDIT SUISSE	
Banque fédérale	Busslinger Walter R. ; Isler Eugen	Rachetée par UBS	
Bank Sarasin	Non retenue	Krayer Georg F. ; Merian Peter E.	Ammann Christoph ; Straehle Joachim H.
Banque Rothschild	Non retenue	Rothschild, de Benjamin* ; Salathé Edward-Trevor	Messulam Claude ; Rothschild, de Benjamin*
BarryCallebaut	Non retenue (créée en 1996)	Non retenue	Jacobs Andreas* ; Steinemann Juergen B.*
Batigroup	Non retenue (créée en 1997)	Jeker Robert A. ; Helfenstein Werner	Fusion avec ZSCHOKKE et formation de IMPLenia
BBC (ABB en 2000 et 2010)	Hummel Piero ; Luterbacher Franz	Barnevik Percy N.* ; Lindahl Göran*	Hogan Joseph* ; Grünberg, von Hubertus*
BB Biotech	Non retenue (créée en 1993)	Thomke Ernst	Non retenue
BCGE	Non retenue	Perrot Jacques ; Fues Marc	Non retenue
BCV	Debétaz Edouard ; Pahud Francis	Duchoud Gilbert ; Treyvaud Jacques	Kiener Pascal ; Steimer Olivier
Bell	Non retenue		Fritschi Adolphe R. ; Loosli Hansueli
Berner Allgemeine	Ammann Hans ; Dolder Adolf	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
BHB	Hegglin Josef ; Stockmann Heinrich	Rachetée par UBS	
BK Vision	Non retenue (créée en 1991)	Ebner Martin	Rachetée par ZKB
BLS	Sommer Henri	Non retenue	
Bobst	Bobst Jacques ; Kalbermatten-Bobst, de Bruno ; Payot Pierre	Cappis Markus C. ; Kalbermatten, de Thierry ; Koopmann Andreas N.	Bobst Jean-Pascal ; Gebhard Charles
Bon Appétit	Voir USEGO	Fontana Mario ; Scherrer Edwin	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)
BPS	Brugger Ernst ; Frey Hans	Rachetée par CREDIT SUISSE	
BSI	Antognini Gianfranco ; Tenchio Ettore Giovanni Michele	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
Bucher	Non retenue	Cornaz Jean-Daniel ; Hauser-Hürlimann Rudolf	Broglie Rolf ; Mosimann Philip
Buss	Haab Hans-Robert ; Wickli Herbert E.	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
Cementia	Non retenue	Blatz Jean-Charles* ; Lefèvre Jacques* ; Schneider Ernst	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)

CFF	Desponds Roger ; Grosjean Carlos	Lalive d'Epinay Thierry ; Weibel Benedikt	Gygi Ulrich ; Meyer Andreas
Charmilles	Pfau-Mercier Jean ; Waldvogel Paul-Henry	Huber Martin ; Stirnemann Kurt E.	Rachetée par GEORG FISCHER
Ciba-Geigy	Planta, von-Ehinger Louis ; Koechlin-Sarasin Samuel	Fusion avec SANDOZ et formation du groupe NOVARTIS	
Ciba SC	Non retenue (créée en 1996)	Meyer Rolf A.	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)
CKW	Aeppli Oswald	Muff Erwin ; Mugglin Carl	Rachetée par AXPO
Clariant	Non retenue (créée en 1995)	Schweizer Rolf W.	Kottmann Hariolf* ; Witmer Jürg
Coop	Crittin Jérôme ; Kohler Robert	Loosli Hansueli ; Metz Gerhard	Kaufmann-Brändli Irene ; Loosli Hansueli
Cortailod	Jacopin André ; Perrot-de Coulon, de Raoul	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger après fusion avec COSSONAY)	
Cossonay	Brunner François	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger après fusion avec CORTAILLOD)	
Crossair	Non retenue	Bruggisser Philippe ; Suter Moritz	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)
Crédit Suisse	Aeppli Oswald ; Gut Rainer E.	Gut Rainer E. ; Mühlemann Lukas	Doerig Hans-Ulrich ; Dougan Brady W.*
Dätwyler	Non retenue	Lombardini Robert ; Zimmerli-Rütti Roland	Graf Ulrich ; Haelg Paul Johann
Danzas	Linder David ; Menzinger Bernhard	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
Disetronic	Non retenue (créée en 1984)	Meyer Thomas ; Michel Willy	Rachetée par ROCHE
DKSH	Voir SIBER HEGNER		Keller Adrian T. ; Wolle Joerg W.
EFG International	Non retenue (créée en 1995)	Non retenue	Cuoni Jean Pierre ; Howell Lawrence D.*
EGL	Bergmaier Hans	Kuntzemüller Hans*	Rachetée par AXPO
Eichhof	Dubach Werner ; Weber Georg	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
Elektrobank/Elektrowatt	Lang Robert ; Bergmaier Hans	Pury, de David	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)
Emil Frey	Non retenue		Frey Walter ; Schürmann Gerhard
Emmi	Non retenue (créée en 1993)	Non retenue	Graber Konrad ; Riedener Urs
Ems	Blocher Christoph ; Oswald Victor	Blocher Christoph	Berg Ulf ; Martullo-Blocher Magdalena
Endress+Hauser	Non retenue		Endress Klaus ; Riemenschneider Klaus Dieter
EOS	Non retenue	Blondon Jean-Pierre* ; Dreyer Dominique	Fusion avec MOTOR-COLUMBUS et ATEL et formation du groupe ALPIQ
Feldschlösschen	Haab Hans-Robert ; Kim Werner	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
Fenaco	Non retenue	Schlup Ulrich ; Schmid-Auf der Maur Thomas	Gehriger Willy ; Marschall Lienhard

Firmenich	Non retenue		Firmenich Patrick ; Sankey Vernon*
FM Brusio	Sarasin-Loriol, de Alfred Emanuel ; Rickenbach Markus W.	Fusion avec Bündner Kraftwerke et Rhätische Werke für Elektrizität AG et formation du groupe REPOWER	
FM Maggia	Generali Luigi	Non retenue	
FMB	Anliker Fritz ; Werdt-Clottu, von Rudolf	Kilchenmann Fritz ; Mühlemann Fritz	Kilchenmann Fritz ; Rohrbach Kurt
Forbo	Binkert Pius ; Ruepp René K.	Janjöri Karl ; Kummer Werner	Gnägi Albert ; Schneider This E.
Franke Group	Non retenue		Erb Thomas A. ; Pieper Michael
Galenica	Käsermann Hans ; Milliet François ; Studer Egon	Jornod Etienne	Jornod Etienne
Geberit	Non retenue	Feller Kurt ; Kelm Günter F.* ; Smulders Patrick*	Baehny Albert M. ; Kelm Günter F.*
Genevoise	Peyrot François ; Schatz Lucien	Rachetée par ZURICH ASSURANCES	
Georg Fischer	Lang Robert ; Mayr Robert ; Saemann Berthold	Huber Martin ; Jeker Robert A.	Huber Martin ; Serra Yves*
Givaudan	Non retenue (redevvenue indépendante en 2000)	Meier Henri B. ; Witmer Jürg	Andrier Gilles* ; Witmer Jürg
Glencore	Non retenue		Glaserberg Ivan* ; Strothotte Willy
Globus	Bitterli Rudolf E. ; Mahler Hans Hermann	Everts Peter ; Kern Thomas	Non retenue
Grand Passage	Brunner Otto ; Wailly, de Jean*	Rachetée par GLOBUS	
Gretag Imaging	Non retenue (créée en 1997)	Fitzgerald Peter David* ; Recker William J.* ; Zulliger Hansrudolf	Non retenue (faillite)
Haldengut	Biedermann Jakob ; Schoellhorn Jürg	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
Hasler	Dähler Hans ; Eigenheer Karl	Fusion avec Autophon et ZELLWEGER et formation du groupe ASCOM	
Helvetia	Bieri Friedrich ; Heiniger Walter	Baumberger Hans Ulrich ; Walser Erich	Loacker Stefan* ; Walser Erich
Hero	Sarasin-de Loriol Alfred Emanuel	Oetker Arend* ; Peters Lutz*	Heidenreich Stefan F. ; Oetker Arend*
Hesta	Gloor Max	Non retenue	
Highlight communications	Non retenue (créée en 1983)	Burgener Bernhard ; Syfrig Marco	Non retenue
Holderbank (Holcim en 2010)	Schmidheiny Thomas ; Schmidheiny Max	Schmidheiny Thomas	Akermann Markus ; Soiron-Lüthi Rolf
Holzstoff-Holvis	La Roche Hans Benedikt ; Zumstein Heinz	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
HPI	Gisling Alfred ; Meyer Fritz W.	Non retenue	
Hürlimann	Sprüngli Rudolph Robert ; Hürlimann-	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	

	Schmidheiny Martin Heinrich E.		
Hypo Aargau	Kägi Paul ; Summermatter Rudolf	Non retenue	
Hypo Winterthur	Braunschweiler-Achtnich Hans ; Bruggmann Otto	Rachetée par SBS	
Implenia	Créée en 2006 (voir fusion BATIGROUP et ZSCHOKKE)		Affentranger Anton
Industrie-Holding Cham	Gloor Max	Non retenue	
Innovation	Brunner Otto ; Dutoit Annie	Rachetée par GLOBUS	
Interfood	Celio Nello ; Wyss, von Jörg	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
Intershop	Braunschweiler-Achtnich Hans ; Müller Jacques Edgar	Non retenue	
Jacobs Suchard	Jacobs Klaus Johann* ; Jacobs Walter Johann*	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
Jelmoli	Sarasin-de Loriol Alfred Emanuel ; Zumstein Josef	Fust Walter ; Leumann Peter	Non retenue
Jomed	Non retenue	Osterlund Jan-Eric* ; Peters Tor*	Non retenue
Kaba	Non retenue		Graf Ulrich ; Weber Rudolf
KBBE	Jaberg Ernst ; Risch Paul	Kappeler Peter ; Kopp Max	Nobili Jean-Claude ; Rieben Jürg
Kudelski	Non retenue	Kudelski André ; Markay John*	Kudelski André
Kühne&Nagel	Non retenue	Herms Klaus* ; Kühne Klaus-Michael*	Kühne Klaus-Michael* ; Lange Reinhard*
Kuoni	Bolli Jack	Affolter Daniel ; Lerch Hans	Boysen Henning* ; Rothwell Peter*
KVZ	Fischer Helmut ; Villiger Rudolf	Rachetée partiellement par COOP	
La Poste	Créée en 1998 (voir PTT)	Fischer Gerhard ; Gygi Ulrich	Bucher Jürg ; Hasler Peter
La Suisse	Cérenville, de Henri ; Meyer Emile	Rachetée par RENTENANSTALT	
Landis&Gyr	Brunner-Gyr Andreas C. ; Straub-Gyr Gottfried	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	
Liebherr	Non retenue		Bausch Robert* ; Liebherr Willi*
Lindt&Sprüngli	Fehle Martin ; Sprüngli Rudolph Robert	Tanner Ernst	Tanner Ernst
Logitech	Non retenue (créée en 1981)	Borel Daniel ; Luca, de Guerrino*	Luca, de Guerrino* ; Quindlen Gerald P.*
Lonza	Voir ALUSUISSE	Ebner Martin ; Marchionne Sergio	Borgas Stefan* ; Soiron-Lüthi Rolf
Losinger	Elsaesser Hans-Georg ; Losinger-Zschokke Vinzenz	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	

Maag	Keller Rolf ; Sulzer-Schwarzenbach Georg	Rachetée par CIBA-GEIGY	
Manor	Non retenue	Nordmann Philippe	Jungo Bertrand ; Maus Didier
Merkur (Valora en 2000 et 2010)	Baur Robert Moritz ; Krneta Georg	Küpfer Peter ; Hartmann Reto	Benedick Rolando ; Vollmoeller Thomas*
Metall Zug	Non retenue		Dormann Jürgen* ; Wintsch Stephan
MF Bühler	Non retenue		Bühler Urs ; Grieder Calvin
Micronas	Non retenue (créée en 1989)	Betschon Franz Felix ; Kalsbach Wolfgang*	Non retenue
Migros	Arnold Pierre ; Gehrig Alfred	Everts Peter ; Kyburz Jules	Bolliger Herbert ; Hauser Claude
Mikron	Fässler Theodor Robert ; Rohner Hans	Non retenue	
Mobiliar	Non retenue	Gadient Ulrich ; Lauper Albert	Berger Urs ; Lauper Albert
Motor-Columbus	Haag Erich ; Kohn Michael ; Tappy Eugène	Steinmann Heinrich	Fusion avec EOS et ATEL et formation du groupe ALPIQ
Mövenpick	Prager Ueli	Non retenue	
Nationale Suisse	Holzach Robert	Non retenue	Künzle Hans ; Planta, von Andreas
Nestlé	Fürer Arthur ; Liotard-Vogt Pierre*	Brabeck-Letmathe Peter* ; Maucher Helmut O.*	Bulcke Paul* ; Brabeck-Letmathe Peter*
NobelBiocare	Non retenue (créée en 1981)	Non retenue	Prondzynski, von Heino* ; Scala Domenico
Novartis	Crée en 1996 (voir fusion SANDOZ et CIBA-GEIGY)	Vasella Daniel L.	Jimenez Joseph* ; Vasella Daniel L.
Oerlikon-Bührle (Unaxis en 2000, OC Oerlikon en 2010)	Bührle Dietrich (ou Dieter)* ; Meier Walter	Kissling Willy	Buscher Michael* ; Kuznetsov Vladimir V.*
Panalpina	Schaller Alfred ; Schneider Werner	Non retenue	Hug Rudolf W. ; Ribar Monika
Pargesa	Non retenue (créée en 1982)	Desmarais Paul Sr.* ; Frère Albert Baron*	Desmarais Paul Sr.* ; Frère Albert Baron* ; Drijard Jacques*
Pax	Haefely James Emil ; Künzli J.	Non retenue	
Pharma Vision	Non retenue (créée en 1988)	Ebner Martin	Rachetée par ZKB
Phonak (Sonova en 2010)	Non retenue	Pfluger Peter* ; Rihs Andreas	Chapero-Rueda Valentin* ; Rihs Andreas
Pictet & Cie	Non retenue		Pictet Ivan
Private Equity	Non retenue	Bachmann Hans-Peter ; Nobel Peter	Non retenue
PTT	Binz Hans-Werner ; Kämpfen Werner	Division et création de SWISSCOM et LA POSTE	

Publicitas (Publigroupe en 2000 et 2010)	Racine Raymond ; Ramelet Pierre	Pidoux Philippe ; Zaugg Jean-Jacques	Rohner Hans-Peter
Raiffeisen Group	Non retenue		Marty Franz ; Vincenz Pierin
Rentenanstalt (SwissLife en 2010)	Non retenue	Rüesch Ernst ; Zobl Manfred	Dörig Rolf ; Pfister Bruno
Repower	Voir FM BRUSIO		Bobst Kurt ; Rikli Eduard
Richemont	Non retenue (créée en 1988)	Rupert Johann* ; Senn Niklaus (Nikolaus)	Lepeu Richard* ; Rupert Johann*
Rieter	Feller Kurt ; Hess Kurt	Feller Kurt ; Steinmann Heinrich	Stoller Erwin
Ringier	Non retenue		Ringier Michael ; Unger Christian*
Rinsoz&Ormond	Chaudet Marc-Henri ; Rinsoz Paul	Non retenue	
Roche	Füglister Dieter B. ; Gerber Fritz	Gerber Fritz ; Humer Franz B.	Humer Franz B. ; Schwan Severin*
Roco	Keiser Beat ; Lossel Robert	Rachetée par HERO	
Rolex	Non retenue		Gros Bertrand ; Meier Bruno
Ruag	Non retenue (créée en 1998)	Non retenue	Braunschweiler Lukas ; Konrad Peter
Sandoz	Dunant Yves ; Moret Marc	Fusion avec CIBA-GEIGY et formation du groupe NOVARTIS	
Saurer	Munz Hans ; Roost Walter	Fischer Heinrich ; Timmermann Manfred*	Rachetée par OC OERLIKON
SBS	Frehner Walter ; Galliker Franz ; Strasser Hans	Fusion avec UBS	
Schindler	Bonnard-Schindler Jean ; Muheim Franz ; Schindler Zeno Karl	Bonnard Luc ; Schindler Alfred Nikolaus	Schindler Alfred Nikolaus ; Bonnard Luc ; Tinggren Jürgen*
Scintilla	Holzach Robert ; Stamm Paul	Malchow Wolfgang* ; Rinderknecht Urs	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)
Securitas	Non retenue	Spreng Samuel ; Winzenried Hans	Spreng Samuel ; Winzenried Hans
Serono	Non retenue	Bertarelli Ernesto ; Muller Georges	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)
SEZ	Non retenue (créée en 1986)	Putzi Egon* ; Sumnitsch Franz*	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)
SGA	Fischer Max ; Hentsch Jean-Claude ; Piccot Noel Louis	Non retenue	
SGS	Non retenue	Amstutz Max ; Czura Anthony*	Kirk Chris* ; Marchionne Sergio*
Siber Hegner	Gautier-Hegner Ralph Harold	Non retenue	Fusion avec Diethelm Keller Services Asia et formation du groupe DKSH
Sibra	Celio Nello ; Hayek Sam*	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)	

SICPA	Non retenue		Amon Philippe ; Bleikolm Anton
SIG	Gähwyler Wolfgang ; Halm Fritz	Baumberger Hans Ulrich ; Boutellier Roman	Degnan Thomas* ; Stangl Rolf*
Sika	Burkard-Schenker Romuald ; Goetz Hannes	Grüebler Walter ; Ming Hans-Peter	Brätschi Ernst ; Grüebler Walter
Sprecher&Schuh	Pfisterer Markus ; Roth Adrian W.	Non retenue (rachetée partiellement par un groupe étranger et création de SWISSLOG)	
SSR	Non retenue	Lehmann Eric ; Walpen Armin	Münch Jean-Bernard ; Walpen Armin
Stillhalter Vision	Non retenue (créée en 1994)	Ebner Martin	Rachetée par ZKB
Straumann	Non retenue	Straumann Thomas ; Stutz Andreas	Achermann Gilbert ; Spalinger Beat
Sudelektra (Xstrata en 2000 et 2010)	Kohn Michael ; Müller A.	Sauter Daniel J. ; Strothotte Willy*	Davis Mick* ; Strothotte Willy*
Sulzer	Borgeaud Pierre ; Sulzer-Schwarzenbach Georg	Borgeaud Pierre ; Kindle Fred	Büchner Ton* ; Dormann Jürgen*
Sulzer Medica	Non retenue (créée en 1997)	Borgeaud Pierre ; Buchel André P.	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)
Swatch Group	Voir ASUAG	Hayek Nicolas G. sen.*	Hayek Nicolas G. sen.* ; Hayek Nick
Swiss-Re	Diehl Walter ; Vischer Heinz B.	Bremi Ulrich ; Kielholz Walter B.	Kielholz Walter B. ; Lippe Stefan*
Swissair	Baltensweiler Armin Otto ; Gugelmann Johann Friedrich	Bruggisser Philippe ; Honegger Eric	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)
Swisscom	Créée en 1998 (voir PTT)	Alder Jens ; Rauh Markus	Scherrer Anton ; Schlöter Carsten*
Swisslog	Voire SPRECHER&SCHUH	Anttila Juhani* ; Berg Truls David*	Brunschwiler Remo ; Ziegler Hans
Syngenta	Non retenue (créée en 2001)		Mack Michael* ; Taylor Martin*
Synthes-Stratec	Non retenue (créée en 1999)	Wyss Hansjörg	Orsinger Michel ; Wyss Hansjörg
Tamedia	Non retenue	Coninx Hans-Heinrich ; Favre Michel	Kall Martin* ; Supino Pietro
Tecan	Non retenue (créée en 1981)	Baronian Mike ; Sutcliffe Emile	Non retenue
Think Tools	Non retenue (créée en 1993)	Müller, von Albrecht A.C* ; Lube Marc-Milo*	Non retenue (cédée à un groupe étranger)
Triumph	Non retenue		Edelmann Andreas ; Spiesshofer Markus
UBP	Non retenue (créée en 1990)	Non retenue	Picciotto, de Guy ; Picciotto, de Edgar
UBS	Holzach Robert ; Senn Niklaus (Nikolaus)	Krauer Alex ; Ospel Marcel Louis	Grübel Oswald J.* ; Villiger Kaspar
Usego	Bürgi Paul ; Rentsch Frank	Fusion avec BON APPETIT	
Vaudoise Assurances	Non retenue		Hebeisen Philippe ; Sanglard Paul-André

Vetropack	Non retenue		Cornaz Claude Raymond ; Rüegg Hans R.
Voegele	Non retenue	Meile Urs ; Voegele Carlo	Caparros Alain* ; Maeder André
Von Roll	Frech Heinz Werner ; Kohli Paul	Amstutz Max ; Messner Martin	Limberger Thomas*
Vontobel	Non retenue	Fischer Jörg K. ; Vontobel Hans-Dieter	Scheidt Herbert J.* ; Widmer Urs
Winterthur	Binswanger Peter ; Braunschweiler-Achtnich Hans	Späti Peter ; Wellauer Thomas	Non retenue (rachetée par un groupe étranger)
Zellweger Uster (Zellweger Luwa en 2000)	Bechtler-Staub Hans Carl ; Hess Walter	Bechtler Thomas W. ; Peter Konrad	Non retenue
ZKB	Lüthy Walter ; Straub Emil	Hasenfratz Paul ; Weigold Hermann	Oberholzer Urs ; Scholl Martin
Zschokke	Non retenue	Bubb Christian ; Koechlin Bernard	Fusion avec BATIGROUP et formation de IMPLenia
Zürcher Ziegeleien (Conzzeta en 2010)	Schmidheiny-Pfister Jacob ; Schmidheiny-Schiesser Peter	Non retenue	Schmidheiny-Pfister Jacob ; Suter Robert
Zurich Assurances	Gerber Fritz ; Portmann Heinz	Hüppi Rudolf	Gentz Manfred* ; Senn Martin

IV. Cross-cultural adjustment of skilled migrants in a multicultural and multilingual environment: an explorative study of foreign employees and their spouses in the Swiss context⁷

Abstract

Skilled migrants are essential to the global economy and both employers and states depend on them to maintain their competitive advantage. This is particularly true for the Swiss economy, which attracts an impressive number of migrants to counteract the national shortage of skilled workers. The Swiss context is particularly interesting to study because of the strong presence of multinational companies and a situation where the difference between qualified migrants and assigned expatriates is increasingly ethereal. Our study focuses on the adjustment of a population of 152 foreign employees from Swiss-based multinational companies and the adjustment of 126 spouses. We studied different adjustment dimensions focusing on local language proficiency and relocation support practices. Despite the highly multicultural and multilingual Swiss context, our data analysis highlighted relatively low cross-cultural adjustment scores (especially interaction adjustment). We uncovered the degree to which relocation support practices are offered, used and perceived as necessary by foreign employees and showed which support practices could be used to improve the adjustment of migrants.

Keywords: skilled migrants; international mobility; cross-cultural adjustment; local language proficiency; relocation practices; Switzerland.

⁷ Ravasi, C., Salamin, X., & Davoine, E. (2015). Cross-cultural adjustment of skilled migrants in a multicultural and multilingual environment: an explorative study of foreign employees and their spouses in the Swiss context. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* (in press).

1. Introduction

In a context of workforce globalization, multinational companies (MNCs) are faced with the challenge of integrating a more heterogeneous workforce ('traditional' expatriates and settled migrants) as well as their partners and families, into the host country. Skilled migrants have become an important part of the workforce (Peiperl & Jonsen, 2007) upon which both employers and states depend to maintain a competitive advantage (Helbling, 2011). This is particularly true for the Swiss economy, which is highly specialized in value-added activities but faces a national shortage of highly skilled employees (Département fédéral de l'économie, 2011). A large number of MNCs are located in Switzerland, especially in the French speaking Lemanic region, where there is a mixed population of assigned expatriates and highly-skilled migrants (Steiner & Wanner, 2011). Most MNCs in the Lemanic region use the notion "foreign employees" to include both groups for human resource management purposes, namely integration and support practices that welcome new employees and their spouses. The Lemanic region is therefore a relevant location to investigate the adjustment of foreign workers and their families. Our study aims to comprehensively examine the practices used by MNCs to support foreign employees' and their families' cross-cultural adjustment.

Expatriation literature has traditionally focused on adjustment issues faced by foreign workers in a host country and the support practices offered by MNCs (Dabic, González-Loureiro, & Harvey, 2015; Takeuchi, 2010). This literature offers useful conceptual tools to address the above-mentioned research questions. Our study relies therefore on several concepts and instruments originating from traditional expatriate research studying cross-cultural adjustment (Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991) and specific support practices offered to foreign employees (e.g. Cerdin, 1999; Suutari & Brewster 2001). To date, very few studies have focused on support practices offered to foreign employees' partners and families, especially when they are settling into the host country and pursuing their own careers. Our study aims to deepen our knowledge of these issues by empirically examining the relationship between the use of particular practices and the adjustment of employees and their partners.

In the section 2, we describe the Swiss immigration context. Hypotheses related to adjustment and support practices are then developed in section 3, before explaining our method in section 4. Results are then presented and discussed in sections 5 and 6.

2. The Swiss immigration context

2.1 Highly skilled migration in Switzerland

Since the 1990s, immigration flow into Switzerland has been strongly characterized by a rising number of highly skilled standards and the strong geographical and cultural proximity of a migrant workforce (Haug, 2005; Steiner & Wanner, 2011). Highly qualified immigration has always existed in Switzerland and it has considerably increased along with its strengthening economic globalization (Reiser-Bello Zago, 2013). In 2010, of the 139,000 foreign nationals entering as permanent residents, the majority were from neighboring European countries including 30,700 Germans, 11,700 French and 10,200 Italians. It is worth noting that there was also a significant number of entries from Anglophone countries (UK, 5,700; North America, 5,700) as well as people from Asia (13,500) (Office Fédéral de la Statistique, 2013a). Pecoraro (2005) showed that these nationalities represent the majority of highly skilled migrants working in Switzerland.

The Swiss economy specializes in the production of value-added goods and services, pharmaceuticals, financial services and machinery (Département fédéral de l'économie, 2011; Junod & Neff 2010). The economic growth of the country is strongly reliant on an accumulation of knowledge and human capital that stimulates a strong demand for highly qualified personnel (Pecoraro 2007). However, as the country faces a national workforce shortage, having access to highly qualified foreign workers is essential to the Swiss economy (Naville, Walti, & Tischhauser 2007). In 2000, the ratio of highly skilled migrants among the total population of recent migrants to Switzerland reached 61.80%, some 38.7 points above the 1990 rate (Pecoraro, 2005). A recent study showed that the majority of top managers in the largest Swiss companies are foreign nationals

(64%), a rate that appears to be much higher than other countries such as France (22%) and Germany (27%) (Davoine & Ravasi, 2013). Switzerland appears to be particularly attractive to highly skilled migrants – even from developed and neighboring countries – due to a conjunction of various economic, sociocultural and political factors (DeWaard, Kim, & Raymer, 2012).

Highly skilled individuals may be initially attracted to the country for income and employment related reasons, as these aspects of Switzerland are favorable compared to elsewhere. Switzerland has one of the highest wage levels internationally (International Labour Organisation, 2013), and has the third highest GDP per capita in Europe after Luxemburg and Norway (Eurostat, 2013). Individual income taxes are also particularly favorable in Switzerland (KPMG International, 2012). Zurich and Geneva have the highest salary levels worldwide and rank in the top four for highest purchasing power (Höfert & Kalt, 2012). These cities also offer many job opportunities as they are the site of several headquarters and subsidiaries for numerous multinational, international and financial organizations (Naville et al., 2007; Steiner & Wanner, 2011). Switzerland is a major host country for foreign direct investments (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2011). Other factors also strongly contribute to stimulating highly skilled migration in Switzerland: quality of life, stable political environment and infrastructure (Naville & Waliti, 2006; Schweizer, 2010; World Economic Forum, 2012). A strong specificity of the country is its stable political system of direct democracy, where civic and voting rights are key aspects of citizenship and national identity (Chevrier, 2009; Wanner and Fibbi, 2002).

Switzerland has a long tradition of welcoming foreign populations and this is an essential element of the country's social fabric (Fibbi, 2013), where multiculturalism and diversity are founding principles of the culture (Froidevaux, 1997; Lhabitant, 2003). Switzerland is a highly multilingual country, with four national languages (German, French, Italian and Romansch). Moreover, the use of English has become particularly important, in the work and nonwork contexts (Office Fédéral de la Statistique, 2014; Stotz, 2006). Grin and Schwob (2002, p.411) observed that the linguistic repertoires of a strong proportion of people are varied throughout the country. In line with this element,

Grin, Sfreddo and Vaillancourt (2009) estimated that the multilingual skills of workers in Switzerland constitutes a value that represents about 10% of the Swiss GDP (about 50 billion Swiss francs), and is therefore a clear asset for companies in the country.

As in many other countries (Keeley, 2009), the issues surrounding immigration policy have always been hotly debated in Switzerland (Le Temps, 2013; Rausa & Reist, 2008). Swiss firms and organizations also acknowledge the increasing cultural diversity of their workforce. The Swiss Post, for example, employed over 140 nationalities in 2013 and designed internal programs and platforms to help their local employees develop intercultural competencies (Hubacher, 2013). Cultural diversity may be especially active within MNCs, which have developed considerable support opportunities for their foreign workers – who are to a very large extent immigrants – and traditional expatriates working in Switzerland on a temporary basis (accompanied by their spouses). Many MNCs in the French speaking part of Switzerland are even pooling their efforts to facilitate the integration of foreign workers' partners and have launched an 'International Dual Career Network' led by major players such as Nestlé, Philipp Morris and Medtronic (see International Dual Career Network, 2013).

2.2 Clarifying concepts: foreign employees, migrants or expatriates?

'Managing internationally mobile employees' is often a synonym used for expatriate management in companies and research (Harvey & Moeller, 2009). In the expatriate research field, expatriates traditionally refer to employees sent by an international company from their headquarters to foreign subsidiaries for a limited duration (Vance, 2005). More recently however, expatriate research has increasingly emphasized alternative forms of international mobility (Bonache, Brewster, Suutari, & De Saá, 2010) and until now, this has mainly been self-initiated expatriates (Doherty, 2013). This term commonly refers to individuals who initiated their international assignment themselves, without (or with very little) corporate support (Andresen, Al Ariss, & Walther, 2012; Inkson & Myers, 2003). Self-initiated expatriates and organizational expatriates have been found to be different in adjustment, local language proficiency,

job satisfaction (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2013), motives for an international move (Doherty, Dickmann, & Mills, 2011), career anchors (Cerdin & Le Pargneux, 2010) and other variables such as age and gender (Suutari & Brewster, 2000). However, the increasing localization of contracts for expatriates to reduce costs blurs the boundaries between traditional organization-assigned and self-initiated expatriates (Manpower, 2008; Salamin, 2012). Criteria for the differentiation between migrants and self-initiated expatriates are not very clear in management literature (Al Ariss, Koall, Özbilgin, & Suutari, 2012) despite recent efforts by several researchers (Al Ariss, 2010; Andresen, Bergdolt, Margenfeld, & Dickmann 2014; Cerdin & Selmer, 2014) to clarify the terminology of various types of internationally mobile people. Al Ariss (2010) observed that literature on international careers tends to distinguish between migrants and self-initiated expatriates along four major dimensions: geographical origin and destination of international mobility; the forced/chosen nature of the movement; period of the stay abroad and the symbolic status of a 'migrant' compared to the self-initiated expatriate. In a similar vein, Cerdin and Selmer (2014) proposed a definition of self-initiated expatriates based on four conceptual criteria that distinguishes them from other types of international movers. According to these authors, self-initiated expatriates (1) freely choose to relocate, (2) have a regular job in the host country or are searching for such a job, (3) plan to return to their home country and (4) have skilled or professional qualifications. Keeping these dimensions in mind, it is worth emphasizing the ambivalence of the Swiss immigration characteristics and context. The foreign population of highly skilled individuals comes mainly from developed neighboring countries, although a significant number also come from Asia. While many individuals might be attracted by the advantages that Switzerland offers and choose their destination freely, recent economic crises, as well as the increasing specialization of local markets (Steiner & Wanner, 2011), pressure many people with specific skills to move across borders to find more suitable employment. Regarding the period of stay abroad, most foreign nationals in Switzerland are settled nationals (established in the country on a long-term basis) (Office Fédéral de la Statistique, 2013b; Office fédéral des migrations, 2013). Most of them therefore do not correspond to the typical highly skilled mobile population relocating for a few years and then leaving for a third country or moving

back home. Even organization assigned expatriates often try to relocate on a long term basis in Switzerland, even if they have to leave their initial employer (Salamin, 2012).

For the purposes of this paper and the Swiss context of our study, we used the MNC term ‘foreign employees’ as ‘internationally mobile individuals who moved from a foreign country to Switzerland for work/career-related reasons’. We tried also to answer to the call of Berry and Bell (2012) to overcome the boundary between these two types of internationally mobile individuals by merging individuals considered ‘migrants’ and those considered ‘expatriates’ into a single category. Merging these two categories also fits with the study of Andresen et al. (2014, p.2304) who consider self-initiated expatriates and organization assigned expatriates as subgroups of migrants since their definition stipulates that all expatriates are migrants.

3. Supporting the adjustment of foreign employees and their partners: hypotheses of our study

In the expatriation field, the concept of cross-cultural adjustment is generally used to study problems and difficulties experienced by expatriates in their work and nonwork environments (Takeuchi, 2010). Cross-cultural adjustment refers to a person’s psychological comfort and familiarity with various aspects of the foreign environment (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). In our study, we wanted to focus on the main areas of adjustment difficulties for foreign employees and their spouses as well as on the relocation practices that may facilitate adjustment. Most of the studies investigating expatriate adjustment are based on samples of individuals who share the same nationality, such as groups of Japanese expatriates (Takeuchi, Yun, & Russell, 2002). Other studies used samples of expatriates based on a single country (such as American expatriate spouses in Germany in Mohr & Klein, 2004) or in multiple locations (Cole, 2011). For our study, we used a sample of foreign employees and partners of different nationalities from multiple locations around the world and studied their adjustment to a single host country. Using a single host location allowed us to better control for the cultural and institutional influences specific to Switzerland.

3.1 Dimensions of adjustment

Adjustment involves reducing the uncertainty associated with evolving in a new environment (Black, 1988), and the ability to ‘fit-in’ or to negotiate interactive aspects of host-culture (Ward, Okura, Kennedy, & Kojima, 1998). In the expatriation field, the most influential theoretical model of expatriate cross-cultural adjustment is the one proposed by Black et al. (1991). While earlier contributions examined expatriate adjustment as a unitary construct (e.g. Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963), Black et al. (1991) proposed a multidimensional concept including general, work and interaction adjustment, which was clearly operationalized, widely used and appropriately validated (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Luk, & Shaffer, 2005; Hechanova, Beehr, & Christiansen, 2003). *General adjustment* refers to the comfort associated with various aspects of the host-cultural environments such as living conditions, food or health care; *interaction adjustment* refers to the comfort associated with socializing with host-country nationals, both inside and outside of work; and *work adjustment* refers to the comfort associated with the work requirements and tasks on assignment. It is a powerful tool for studying the problems and difficulties commonly encountered by foreign employees in their efforts to adapt to new life conditions, interacting with locals and adapting to different work environments and organizational practices. Black et al. (1991) remains the most widespread operationalized model for examining and comparing expatriate cross-cultural adjustment, though their conceptualization has been criticized from a theoretical point of view (Haslberger, Brewster, & Hippler, 2013) as well as for methodological reasons (Hippler, 2006). Although a new and relevant adjustment scale was recently developed and validated (Hippler, Caligiuri, Johnson, & Baytalskaya, 2014), and recent studies focus more on the integration process of qualified migrants (Cerdin, Abdeljalil Dine, & Brewster, 2014), in our study we used the Black et al. (1991) model because one of our objectives is to highlight the specifics of Switzerland as host country and observe differences (and similarities) in adjustment levels with other host countries. This widely used conceptualization of expatriate adjustment developed by Black et al. (1991) is therefore the most suitable instrument for this purpose even if it may have limited our findings; as discussed in greater detail in the final section of the article.

The Swiss context may present some institutional and cultural particularities that positively influence the process of interaction adjustment. Black, Gregersen and Mendenhall (1990) state that of the three adjustment dimensions (general, work and interaction), interaction is the most challenging: mental maps and rules are always involved in social interaction and the latter can be problematic due to different social manners or negative attitudes toward foreigners as discussed by Peltokorpi and Froese (2009) regarding Japan. Most empirical studies support this assertion with only a few exceptions – where general adjustment received higher scores than interaction adjustment (Gabel, Dolan, & Cerdin, 2005; Selmer, 2001; Shay & Baack, 2006; Templer, Tay, & Chandrasekar, 2006). In Switzerland, we expected a higher interaction adjustment because of its tradition of welcoming foreign populations (Fibbi, 2013), and because multiculturalism, diversity and multilingualism are seen to be the cornerstones of the nation (Froidevaux, 1997; Lhabitant, 2003). We therefore formulated the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: For foreign employees in Switzerland, interaction adjustment will not differ significantly from the other adjustment dimensions.

Hypothesis 1b: For partners of foreign employees in Switzerland, interaction adjustment will not differ significantly from the other adjustment dimensions.

3.2 Importance of local language proficiency

Despite the fact that English is commonly spoken in various work and nonwork contexts in Switzerland (Stalder, 2010; Stotz, 2006), past research has found that adopting English as a common language does not ensure efficient communication (Björkmann, Tienari, & Vaara, 2005; Peltokorpi, 2007). Even when they are relatively fluent, non-native English speakers from different cultural origins might interpret the underlying meaning according to their own cultural norms, which leads to misunderstandings (Henderson, 2005; Selmer, 2006). Additionally, people often have a natural tendency to interact in their native language (Peltokorpi, 2008). Individuals with

poor host-country language skills may be intentionally or unintentionally excluded from daily interaction with locals and be categorized as out-group members (Piekkari, Vaara, Tienari, & Sääntti, 2005; Selmer & Låuring, 2011).

Expatriate fluency in the host-country language may facilitate cross-cultural adjustment due to more effective communication and perceptual skills (Andreasson, 2003). This language proficiency might encourage communication exchanges with host-country nationals, who appear to be a great source of information and support for expatriates, and enable them to develop a better understanding of local culture (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002; Froese, Peltokorpi, & Ko, 2012). In a work context, local language proficiency may also help expatriates to better understand work values and behave appropriately in a professional environment (Takeuchi et al., 2002; Wang & Tran, 2012). Additionally, speaking the host-country language with local colleagues better enables them to build trust and relations (Låuring & Selmer, 2012). We therefore formulated the following hypotheses concerning the impact of language proficiency with regard to foreign employees (information on the language proficiency of partners was not at our disposal).

Hypothesis 2a: Local language proficiency will be positively related to general adjustment of foreign employees.

Hypothesis 2b: Local language proficiency will be positively related to interaction adjustment of foreign employees.

Hypothesis 2c: Local language proficiency will be positively related to work adjustment of foreign employees.

3.3 Partner/Family

Family migration has been extensively studied since the 1970s by researchers in different disciplines including economics, sociology and psychology. The earliest studies were mainly conducted by economists and sociologists and aimed to study the

decision-making of migrant families, the impact of migration on employment status and the earnings of 'trailing spouses' or 'tied migrants' (Cooke, 2008). The family migration field has also expanded to include the particularities of the social, economic and geographical context in which migration takes place, family migration behavior and their psychological and sociological consequences (Cooke, 2008). In the expatriation field, the seminal contributions of Tung (1981), Harvey (1985) and Adler (1986) shed light on the difficulties of expatriate partners: disruption/interruption of social ties and routines, loneliness, isolation, social roles modification, loss of identity and self-esteem. For expatriate partners, the adjustment to the host country's culture can be longer and harder compared to the expatriate employee (Suutari & Brewster, 1998) as during the assignment, expatriate employees are less exposed to the culture of the host country and they generally continue to work in a relatively familiar context. Expatriate partners are usually in charge of dealing with several practical/administrative issues tied to the relocation process and the settling of the family in an unknown environment while the partner works long hours (Davoine, Ravasi, Salamin, & Cudré-Mauroux, 2013; McNulty, 2012).

Furthermore, dual career couple expatriate partners are faced with the additional challenge of finding a job and ultimately abandoning and sacrificing their own careers (McNulty, 2012). Adjustment can be more difficult for dual career couples which need to develop strategies to coordinate both careers (Mäkelä, Käsälä, & Suutari, 2011). Spouses are often forced to resign from their jobs and abandon potential careers to follow their partner (Kupka & Cathro, 2007). Expatriate spouses may not be allowed to work because of permit and visa limitations, or face serious job-finding obstacles including cultural and language barriers, unrecognized foreign educational or professional qualifications, lack of available and suitable jobs and general preference for local workers (Pellico & Stroh, 1997). Partners forced to abandon their career are in a more fragile psychological state due to their career interruption and the exclusive focus on their partner's career. Furthermore, when the expatriate spouse is able to secure a new job in the host location, it may be at a lower level than before and include a loss of status, power, self-worth and identity (Eby, 2001). Spousal adjustment is a major issue

in most studies because of increased adjustment difficulty. We formulated the following hypotheses accordingly:

Hypothesis 3a: General adjustment will be lower for foreign employees' partners than for foreign employees.

Hypothesis 3b: Interaction adjustment will be lower for foreign employees' partners than for foreign employees.

Hypothesis 3c: Work adjustment will be lower for foreign employees' partners than for foreign employees.

3.4 Relocation practices

Companies have several practices at their disposal that they can offer foreign employees to facilitate their relocation and integration into the host country. These practices can also affect the degree of adjustment to several aspects of life in the new country (Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1994; Takeuchi, 2010). MNCs have long developed relevant experience and specific knowledge in the development of relocation and career-related measures to ensure the efficient transfer of international skilled employees between geographically dispersed organizational units (Peiperl & Jonsen, 2007). Given the increasing use of self-initiated expatriates, who are generally excluded from career-related practices (Suutari & Brewster, 2000), we chose to focus only on relocation practices. Only relocation practices that can be offered to all type of foreign employees were taken into account.

In this category of organizational support, some practices are intended to prepare foreign employees for their new environment. Companies can provide cross-cultural training (Forster, 2000) and communicate information about important practical issues before the foreign employee arrives in an unfamiliar, often unknown environment (Haile, Jones, & Emmanuel, 2007). In a similar vein, companies can even organize or fund a trip to the host country that can help the foreign employee to formulate realistic

expectations about the destination country (Macdonald & Arthur, 2005). Having recognized the importance of the role played by the partner/family and the magnitude of the potential negative consequences associated with the move, the employing organization can also decide to include the partner and other family members in the training program (Haile et al., 2007; McNulty, 2012). In most cases, foreign employees and their partners are faced with language barriers – total or partial funding of language courses are therefore useful to help them interact with host nationals (Puck, Kittler, & Wright, 2008).

Companies can also offer spouses career counseling and other career-related support (help with work permits and other practical work-related issues, e.g. covering job search related costs) (Harvey, 1995; McNulty, 2012). Organizational help in finding accommodations in the host country can be also taken into account as well as offering an allowance or payment for moving the belongings of foreign employees and their families (Forster & Johnsen, 1996). As economic conditions and cost of living can differ greatly from one country to another, companies can also provide different forms of financial compensation. Some companies offer mobility and relocation allowances as well as allowances for school fees (Klaus, 1995). Tax or insurance support (insuring household goods, pension plan and health insurance) are also part of the relocation practices offered by some companies (Suutari & Tornikoski, 2001). To ease the introduction of foreign employees, the employing organizations can also assist them in dealing with administrative processes in the host country such as obtaining visas or work permits and managing the administrative paperwork required by immigration services (Aycan, 1997).

Black et al. (1991) showed that organizational support as a whole is significantly related to the cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates and their partners (Black & Gregersen, 1991). For partners of foreign employees, pre-move visits and training (Black & Gregersen, 1991) and employer spousal support (Kraimer, Wayne, & Jaworski, 2001) have a positive impact on adjustment. Organizational support in the form of logistical assistance or help with administrative paperwork (Shaffer, Harrison, & Gilley, 1999; Takeuchi, Wang, Marinova, & Yao, 2009) also has a positive impact on partner

adjustment. The impact of cross-cultural training on adjustment was confirmed by the meta-analysis of Morris and Robbie (2001). We therefore hypothesized a positive correlation between use of relocation practices and the adjustment of foreign employees and partners. On the basis of the expatriate corporate support literature (Klaus, 1995; Suutari & Brewster, 2001), we distinguished two categories of support practices: the first category includes country information and training support practices, the other includes administrative, logistical and financial support practices.

Hypothesis 4a: Use of information and training support will be positively related to the adjustment of foreign employees and partners.

Hypothesis 4b: Use of administrative and financial support will be positively related to the adjustment of foreign employees and partners.

4. Method

4.1 Participants and context of the study

The empirical data came from a survey of foreign employees living in French-speaking Switzerland and working for MNCs. Twelve MNCs, representing a relatively large number of industries including food, pharmaceuticals, tobacco, technological and scientific services, agreed to participate in the study. They either forwarded the link to the online English version of the survey or they sent the paper version to foreign employees. We received 152 completed and usable questionnaires (126 of them included information on partner adjustment). In our survey, we asked respondents to query their partners about their levels of adjustment. In 38 cases, the partners answered themselves and in 88 cases, the foreign employees gave their perception of their partner's adjustment. An ANCOVA test was then performed to investigate methodological biases, i.e. differences between the two ways of evaluating partner adjustment. Our analysis revealed no significant differences between the two methods: expatriates' perception of the adjustment of their spouses was therefore used as a measure of spousal adjustment.

Preliminary results were then presented and discussed with a sample of HR representatives (HR business partners, HR managers and global mobility managers) from six MNCs who took part in our study. Two other global mobility experts from the International Link network took part at the discussion. Results were then presented and discussed individually with other HR managers from six other MNCs in charge of international mobility. Discussions with these key informants allowed us to test the validity and reliability of our data (Kumar, Stem, & Anderson, 1993): results on levels of adjustment, perceived necessity and current offers of certain relocation practices were confirmed, providing us with a more comprehensive understanding of the context of our research.

The average age of participants in our study was 38.38 years ($SD = 8.11$), they had spent 2.01 years in Switzerland ($SD = 2.07$) and had international experience (measured by number of years spent in a foreign country, including Switzerland) of 6.67 years ($SD = 6.19$). For those with a fixed-term contract, the planned duration of their current assignment was 3.55 years ($SD = 1.49$). Of the 152 participants, two thirds ($n = 101$) were male. The vast majority of participants were married or living with a partner and half of them had no children. The foreign employees in our study came from more than 30 countries including the following nationalities: French (20.3%), German (13.8%), Italian (11.1%), British (6.5%), US (5.2%), Japanese (5.2%) and other nationalities (37.9%). Characteristics of foreign employees that participated to our study are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of participants

Dimension	Frequency	Percentage	Dimension	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>			<i>Marital status</i>		
Male	101	66.4	Married	126	82.9
Female	51	33.6	Single	26	17.1
<i>Age (years)</i>			<i>Level of education</i>		
< 30	22	14.4	Less than bachelor	10	6.6
31-40	69	45.1	Bachelor	33	21.7
41-50	48	31.4	Master/graduate	84	55.3
>50	14	9.1	Post graduate	25	16.4
<i>Nationality</i>			<i>Type of expatriation</i>		
French	31	20.3	Self-initiated	82	53.9
German	21	13.8	Organizational	70	46.1
Italian	17	11.1	<i>Partner working status</i>		
British	10	6.5	Working partner (before)	84	68.3
US	8	5.2	Working partner (during)	49	40.8
Japanese	8	5.2	<i>First international</i>		
Other	58	37.9	Yes	83	54.6
<i>Children</i>			No	69	45.4
Yes	77	50.7			
No	75	49.3			

4.2 Instruments

We used the 14-item scale developed by Black (1988) and Black and Stephens (1989) to measure the three dimensions of expatriate cross-cultural adjustment. Respondents were asked to answer a seven-point Likert scale (from 1, ‘not at all adjusted’ to 7, ‘completely adjusted’) on how well-adjusted they were to several aspects of their lives in Switzerland. The reliability of each dimension was acceptable (Nunnally, 1978): general adjustment ($\alpha = 0.84$), interaction adjustment ($\alpha = 0.95$) and work adjustment ($\alpha = 0.80$). We measured the adjustment of foreign employees’ partners with the nine items developed by Black and Stephens (1989) on general and interaction adjustment and we measured their adjustment to work/career with a self-developed three-item scale (*Work*, *Personal income level* and *Career development*). The reliability of each dimension was also acceptable for each aspect of partner adjustment: general adjustment ($\alpha = 0.85$), interaction adjustment ($\alpha = 0.90$) and work adjustment ($\alpha = 0.90$). We measured the level of host country language proficiency by asking

respondents to answer a single-item scale (from 1, ‘not at all’ to 5, ‘completely’) on their ability to speak/converse in the local language. Concerning relocation practices, we used items developed by Cerdin (1999) and Suutari and Brewster (2001) that we slightly modified to integrate suggestions made by corporate representatives. Availability, use and the perceived necessity of relocation practices were measured. We measured the relocation support by asking expatriates which practices were offered by their employers (Yes/No/Don’t know) and by asking them to evaluate the perceived necessity of these practices and their effective use on a five-point Likert scale (from ‘small extent’ to ‘large extent’). The 16 items were later classified in two broad categories: *information and training support* and *administrative and financial support* (see table 5). These categories were identified by the three authors on the basis of relevant literature on expatriate relocation support practices (Klaus, 1995; Suutari & Brewster 2001). Each of the authors then independently classified the 16 items in one of the two categories and agreement was reached for all of them.

Consistent with theoretical assumptions and previous research, the following other variables were measured and their impacts were controlled: gender, age, previous international experience (measured in years), time spent in Switzerland since arrival (measured in years), type of expatriation (self-initiated expatriates vs. assigned expatriates) and host language proficiency (self-evaluation of the ability to converse in French on a scale from 1 to 5).

5. Results

The correlation matrix for the adjustment dimensions of foreign employees and their partners as well as descriptive statistics of other variables of our study are given in Table 2.

The type of expatriation does not correlate significantly with any dimensions of foreign employee adjustment. Gender had a significant positive correlation with foreign employee interaction adjustment ($r = 0.196$, $p < 0.05$) and partner interaction adjustment ($r = 0.186$, $p < 0.05$). Partner general adjustment was significantly and negatively

correlated with time spent in Switzerland since arrival ($r = -0.253$, $p < 0.01$) and with previous international experience ($r = -0.228$, $p < 0.05$). The age of the foreign employee had a significant and negative correlation with partner work adjustment ($r = -0.323$, $p < 0.05$). The language proficiency of foreign employees was significantly and positively correlated with foreign employee interaction adjustment ($r = 0.341$, $p < 0.01$), with partner interaction adjustment ($r = 0.267$, $p < 0.01$) and with partner work adjustment ($r = 0.447$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and correlations with adjustment levels

	<i>Employee adjustment</i>			<i>Partner adjustment</i>				
	M	SD	General	Interaction	Work	General	Interaction	Work
<i>Employee adjustment</i>								
General	5.01	1.10	-					
Interaction	4.13	1.67	.410**	-				
Work	5.48	1.23	.415**	.416**	-			
<i>Partner adjustment</i>								
General	4.64	1.22	.721**	.247**	.219**	-		
Interaction	3.79	1.67	.319**	.626**	.204**	0.488**	-	
Work	4.32	1.84	.106	.165	.045	.350**	.300*	-
<i>Other variables</i>								
Gender	-	-	.082	.196*	.129	.145	.186*	.083
Age (years)	38.4	8.11	.034	-.044	.088	.030	-.002	-.323*
Inter. experience (years)	6.67	6.19	-.141	-.072	.010	-.228*	-.100	-.050
Time in Switzerland (years)	2.01	2.07	-.136	-.011	-.038	-.253**	-.070	-.102
Type of expatriation	-	-	-.034	-.004	-.062	.044	.020	.057
Language proficiency (1-5)	3.35	1.43	-.026	.341**	.096	-.091	.267**	.447**

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

The six adjustment variables were all strongly inter-correlated with the exception of partner work adjustment. The latter had significant and positive relationships with the other two dimensions of partner adjustment but with none of the foreign employee adjustment variables.

Foreign employee adjustment scores were relatively low (mostly less than 5.0) and are similar to other studies conducted in other locations (see for example Black, 1990; Black & Stephens, 1989; Peltokorpi & Froese, 2009; Van Vianen, De Pater, Kristof-Brown, & Johnson, 2004; Waxin & Panaccio, 2005). Partner adjustment scores were also similar (slightly lower) to most studies on expatriate spousal adjustment (see Black & Gregersen, 1991; Black & Stephens, 1989; Herleman, Britt, & Hashima, 2008; Mohr & Klein, 2004; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). We expected that cross-cultural adjustment in a developed, multicultural and highly esteemed country like Switzerland would have been easier, but our results show that adjustment in Switzerland is as difficult as it is in other locations.

For foreign employees, we found lower levels of interaction adjustment ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.67$) than general adjustment ($M = 5.01$, $SD = 1.10$) ($t = 6.846$, $df = 151$, $p < 0.00$) and work adjustment ($M = 5.48$, $SD = 1.23$) ($t = 10.271$, $df = 151$, $p < 0.00$). For partners, the levels of interaction adjustment ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 1.67$) were significantly lower than those of general adjustment ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 1.22$) ($t = 6.223$, $df = 122$, $p < 0.00$) but not work adjustment ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 1.84$) ($t = 0.882$, $df = 57$, $p < 0.381$). Hypotheses 1a and 1b are therefore not supported. Among the three dimensions of adjustment, our data clearly show that the most challenging dimension for foreign employees and their partners is the interaction adjustment. Interaction with locals represents the most significant challenge for foreigners in Switzerland and is more difficult to master than challenges related to work and general life environments.

We performed a hierarchical regression analysis to test hypotheses 2a, 2b and 2c, in keeping with Selmer's (2006) study focusing on the impact of language on adjustment. Following the same approach as Selmer, we entered the 'time spent on the current assignment' variable in the first step and the 'host language proficiency' variable in the second step. In addition, we entered the variable 'type of expatriation' in the first step. This process allowed us to measure the impact of language ability on interaction adjustment while controlling for time spent in Switzerland and for type of expatriation (self-initiated vs. assigned expatriates).

Table 3. Results of hierarchical regression for effects of language proficiency on adjustment

	General adjustment	Interaction adjustment	Work adjustment
Step 1			
Time in Switzerland (control)	- 0.136	- 0.011	- 0.039
Type of expatriation (control)	- 0.035	- 0.004	- 0.062
R	0.141	0.012	0.073
R2 (adjusted)	0.020	- 0.013	- 0.008
F	1.502	0.010	0.397
Step 2			
Language proficiency	- 0.013	0.348*	0.106
R	0.141	0.345	0.128
Change in R2	0.000	0.119	0.009
R2 (adjusted)	0.000	0.101	- 0.004
F	1.003	6.667*	0.824

* $p < 0.001$

As illustrated in Table 3, neither the ‘time spent in Switzerland’ control variable nor the ‘type of expatriation’ control variable had any significant impact on the three adjustment dimensions. Language proficiency showed significant positive impact on interaction adjustment ($\beta = 0.348$, $p < 0.001$) but not general adjustment or work adjustment. We also found a statistically significant F value for interaction adjustment only ($F = 6.667$, $p < 0.001$), indicating a good fit between our data and the regression model tested for this dimension of adjustment only. Therefore only hypothesis 2b is supported.

To test Hypotheses 3a, 3b and 3c, a series of independent sample t-tests was performed. We found higher scores of cross-cultural adjustment for foreign employees compared to those of their partners, suggesting that the adaptation process was more challenging for them. Significant differences were found for general adjustment ($t = 4.684$, $df = 122$, $p < 0.00$) and work adjustment ($t = 3.687$, $df = 57$, $p < 0.001$) but not for interaction adjustment ($t = 1.740$, $df = 122$, $p < 0.08$). Hypotheses 3a and 3c were supported and Hypothesis 3b was not supported. The correlation matrix for the adjustment dimensions of foreign employees and partners and the use of relocation practices is given in Table 4.

Table 4. Correlations among use of relocation practices and dimensions of adjustment

	GA1	IA1	WA1	GA2	IA2	WA2	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16
GA1	-																					
IA1	.410**	-																				
WA1	.415**	.416**	-																			
GA2	.721**	.247**	.219*	-																		
IA2	.319**	.626**	.204*	.488**	-																	
WA2	.106	.165	.045	.350**	.300*	-																
P1	.094	.055	-.035	.003	.010	-.234	-															
P2	.060	-.034	.059	.132	-.034	-.030	.325**	-														
P3	-.059	.010	.023	-.063	-.008	-.271*	.274**	.110	-													
P4	.010	-.017	.016	.063	-.042	-.171	.260**	.191*	.461**	-												
P5	.154	.096	.121	.299**	.192*	.085	.254**	.121	.324**	.109	-											
P6	.212**	.032	.209**	.072	.135	-.048	.397**	.109	.155	.126	.266**	-										
P7	.144	.079	.045	.235**	.167	.004	.223**	.083	.284**	.116	.691**	.301**	-									
P8	.141	.211**	.111	.106	.177	.075	.377**	.251**	.134	.213**	.311**	.331**	.415**	-								
P9	.085	.012	-.007	.331**	.091	-.061	.187*	.199*	.135	.145	.202*	.162*	.300**	.151	-							
P10	.094	-.048	-.117	.193*	.052	-.308**	.302**	.186*	.309**	.220**	.279**	.144	.418**	.176*	.631**	-						
P11	.101	.190*	.037	.059	.054	-.169	.243**	.184*	.106	.366**	.220**	.212**	.346**	.434**	.222**	.400**	-					
P12	.112	-.015	.035	.146	.009	-.059	.286**	.417**	.293**	.179*	.235**	.234**	.340**	.371**	.493**	.535**	.327**	-				
P13	.061	.095	.166*	.039	.057	.073	.088	.234**	.029	.165*	.067	.165*	.210**	.180*	.144	.164*	.329**	.204*	-			
P14	.127	.043	.053	.235**	.131	.018	.186*	.175*	.295**	.466**	.349**	.073	.325**	.243**	.349**	.431**	.315**	.314**	.315**	-		
P15	.121	.056	.072	.215*	.142	.086	.195*	.135	.259**	.457**	.356**	.085	.345**	.269**	.345**	.462**	.338**	.276**	.296**	.931**	-	
P16	.076	-.051	-.056	.186*	.115	-.032	.097	-.047	.091	.209**	.199*	.122	.214**	-.041	.162*	.278**	.148	.096	.119	.568**	.592**	-

Note: GA1, IA1, WA1: general, interaction and work adjustment of foreign employee; GA2, IA2, WA2: general, interaction and work adjustment of foreign employee's partner; P1: housing (search, availability); P2: dealing with administrative paperwork in the host country (e.g. immigration services); P3: trips to discover Switzerland before the assignment ; P4: training and information before departure; P5: schools for children (search); P6: allowance for or payment of moving costs; P7: allowance for or payment of schooling costs; P8: Allowance for or payment of housing costs; P9: allowance for or payment of language courses for the expatriate; P10: allowance for or payment of language courses for the partner/spouse; P11: allowances for other benefits; P12: tax support; P13: insurance support (household goods insurance, pension plan, health insurance); P14: cross-cultural training in the host country; P15: cross-cultural training in the host country for the spouse/partner; P16: spouse employment support.

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01

Five practices out of seven of those we coded as ‘information and training support’ are positively correlated with the general adjustment of the foreign employee’s partner: *Allowance for or payment of language courses for the expatriate* ($r = 0.331, p < 0.01$), *Allowance for or payment of language courses for the partner/spouse* ($r = 0.193, p < 0.05$), *Cross-cultural training in the host country* ($r = 0.235, p < 0.01$), *Cross-cultural training in the host country for the spouse/partner* ($r = 0.215, p < 0.05$) and *Spouse employment support* ($r = 0.186, p < 0.05$). None of them were correlated with the adjustment of foreign employees.

We did not observe a radically stronger correlation between ‘administrative and financial practices’ and adjustment. Three of them (*Housing*, *Dealing with administrative paperwork* and *Tax support*) were not correlated with any dimensions of adjustment. Four were correlated with foreign employee adjustment: *allowance for or payment of moving costs* with general adjustment ($r = 0.212, p < 0.01$) and work adjustment ($r = 0.209, p < 0.01$), *insurance support* with work adjustment ($r = 0.166, p < 0.05$), *allowance for or payment of housing costs* ($r = 0.211, p < 0.01$) and *allowances for other benefits* ($r = 0.190, p < 0.05$) with interaction adjustment. Only two of them were correlated with partner adjustment: *schools for children* with general adjustment ($r = 0.299, p < 0.01$) and interaction adjustment ($r = 0.192, p < 0.05$) and *allowance for or payment of schooling costs* with general adjustment ($r = 0.235, p < 0.01$). In our study, corporate relocation practices (either administrative and financial support or information and training support) have little positive correlation with general, interaction or work adjustment for foreign employees and partners. Hypotheses 4a and 4b can only be partially supported.

Results on the availability, use, correlations and perceived necessity of relocation practices are given in Table 5. Concerning the availability of relocation support, we observed that administrative and financial practices (ranging from 57.2% of *allowances for other benefits* to 94.1% of *allowance for or payment of moving costs*) are offered more frequently than information and training practices (ranging from 27% of *cross-cultural training in the host country* to 73.7% of *allowance for or payment of language courses for the expatriate*).

Table 5. Availability, use, correlations and perceived necessity of relocation practices

Practices	Availability (%)	Utilization (1 - 5)	Positive correlation	Necessity (1 - 5)
Allowance for or payment of moving costs	94.1%	4.44	GA1 ; WA1	4.66
Housing (search, availability)	90.8%	4.16	-	4.53
Dealing with administrative paperwork in the host country (e.g. immigration services)	85.0%	4.10	-	4.42
Tax support	75%	3.62	-	4.30
Allowance for or payment of schooling costs	59.4%	3.45	GA2	4.25
Insurance support (household goods insurance, pension plan, health insurance)	71.1%	3.32	WA1	4.15
Allowance for or payment of housing costs	63.8%	3.62	IA1	4.09
Allowance for or payment of language courses for the expatriate ^a	73.7%	3.04	GA2	3.83
Allowance for or payment of language courses for the partner/spouse ^a	68.3%	3.06	GA2	3.81
Spouse employment support ^a	47.9%	2.06	GA2	3.70
Schools for children (search)	68.1%	2.10	GA2 ; IA2	3.63
Allowances for other benefits	57.2%	2.82	IA1	3.50
Trips to discover Switzerland before the assignment ^a	56.6%	2.63	-	3.16
Training and information before departure ^a	48.7%	2.39	-	3.14
Cross cultural training in the host country ^a	27%	1.74	GA2	2.86
Cross cultural training in the host country for the spouse/partner ^a	27.6%	1.79	GA2	2.89

Note: GA1, IA1, WA1: general, interaction and work adjustment of foreign employee; GA2, IA2, WA2: general, interaction and work adjustment of foreign employee's partner

^a *Information and training practices*

For scores on the perceived necessity of these practices, we did not observe any inconsistency between perceived necessity and current availability: administrative and

financial practices (ranging from 3.63 of *schools for children* to 4.66 of *allowance for or payment of moving costs*) are perceived as more important than information and training practices (ranging from 2.89 of *cross-cultural training in the host country for the spouse/partner* to 3.83 of *allowance for or payment of language courses for the expatriate*). When these results were presented to the HR representatives from MNCs who took part to our study, they confirmed and validated the scores on the perceived necessity of these practices. However, despite administrative and financial support practices being more frequently offered by organizations and their perception as being necessary by foreign employees, they seem to be less strongly correlated with the adjustment of foreign employees and their partners than information and training practices.

6. Discussion

Contrary to our expectations, cross-cultural adjustment scores for our population of foreign employees and spouses were relatively low. For spouses, adjustment scores were less than 5.0. The interaction adjustment score was especially low for employees and spouses (4.13 and 3.79 on a scale of 7) and were significantly lower for the employees than the other adjustment dimensions. A primary result of our study is that interaction with locals remains an issue for foreign employees and their spouses, despite Switzerland being a rich country with a skilled local, multicultural workforce and low unemployment rates.

In general, a low interaction adjustment might be explained by inadequate language skills and inability to speak the local language (Suutari, 1998) in addition to the cultural distance (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005) which leads to difficulty establishing contacts with locals. Since nearly half of our sample came from neighboring countries and Switzerland is characterized by multilingualism, we expected that interaction adjustment would not be a problematic issue. An early explanation could be the particularities of the local understanding of ‘citizenship’ and ‘national identity’ (Chevrier, 2009; Wanner & Fibbi, 2002) that are closely tied to civic and voting rights

and obligations in the Swiss political system of direct democracy. This could create a greater distance between local citizens and foreigners and hinder their social interaction. Another explanation could be linked to a so-called 'expat community' in the Lemman Lake region (a closed social bubble of expats and foreign employees of MNCs) using English as a common language in the middle of a French-speaking region. An interesting and new phenomenon in Switzerland is the structural change within the population of foreign employees, moving progressively from an 'expat community' to a 'highly skilled migrant community'. This seems especially true in the Geneva Lake Region, characterized by a preponderance of highly skilled immigrants from neighboring and developed economies and where most of the foreign population has settled on a long-term basis (Office Fédéral de la Statistique, 2013b; Office fédéral des migrations, 2013). The progressive change of status of foreign employees in Switzerland over the last 20 years from assigned expatriates to self-initiated expatriates with local contracts or skilled migrants increases pressure on the local employment market and this could lead to a newly increased negative attitude towards foreigners, even from the local highly-skilled population who now feel they are in competition with an abstract, globally skilled workforce (Flückiger, 2013; Ruedin & Pecoraro, 2013). This phenomenon might explain why interaction between foreigners and locals remain weak or have decreased.

In line with past empirical evidence, our results show that host-country language fluency facilitates interaction adjustment, (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Froese et al., 2012; Peltokorpi, 2008; Selmer, 2006; Selmer & Luring, 2011; Shaffer et al., 1999). This finding illustrates that although Switzerland is highly multilingual, language diversity is clearly compartmentalized into mostly monolingual linguistic regions (Grin & Schwob, 2002) with which locals strongly identify (Chevrier, 2009). In the Geneva Lake Region, the ability to speak French significantly and positively influences the ability of foreign employees to interact with local nationals. On the other hand, contrary to our hypotheses, no relationships were found between language proficiency and general and work adjustment. This might be explained by the fact that Switzerland is strongly internationalized in many aspects (see Section 2) and that more information may also be available in English, particularly in larger cities (Demont-Heinrich, 2005).

Lüdi and Werlen (2005) showed that the use of English at work has significantly increased in Switzerland over the past few decades - especially for highly skilled workers. Moreover, expatriates in our sample were all working in MNCs, most of which adopted English as a corporate language and designed processes and procedures in English. In this context, it could be argued that French proficiency might be less crucial when adapting to the professional environment.

Much has been done in Switzerland recently to integrate migrants and their families into several levels and different spheres of life (Wichmann, 2013) by the government as well as local companies facing the need to integrate a large number of foreign workers (over 140 nationalities are employed by Swiss Post; 146 by Swiss retailer Migros on the national market). They have developed practices and tools to facilitate integration and support cultural diversity. Aratnam (2012) emphasizes that considerable effort has been made to integrate highly skilled foreigners into Switzerland directly within companies. This may be particularly true in MNCs that employ an increasingly diverse population of foreign workers (Zimmermann & Sparrow, 2007). While services provided by relocation agencies used to be offered by MNCs to traditional expatriates, these services are increasingly offered to self-initiated expatriates and foreign employees with local contracts. In addition to logistical and administrative support, these services typically include general information about Switzerland as well as language and cross-cultural training. Within the Geneva Lake 'International Link' and 'International Dual Career Network', collective spousal employment support measures are provided to foreign employees of network members (International Dual Career Network, 2013; International Link, 2013). Our study showed that some of these support practices are correlated with the adjustment of foreign employees and their spouses. Administrative and financial support practices are the most frequently offered measures by organizations. Financial support practices can have an impact on adjustment dimensions because they may facilitate the daily lives of foreign employees and offer them more cognitive availability to deal with their new social and work environments (Aycan, 1997). They are mostly perceived as more necessary by foreign employees, except for specific measures like private school support, a measure that makes more sense for

foreign employees in Switzerland as assigned expatriates with a limited term assignment frame.

In the category of information and training practices, cross-cultural training is the most rarely offered measure for foreign employees and is rated as the least necessary measure by the employees themselves though it is positively correlated with adjustment, especially on spousal adjustment. This is consistent with the literature defending the impact of cross-cultural training for employees and spouses to improve adjustment and performance (Morris & Robbie, 2001). Language training is a traditional support measure for expatriates and their partners (Puck et al., 2008) and it has a significant impact on spousal adjustment. Our study highlights that both cross-cultural and language training given to the employee seem to be more strongly correlated with the adjustment of the employee's spouse than with the adjustment of the employee themselves. The results of our study show that even though all these measures, including spousal employment support, are positively correlated with the general spousal adjustment, they are perceived as less necessary by most foreign employees.

7. Conclusion: implications and limitations

Some limitations of this study should be acknowledged. Self-reporting was used to collect the data, since it appeared to be the most relevant method for measuring cross-cultural adjustment. Since this data collection method may potentially lead to common method bias, including inflation of relationships between variables, we proactively followed steps aimed to reduce these biases (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). For example, we clearly emphasized that respondent anonymity was guaranteed and that items were assigned in random order. We also stressed that there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. While cross-cultural adjustment is a process that occurs over time (Black & Mendenhall, 1990), our study only dealt with participant adjustment levels at a single point in time. Further studies could consider adopting a longitudinal approach to address this weakness. Another potential limitation involves the language used in our survey (English). The large number of different nationalities of our

respondents made it impossible to translate the questionnaire into all the languages necessary and since the language version of a survey can impact answers due to ethnic affirmation or cultural accommodation effects (Harzing & Maznevski, 2002; Ralston, Cunniff, & Gustafson, 1995) this could have affected our findings. Another limitation relates to the exploratory nature of this study - especially regarding the spousal adjustment data collection method, the testing of our hypotheses and the relatively small sample size. Regarding the indirect measurement of spousal adjustment, asking foreign employees to evaluate the adjustment of their partners implies the possibility for underestimation or overestimation of adjustment levels. Future studies should send separate questionnaires to foreign employees' partners with instructions specifying that the survey must be completed without consulting each other in order to increase accuracy. Future studies should also take into account the language proficiency of partners and use a more sophisticated scale to measure this aspect. Merging different categories of internationally mobile individuals in our sample, even though reasonable and justified by the particular context of our study, could also limit our findings. Future research should continue to investigate differences between different types of internationally mobile individuals and take into account their specifics during observation such as differences in adaptation and integration (Cerdin et al., 2014; Cerdin & Selmer, 2014).

The last important limitation is the operationalization of cross-cultural adjustment used in this study (Black et al., 1991). The validity of this approach is increasingly being criticized for methodological reasons (lack of inductive-exploratory approach, concerns about arbitrariness and the validity of some items, see Hippler [2006] for a review). It may be possible that in our study, and in our particular context, we were not able to capture the whole picture of cross-cultural adjustment since environmental features that require adjustment could be more numerous and more complex than the 14 item scales proposed by the Black et al. (1991) model and their three domains of adjustment. Moreover, we were unable to differentiate between the facets of adjustment considered important by our respondents and those that were not. Future studies should use a more comprehensive and refined adjustment scale such as those of Hippler et al. (2014) which include a more exhaustive range of adjustment domains and take into account their

saliency as well as the direction (positive or negative) of change to obtain more accurate and relevant findings.

Our study has several implications. It stresses the importance of national particularities when studying the cross-cultural adjustment of foreign employees. The effort made to contextualize our study and its findings highlights the need to address the issue of different national contexts to generalize findings about foreign employee adjustment (Suutari & Brewster, 1998). Cross-cultural adjustment literature may certainly benefit if more macro-level elements of host countries would be taken into account when measuring expatriate adjustment. Attractive countries for highly skilled migrants like Switzerland could be considered laboratories for the study of immigration management (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010). The population of foreign employees in Switzerland's settled MNCs is an excellent example of a progressive change from mobile expatriates with short fixed term assignments and expatriate packages to a new population of skilled migrants with local contracts and longer term career plans in the host country. The consequence of this is a progressive move from an 'expat community' to a 'highly skilled migrant community'. Despite longer-term settlement intentions and a multilingual, skilled host-country population, our study showed that skilled migrants do not seem to interact more with locals than the traditional population of assigned expatriates. This finding might reflect what Yanaprasart (2006, p.53) terms the 'ambiguity of Swiss hospitality', between the tradition of being a country of immigration and the rigidity of its social structures toward foreigners, leading to potential challenges in daily interactions between foreign workers and the Swiss. On the other hand, a further clear finding of our study is the importance of host-country language fluency when interacting with local nationals, despite the highly multicultural Swiss context and the increasing use of English. This finding suggests that local language fluency is essential for the 'highly skilled migrant community', who aims to settle in Switzerland on a long-term basis, to develop ties with local nationals. Further research should qualitatively investigate the relationship between locals and migrants and the 'highly-skilled migrant communities' phenomenon.

Regarding the practical implications, our findings show that some relocation practices are positively correlated with the adjustment of foreign employees and their spouses (though the correlations are often quite weak). Our results show that spouses experience stronger cross-cultural adjustment difficulties and that the influence of relocation practices on their adjustment levels seems to be stronger compared to foreign employees. Given the importance of spousal adjustment issues, our study clearly highlights the need for MNCs to provide organizational support to facilitate the experience of foreign employees' spouses. Our study may help MNCs to adequately support foreign employees since our results provide important information for international organizations on how to efficiently support their foreign employees in their adjustment to a new host country. This is particularly helpful because some of the relocation practices (e.g. cross-cultural training) that are strongly correlated with adjustment are not perceived as necessary by foreign employees. In light of our findings, foreign employees in particular should not underestimate the importance of language proficiency and thus of language courses as well as intercultural training for their adjustment and integration. With regard to the low levels of interaction adjustment found, our study draws attention to this particular aspect and shows the necessity for Swiss-based MNCs as well as MNCs elsewhere to work harder to better integrate foreign employees and their families into the local community. Corporate sponsored initiatives and activities can be implemented to promote favorable relationships between the local and foreign workforce with consequential advantages in terms of work environment as well as for the image of (Swiss and foreign) MNCs' subsidiaries and headquarters. Our results, embedded in the Swiss context, highlights how international organizations can calibrate and adapt their mobility programs and provide support that is tailored to different countries, as adjustment problems and difficulties are highly embedded in national contexts.

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V. Résumé de la thèse⁸

1. Introduction

Cette thèse de doctorat examine la carrière des managers dans un contexte international. Elle s'intéresse plus précisément aux parcours et modèles de carrière dans un contexte en évolution en prenant comme exemple le cas des managers internationaux, autrement dit des managers avec une carrière qui se développe dans plusieurs pays (Peiperl et Jonsen, 2007). Nous nous focalisons sur la nature évolutive des carrières managériales, les environnements organisationnels et globaux dans lesquels les carrières se développent, et la relation réciproque qui existe entre des carrières et des environnements en évolution (Nicholson, 2007; Tams et Arthur, 2007).

L'environnement économique mondial et les modèles de carrière ont subi des changements et développements importants au cours des dernières décennies qui ont, à leur tour, influencé la façon dont les individus poursuivent leur carrières et la façon dont les organisations essaient de gérer la carrière de leurs employés (Lazarova, Dany et Mayrhofer, 2012). Par conséquent, les carrières dans un environnement international subissent des changements substantiels aux niveaux individuel, organisationnel et institutionnel (Cappellen et Janssens, 2010).

Comme l'économie mondiale continue de croître et que les environnements économiques s'internationalisent, les carrières qui pourraient être identifiées comme *traditionnelles* ou *nationales* sont devenues potentiellement moins attrayantes et moins valorisées que les parcours de carrière internationaux. En effet, de nouveaux modèles de carrière internationale et de nouveaux moyens de s'engager dans des positions managériales sont désormais en concurrence avec des modèles de carrière nationaux et/ou traditionnels. Dans cette recherche, nous explorons la force des modèles de

⁸ Je tiens à remercier ici *Herr* Guillaume pour sa relecture et ses suggestions ainsi que pour avoir toujours soutenu la rencontre et l'échange entre chercheurs et praticiens.

carrière traditionnels. Ces derniers sont cependant remis en question et doivent actuellement coexister avec les nouveaux modèles internationaux.

Un changement important se produit également au niveau du processus actuel d'internationalisation des carrières et du rôle joué par les acteurs institutionnels (par exemple, les multinationales, les gouvernements nationaux et les institutions supranationales) dans ce processus. Les entreprises multinationales utilisent toujours l'expatriation traditionnelle comme outil de développement des leaders globaux, mais de nouvelles formes de mobilité géographique émergent (Collings, Scullion et Morley, 2007) et donnent naissance à des nouveaux modèles de carrière internationale. L'expatriation volontaire (*self-initiated expatriation*), ainsi que la migration hautement qualifiée figurent comme les modèles les plus importants. Le développement d'un marché international de dirigeants d'entreprise (Ruigrok et Greve, 2008) et l'influence des entreprises multinationales sont explorés dans cette thèse de doctorat.

Nous observons également un changement au niveau des acteurs poursuivant des carrières internationales. Le profil de cette population a subi des changements démographiques importants. On retrouve ainsi désormais une population avec plus de femmes et de couples à double carrière, des expatriés volontaires et des migrants qualifiés qui se déplacent dans des nouvelles destinations (par exemple, les marchés émergents). Dans ce contexte, nous explorons les expériences de nouveaux acteurs en termes de mobilité internationale ainsi que les moyens dont les organisations peuvent les supporter.

Tous ces aspects sont explorés à travers trois articles qui reposent sur trois terrains empiriques distincts.

Le premier article⁹ analyse les profils de carrière des top managers européens dans un contexte d'internationalisation accrue. Des données sur le profil et la carrière de plus de 900 top managers dans quatre pays (France, Allemagne, Royaume-Uni et Suisse) ont

⁹Davoine, E., & Ravasi, C. (2013). The relative stability of national career patterns in European top management careers in the age of globalisation : a comparison of France, Germany, Great Britain and Switzerland. *European Management Journal*, 31(2), 152-163.

été collectées et analysées. Le but est de vérifier l'hypothèse d'une stabilité des modèles nationaux de carrière et d'identifier les éléments nouveaux liés à l'internationalisation.

Le deuxième article¹⁰ se focalise sur les profils des dirigeants des plus grandes entreprises suisses. Nous nous sommes intéressés à l'évolution historique sur 30 ans (1980–2010) des profils et des carrières d'environ 600 top managers. Cet article met en évidence le développement en Suisse d'une communauté internationale de top managers étrangers, et analyse les changements dans leurs profils et dans leurs carrières, ainsi que le rôle joué par les entreprises multinationales dans ces changements.

Le troisième article¹¹ s'intéresse à l'adaptation interculturelle d'une population de 152 employés étrangers (expatriés traditionnels, expatriés volontaires, migrants qualifiés) et 126 conjoints. Cet article étudie différents aspects de l'adaptation, en se concentrant sur la maîtrise de la langue locale et les pratiques organisationnelles de soutien à l'expatriation.

¹⁰Ravasi, C. (2013). Les top managers internationaux des grandes entreprises suisses : profils et parcours de carrière. *Revue Economique et Sociale*, 71(4), 107-119.

¹¹Ravasi, C., Salamin, X., & Davoine, E. (2015). Cross-cultural adjustment of skilled migrants in a multicultural and multilingual environment: an explorative study of foreign employees and their spouses in the Swiss context. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* (in press).

2. Les carrières internationales et la gestion internationale des RH

Les carrières internationales ont été l'objet de nombreuses études dans le domaine de la gestion internationale des ressources humaines et des efforts pour organiser cette littérature ont été entrepris par certains chercheurs. En particulier, les articles conceptuels de Cerdin (2004), Cerdin et Bird (2007) et Tams et Arthur (2007) sont très utiles pour clarifier les cadres théoriques et conceptuels avec lesquels les trois articles de cette thèse de doctorat sont liés. En révisant et en organisant des recherches existantes dans le domaine des carrières internationales, ces auteurs proposent deux cadres distincts avec plusieurs similitudes qui offrent une structure utile pour positionner les trois articles et souligner leur contribution.

Cerdin (2004) et successivement Cerdin et Bird (2007) affirment que, dans le domaine de la gestion internationale des ressources humaines, les carrières internationales sont étudiées à partir de deux perspectives différentes. La première perspective adopte une approche comparative des pratiques et des modèles de carrières nationales. Selon cette perspective, des différences existent quant à la façon dont les carrières sont perçues et gérées dans différents pays et le but de cette perspective est d'illustrer et d'expliquer ces différences. Cette perspective peut concerner, par exemple, les différences nationales dans les modèles de développement des carrières managériales, dans l'interprétation du succès de carrière, dans les pratiques organisationnelles de soutien à la carrière ou dans les ancrs de carrière (Cerdin, 2004).

La seconde perspective englobe les études qui se concentrent sur la mobilité internationale des employés et la gestion de l'expatriation. Par conséquent, cette seconde perspective se focalise sur l'étude des individus avec une carrière internationale, les pratiques organisationnelles de gestion de la mobilité géographique et, en général, la gestion de l'expatriation. Les sujets d'intérêt dans cette perspective sont, par exemple, l'adaptation interculturelle des expatriés, la volonté de poursuivre une carrière internationale et l'impact d'une affectation internationale sur la carrière, ainsi que la question du retour des expatriés (Cerdin, 2004).

D'une façon très similaire, Tams et Arthur (2007) identifient trois perspectives à travers lesquelles les carrières internationales sont étudiées. La première perspective (*international careers perspective*) englobe les thèmes du développement de la carrière internationale et de la gestion internationale des ressources humaines et peut être comparée à la perspective de *la mobilité internationale des employés et la gestion de l'expatriation* de Cerdin (2004) et Cerdin et Bird (2007). La deuxième perspective (*careers across cultures perspective*) peut être comparée à l'*approche comparative des pratiques et des modèles de carrière* de Cerdin (2004) et Cerdin et Bird (2007).

Tableau 1. Perspectives de recherche sur les carrières internationales

<i>Cerdin (2004), Cerdin et Bird (2007)</i>	<i>Exemples de thématique</i>
« Approche comparative des pratiques et des modèles de carrière nationales »	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modèles de carrière nationaux - Différences dans l'interprétation du succès de carrière - Comparaison entre pays des ancrs de carrière
« Mobilité internationale des employés et la gestion de l'expatriation »	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adaptation interculturelle - Volonté de poursuivre une carrière internationale - Impact d'une affectation internationale sur la carrière - Retour des expatriés
<i>Tams et Arthur (2007)</i>	<i>Exemples de thématique</i>
« Careers across cultures perspective »	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Succès de carrière (objectif et subjectif) - Aspirations de carrière - Réseaux sociaux et stratégies de carrière - Interprétation du succès de carrière - Expériences de carrière des femmes
« International careers perspective »	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Succès et faillite de l'expatriation - Adaptation interculturelle - Recrutement, sélection, formation et développement - Support organisationnel des expatriés et de leurs familles - Retour et gestion de la carrière - Expatriés volontaires
« Globalization and career perspective »	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Influence des interdépendances économiques globales - Flux global de connaissances - Sources de changement culturel et convergence

Source: Cerdin (2004); Cerdin et Bird (2007); Tams et Arthur (2007)

Enfin, Tams et Arthur (2007) ont ajouté un dernier axe qu'ils ont nommé la perspective de la globalisation (*globalization and career perspective*). Cette troisième perspective suggère de s'intéresser à la carrière en prenant en compte le contexte de la globalisation et considère les choix et comportements liés à la carrière comme un reflet de leur adaptation au processus de globalisation. Cependant, les carrières ne sont pas uniquement influencées par un environnement en évolution, mais ont aussi un impact sur ce dernier. Par conséquent, ces auteurs proposent d'examiner la relation réciproque entre les carrières des individus et des facteurs macro liés à la globalisation sur un niveau économique, politique, social et environnemental. Plus précisément, cette perspective cherche à découvrir la manière dont les interdépendances globales façonnent les carrières des individus, dont les actions des individus qui poursuivent des carrières internationales ont une incidence sur le processus de globalisation et enfin sur la manière dont les processus d'internationalisation des carrières et de la globalisation se traduisent dans des processus de changement culturel et de convergence.

Afin de résumer cette thèse de doctorat, une revue de la littérature est organisée à partir de ces perspectives de recherche et les trois projets de recherche seront synthétisés et positionnés dans ces domaines de recherche. Il est important de noter que ces perspectives ne sont pas mutuellement exclusives et les trois articles de cette thèse apportent des contributions aux trois perspectives.

A noter que le premier article traitant des carrières et des profils des dirigeants européens adopte et apporte des contributions principalement à l'*approche comparative des pratiques et des modèles de carrière nationales* de Cerdin (2004) et Cerdin et Bird (2007) et à la *career across cultures perspective* de Tams et Arthur (2007). Nous pouvons également affirmer que le deuxième article portant sur l'évolution historique de dirigeants de grandes entreprises suisses appartient principalement à la *globalization and career perspective* de Tams et Arthur (2007). Enfin, le troisième article sur l'adaptation des employés internationaux appartient principalement à la perspective de *la mobilité internationale des employés et la gestion de l'expatriation* de Cerdin (2004) et Cerdin et Bird (2007) ainsi qu'à l'*international careers perspective* de Tams et Arthur (2007).

3. Comparaison des pratiques et des modèles de carrière nationaux

Cet axe de recherche comprend des études dans lesquelles les cultures nationales sont considérées comme une variable explicative lorsque l'on considère les différences entre plusieurs caractéristiques liées à la carrière. Dans cette perspective, les carrières sont structurées par des facteurs nationaux, institutionnels et culturels (Thomas et Inkson, 2007). Le but principal de ce courant de recherche est d'illustrer des variations culturelles (différences entre les pays) et des concepts universels (points de convergence au niveau international) (Tams et Arthur, 2007).

Plusieurs études faisant partie de cette perspective ont porté sur la comparaison entre pays au niveau de différents aspects liés à la carrière comme, par exemple, le sens de la réussite professionnelle (Chudzikowski et al., 2006; Lirio et al., 2007); les expériences vécues liées à la carrière (Burke, 2001); les aspirations de carrière (Malach-Pines et Kaspi-Baruch, 2008); le capital de carrière (Cadin, Bender, de Saint Giniez et Pringle, 2000) ou les pratiques organisationnelles relatives aux carrières internationales (Stahl et Cerdin, 2004; Tungli et Peiperl, 2009).

Dans l'ensemble, cette perspective de recherche s'est intéressée à différents aspects de la carrière à partir d'échantillons constitués par différents types d'employés (ainsi que des étudiants). D'autres études, plus rares ont adopté une approche comparative en se concentrant sur la carrière des dirigeants d'entreprise, autrement dit les top managers à la tête de leurs organisations. Analyser et étudier les parcours de carrière et la formation des top managers dans différentes cultures permet aux chercheurs de mettre en évidence et d'évaluer l'ampleur de l'impact des valeurs culturelles et des institutions nationales sur les pratiques de gestion et de développement de carrière dans une perspective comparative.

3.1 Différences dans les modèles nationaux de développement managérial

Les pays diffèrent dans les pratiques adoptées pour l'identification, la sélection et le développement de leurs dirigeants d'entreprises, conduisant à la conséquence que les top

managers dans un pays se distinguent de dirigeants d'autres pays en termes de caractéristiques personnelles, de valeurs culturelles, de parcours scolaires et de formation, d'expériences professionnelles et de valeurs et pratiques managériales (Myers, Kakabadse, McMahon et Spony, 1995). Les différences nationales dans l'identification et le développement des top managers révèlent les différences dans les priorités internes et les processus de décision au niveau de l'entreprise et mettent en évidence les caractéristiques institutionnelles et les valeurs culturelles au niveau national (Evans, Lank et Farquhar, 1989).

Le processus suivi par les dirigeants pour atteindre les plus hautes positions dans la hiérarchie d'une entreprise est fortement influencé par les préoccupations culturelles et des cadres institutionnels, et donc varie de pays à pays. Le processus de légitimation se produit tout au long de la carrière professionnelle des dirigeants et parfois même pendant les parcours scolaires, principalement lorsque qu'un diplôme spécifique est considéré comme important en termes de légitimité.

La contribution la plus importante dans le domaine des modèles de carrière nationaux de développement managérial est l'étude réalisée par Evans et al. (1989) qui a identifié quatre modèles nationaux qui sont différents en termes d'identification de potentiel, de potentiel de développement, de mobilité inter-entreprises et de mobilité inter-fonctionnelle. Les modèles identifiés sont le modèle japonais (ou *Elite Cohort approach*), le modèle latin (ou *Elite Political approach*), le modèle germanique (ou *Functional approach*) et le modèle anglo-hollandais (ou *Managed Development approach*).

Malgré le peu de recherches se consacrant à l'étude de l'impact national aux niveaux institutionnel et culturel sur les modèles de carrière de dirigeants d'entreprise, certaines études ont testé empiriquement à des dates différentes la validité des modèles de Evans et al. (1989).

Au milieu des années 1990, Bauer et Bertin-Mouro (1996) ont étudié le processus par lequel les dirigeants d'entreprise construisent l'autorité légitimée à la tête d'une entreprise en France, en Allemagne et au Royaume-Uni afin de vérifier si un modèle

européen unique existait ou si différents modèles nationaux étaient prédominants. Des caractéristiques nationales spécifiques ont été observées, tels que le pourcentage élevé de titulaires de diplômes de doctorat et un taux moindre de mobilité inter-entreprises parmi les dirigeants allemands, ou l'importance du rôle joué par les grandes écoles et l'État pour les dirigeants français. Dans l'ensemble, les principales caractéristiques des modèles nationaux ont été confirmées et les auteurs de l'étude ont déterminé qu'il n'existait pas à l'époque un seul modèle européen de carrière.

L'intégration potentielle des dirigeants d'entreprise en Europe a également été étudiée par Mayer et Whittington (1999), qui ont analysé des données recueillies à deux reprises, 1983 et 1993, et ont montré que les modes de légitimation étaient différents à travers les cultures et les pays tout en restant relativement stables dans le temps. Par conséquent, ils ont démontré que les différences entre les dirigeants d'entreprise britanniques, allemands et français en termes de formation et parcours n'ont pas disparu et ont continué d'exister tout au long des années 1980 et 1990. Ces différences ont survécu en dépit d'importants chocs nationaux (privatisation et déréglementation au Royaume-Uni, nationalisations et dénationalisations en France et réunification en Allemagne) et les principales pressions internationales, telles que la mondialisation et l'intégration européenne.

L'influence de la culture nationale sur les modèles de carrière et les pratiques de promotion (principalement en ce qui concerne le choix entre les systèmes de promotion interne ou externe) a été étudiée par Segalla, Rouzies et Flory (2001). Ces auteurs ont confirmé l'existence d'une influence culturelle sur les systèmes de carrière et les choix de promotion, et ont mis en évidence l'existence de trois groupes culturels distincts en Europe (*Latin, Germanic and Anglo-Saxon*). Cependant, ils ont invalidé les hypothèses des modèles nationaux d'Evans et al. (1989), selon lesquelles les entreprises latines préfèrent la promotion externe à la promotion interne, alors que c'est l'inverse pour les entreprises germaniques. En effet, ils ont observé dans leur échantillon que les managers allemands préféraient embaucher des candidats externes alors que les entreprises latines préféraient promouvoir des candidats internes.

La préférence des entreprises allemandes pour la promotion interne par rapport aux entreprises latines et aux entreprises anglo-hollandaises a aussi été réfuté par une étude de Klarsfeld et Mabey (2004). Cela suggère une certaine convergence dans le domaine de l'identification et du développement des potentiels top managers dans les trois pays (France, Allemagne et Royaume-Uni) considérés dans l'étude. Cependant, cette étude a identifié d'autres caractéristiques spécifiques et distinctes de modèles nationaux. Dans l'ensemble, leurs résultats ont confirmé que les entreprises en Allemagne, en France et au Royaume-Uni ont continué à être caractérisées par des approches distinctes plusieurs années après que les différences nationales dans l'identification et le développement des dirigeants d'entreprise aient été identifiées (Klarsfeld et Mabey, 2004).

3.2 De l'internationalisation à la convergence ?

La plupart des auteurs cités ci-dessus ont confirmé la persistance de modèles nationaux et, en même temps, ont reconnu un certain degré de convergence vers un modèle européen. La relative stabilité dans le temps des institutions nationales et des valeurs managériales peut affaiblir l'effet de l'internationalisation sur les processus distinctifs qui permettent aux top managers dans différents pays d'être identifiés et sélectionnés. Cependant, l'internationalisation ou « européanisation » du business et la présence accrue de top managers étrangers parmi les membres des comités exécutifs, associée à la mobilité accrue des managers à travers l'Europe, représentent la menace la plus forte pour les modèles nationaux de carrière des top managers.

En Europe la création du marché unique en 1993 a représenté pour plusieurs entreprises européennes le passage d'un marché national à un marché européen. La concurrence est devenue plus importante et plus intense et les entreprises européennes ont été obligées de suivre des stratégies de production, fusions, acquisitions, joint-ventures et alliances stratégiques à un niveau européen afin d'améliorer leur position sur le marché ou de pénétrer de nouveaux marchés (Mercado, Welford et Prescott, 2001). De plus, la création du marché unique, et les projets de création d'un marché unique de l'emploi qui ont suivi, ont forcé les entreprises européennes à structurer les programmes de carrière

de leurs employés à un niveau européen, afin d'attirer et de retenir les meilleurs employés (El Kahal, 1998).

Cependant, au début des années 1990, il n'y avait pas un consensus général parmi les entreprises européennes sur la nécessité de recruter des ressortissants d'autres pays européens pour des postes de direction. A cette époque, Bournois (1992) a observé que seulement un petit nombre d'entreprises européennes étaient prêtes à promouvoir activement la mobilité géographique de leurs employés et l'embauche de dirigeants étrangers. En effet, une grande majorité des entreprises étaient beaucoup moins ouvertes à la possibilité de recruter et de développer des managers sur une base européenne.

Mais d'autres auteurs ont soutenu l'idée que, dans les années 1990, les entreprises étaient déjà au courant du fait que recruter des top managers non-nationaux apportait plusieurs avantages à une entreprise (Tasler, 2001). En général, les entreprises qui sont de plus en plus internationales sont contraintes de recruter des managers avec des compétences, des réseaux, et de la légitimité associés à l'expérience internationale. Plusieurs études (Heijltjes, Olie et Glunk, 2003; Ruigrok et Greve, 2008; Staples, 2007) ont montré une internationalisation croissante des comités exécutifs des entreprises multinationales au cours des deux dernières décennies. Une telle internationalisation des comités exécutifs semble contribuer à l'émergence d'un marché international de dirigeants d'entreprise, dont les acteurs se distinguent par des carrières, des profils et des signes de légitimité qui reflètent leur orientation internationale.

Certains chercheurs se sont récemment intéressés aux effets de la globalisation sur les élites économique nationales (David, Davoine, Ginalska et Mach, 2012; Froud, Savage, Tampubolon et Williams, 2006; Godelier, 2005) ainsi qu'aux nouveaux facteurs internationaux qui produisent de l'autorité légitime : les formations en économie, gestion et finance, les diplômes de type MBA, l'expérience et les compétences internationales, l'expérience précédente dans des entreprises internationales d'audit et les cabinets de conseil (Morgan, 2001).

La résistance des modèles nationaux de développement managérial a été testée empiriquement dans le premier article de cette thèse de doctorat à travers la collecte et

l'analyse des données concernant un important et récent échantillon de top managers européens. Les effets de l'internationalisation et l'eupéanisation des activités des entreprises sur ces modèles ont également été évalués.

3.3 Résumé du premier article

Concernant le premier article, nous avons souhaité étudier la stabilité des modèles nationaux de carrières de dirigeants et l'apparition de nouveaux éléments liés à l'internationalisation. Un ensemble important de données a été recueilli à partir d'informations publiquement disponibles sur 916 top managers travaillant pour 111 entreprises européennes basées en France, Allemagne, Grande-Bretagne et Suisse. Les données biographiques et les informations liées à la carrière recueillies ont montré que vingt ans après la formulation des modèles d'Evans et al. (1989), certaines caractéristiques des modèles nationaux de sélection et de développement sont toujours présentes.

Dans chaque pays étudié, ces caractéristiques représentent encore entre un tiers et la moitié des top managers des grandes entreprises cotées en bourse, les entreprises qui justement devraient être les plus ouvertes aux changements internationaux. Les éléments identifiés sont spécifiques aux différents cadres institutionnels nationaux, tels que les grandes écoles et la haute fonction publique pour les top managers français, les « carrières de montagnards » et le doctorat pour les top managers allemands, les instituts professionnels pour les top managers britanniques. L'étude montre aussi une évolution concernant plusieurs autres critères qui peuvent être décrits comme internationaux. Par rapport à la recherche de Bauer et Bertin-Mouro (1996), le pourcentage de top managers étrangers est maintenant beaucoup plus important. L'expérience internationale, très appréciée sur le marché international actuel de dirigeants d'entreprise, est plus fréquente et concerne plus de la moitié de l'ensemble des top managers.

Les entreprises britanniques et (surtout) suisses ont beaucoup plus de top managers avec des profils internationaux par rapport aux entreprises allemandes et françaises. Nous

avons également constaté une plus forte présence de diplômés de MBA parmi les comités exécutifs des entreprises britanniques et suisses. Un pourcentage important de ces diplômés de MBA sont des top managers étrangers ou des top managers avec une expérience internationale importante: un MBA semble être un élément important d'autorité managériale légitime pour poursuivre une carrière internationale. Plus généralement, des diplômes dans des domaines comme l'économie, la gestion ou la finance semblent avoir gagné en importance dans la formation de top managers européens.

En conclusion, les résultats de notre recherche montrent, d'une part, une certaine érosion des modèles nationaux en raison de l'arrivée progressive des dirigeants étrangers dans des postes de direction. D'autre part, l'érosion semble très lente, en dépit de la très forte dimension internationale des activités et des actifs des entreprises étudiées.

4. Globalisation et carrières

Une deuxième perspective qui peut être adoptée pour étudier les carrières internationales est proposée par Tams et Arthur (2007). Cette perspective suggère d'enquêter les carrières en tenant compte du contexte de la globalisation. Plus précisément, ces auteurs proposent d'examiner la relation réciproque entre les carrières des individus et des facteurs macroéconomiques liés à la globalisation sur un niveau économique, politique, social et environnemental.

Cette approche est en ligne avec l'approche de la coévolution (Nicholson, 2007) qui suggère que l'étude d'une carrière, en liant individus aux organisations et institutions, permet de se concentrer sur plusieurs aspects de l'évolution de l'environnement global (Duberley, Mallon et Cohen, 2006; Jones et Dunn, 2007).

Une première approche au sein de cette perspective vise à étudier la façon dont les interdépendances globales façonnent les carrières individuelles. Cette perspective s'est particulièrement intéressée à comprendre comment les différents acteurs et cadres institutionnels (la technologie, les entreprises multinationales, la politique nationale et supranationale) dans le contexte de la mondialisation influencent les types d'emplois qui sont disponibles et les types de carrières que les individus peuvent poursuivre (Tams et Arthur, 2007).

Cappellen et Janssen (2010) ont par exemple clairement montré que les décisions et les actions individuelles de carrière (sur un plan international) sont fortement influencées par l'organisation (l'entreprise) et l'économie mondiale. Les résultats de leurs recherches montrent que les pratiques de développement de carrière organisationnelle ne correspondent pas toujours aux attentes des managers internationaux. Dans ces cas où le rôle des organisations dans le développement des carrières internationales semble plus faible et où il y a divergence entre l'organisation et le contexte global, les individus agissent de manière indépendante afin de poursuivre une carrière internationale. Selon ces auteurs, alors que le contexte organisationnel demeure un facteur important pour la compréhension des carrières, les caractéristiques de l'économie mondiale sont

également un facteur crucial pour expliquer les choix de carrière des managers internationaux.

Une deuxième approche de cette perspective considère la carrière en tant que *porteur* ou *transporteur* de la connaissance mondiale et met en évidence la dimension co-évolutive de la perspective de la globalisation. En effet, cette approche souligne notamment que la relation entre le processus de globalisation et ceux des carrières individuelles n'est pas unidirectionnelle mais plutôt réciproque.

À travers cette approche, Tams et Arthur (2007) montrent que les investissements des individus qui poursuivent des carrières internationales ont de profondes répercussions sur l'économie, l'environnement politique et social des pays d'origine ainsi que des pays d'accueil. Par exemple, les expatriés volontaires et les migrants qualifiés jouent un rôle très important dans la création et le développement de clusters régionaux spécialisés, par exemple, dans les services informatiques (Silicon Valley aux États-Unis), les services financiers (Londres au Royaume-Uni), l'industrie pharmaceutique (Bâle en Suisse) ou les industries de la mode (Paris en France) et du design (Milan en Italie).

En adoptant cette approche, il est intéressant de constater que certains pays et même certaines régions semblent être particulièrement favorables dans le développement d'une carrière internationale, et semblent donc être à l'avant-garde dans le développement d'un marché international de dirigeants d'entreprise (Ruigrok et Greve, 2008). En effet, le marché international de dirigeants d'entreprise se développe à des vitesses différentes dans différentes parties du monde, et les entreprises font plus ou moins massivement recours à des top managers étrangers. Ces différences s'expliquent par des disparités dans le degré d'internationalisation des entreprises ou le degré d'internationalisation de l'économie du pays d'origine (Van Veen et Marsman, 2008). Les différences sont aussi expliquées par leur présence sur les marchés internationaux (Greve, Nielsen et Ruigrok, 2009), ainsi que par les caractéristiques institutionnelles nationales, tel que le cadre juridique de la gouvernance d'entreprise par exemple (Van Veen et Elbertsen, 2008).

La troisième approche de cette perspective considère les carrières comme sources de changement culturel et convergence (Tams et Arthur, 2007) et l'hypothèse générale de cette troisième approche sous-tend que l'internationalisation des carrières conduit à la convergence des cultures d'entreprise et des profils de carrière.

Fioole, Van Driel et Van Baalen (2008) évoquent les notions d'américanisation et d'eupéanisation pour décrire les changements dans les profils des dirigeants allemands et néerlandais étudiés dans leur recherche. D'autres auteurs font référence d'une façon encore plus explicite à l'existence de nouveaux espaces transnationaux (Morgan, 2001) et à l'émergence de communautés transnationales (Djelic et Quack, 2010) constituées par des cosmopolites mondiaux (Brimm, 2010). Ces derniers sont caractérisés par des valeurs et une culture commune propres à ce nouveau groupe transnational de dirigeants d'entreprise qui est sensiblement différent des groupes de top managers « nationaux » ou « locaux » (Djelic et Quack, 2010; Morgan, 2001).

Morgan (2001) soutient que ces communautés transnationales partagent « des intérêts au sein d'un espace transnational spécifique, des intérêts qui se distinguent des intérêts qui existent sur une échelle nationale ». En développant cette définition, Djelic et Quack (2010) soulignent l'importance d'une culture commune dans les communautés transnationales, exprimée par des « *common meanings* », « *références* » et « *identity markers* ». Cependant, la coordination interactionnelle et culturelle entre les élites économiques est également décrite comme « fluide et fragile » (Djelic et Quack, 2010).

4.1 Résumé du deuxième article

Dans le deuxième article, nous avons choisi comme champ d'investigation la Suisse, un pays avec une population de dirigeants d'entreprise hautement internationalisée et composée de top managers provenant de différents pays (Davoine et Ravasi, 2013). En effet, les résultats du premier article montrent que les comités exécutifs des grandes entreprises suisses sont fortement internationalisés: 64% des gestionnaires de l'échantillon sont des étrangers et 75% ont eu une expérience professionnelle dans un pays étranger. En outre, la participation à des programmes de formation de type MBA

(ou équivalent) était plus élevée en Suisse qu'ailleurs. Enfin, le premier article et l'article de Davoine (2005) montrent que la Suisse est caractérisée par un modèle national hybride de formation-sélection des top managers.

Dans ce deuxième article, nous nous sommes donc intéressés à l'évolution historique des top managers d'entreprises suisses en étudiant les changements intervenus entre 1980 et 2010. À partir d'un échantillon constitué de dirigeants (président du conseil d'administration, directeur général et/ou administrateur délégué) des 110 plus grandes entreprises suisses, nous avons collecté des données sur 189 personnes en 1980, 184 en 2000 et 200 en 2010.

Dans cette étude nous avons adopté une démarche compréhensive visant à : décrire de façon quantitative le profil (en termes de nationalité et formation) des dirigeants des entreprises de notre échantillon; décrire de façon qualitative et détaillée la diversité des profils de carrière des dirigeants internationaux de notre échantillon; classer ces profils en plusieurs catégories expliquant le processus d'internationalisation.

L'analyse des parcours de carrière des dirigeants d'origine étrangère et la classification que nous en avons faite nous a permis d'amener des éléments de réponse sur les questions de la construction de ces communautés transnationales, et en particulier par le rôle joué par les différentes institutions (l'entreprise multinationale dans ce cas) dans le développement d'un marché international de dirigeants et dans l'internationalisation des carrières des top managers.

Globalement, plusieurs résultats intéressants ont été observés. Premièrement, les données de cette recherche montrent une forte augmentation des top managers étrangers (la proportion des dirigeants étrangers a augmenté de 4% en 1980 à 24% en 2000 et 35% en 2010) et une augmentation de diplômes dans les domaines de l'économie et de la gestion, ainsi qu'une augmentation de la participation aux programmes de type MBA.

Deuxièmement, l'analyse des parcours de carrières des top managers internationaux nous a permis d'apprécier la diversité qui caractérise ces parcours et ces séjours à l'étranger, ce qui nous a permis de conclure qu'encore aujourd'hui, il ne semble pas exister une standardisation de la figure du manager international ni de l'expérience à internationale acquise par ce type de manager : le processus d'internationalisation ne

semble pas provoquer de façon claire une standardisation des profils. En outre, nos résultats montrent que l'influence de la multinationale en tant qu'acteur institutionnel dans le processus d'internationalisation semble s'affaiblir pendant les dernières décennies. En 2010 parmi les dirigeants étrangers, un top manager sur deux a réalisé son parcours de carrière à l'international en dehors de l'entreprise multinationale dont il se retrouve à la tête aujourd'hui (ils étaient 20% en 2000). Dans notre échantillon de top managers des carrières internationales « nomades » (Arthur et Rousseau, 1996; Cadin, Bender et de Saint Giniez, 2003) sont relativement fréquentes.

5. Mobilité internationale et gestion de l'expatriation

Les recherches appartenant à cette perspective se concentrent sur l'étude de la carrière des individus en situation de mobilité internationale, des pratiques organisationnelles concernant la mobilité internationale et, en général, la gestion de l'expatriation.

Le nombre d'expatriés envoyés à l'étranger par les firmes multinationales n'a cessé d'augmenter tout au long des dernières décennies (PWC 2010) car l'expatriation reste un moyen important pour l'entreprise multinationale de transférer et de partager des connaissances, de contrôler ses filiales et de développer les compétences de son personnel (Harzing 2002). En outre, les entreprises internationales continuent de se développer à l'échelle mondiale, elles nécessitent donc d'attirer, de développer et de retenir un nombre croissant de managers globaux afin de rester compétitives dans l'arène économique mondiale.

Ainsi, les affectations à l'étranger restent un des outils les plus fréquemment utilisés pour le développement des leaders globaux (Caligiuri et Di Santo, 2001), et pour le contrôle des filiales et le transfert de connaissances tout au long des chaînes de valeur qui sont de plus en plus internationales (Tungli et Peiperl, 2009). Pour un individu, une affectation à l'étranger ou, en général, une expérience internationale peut permettre de développer des compétences et des réseaux internationaux qui sont très appréciés sur le marché du travail d'aujourd'hui (Daily, Certo et Dalton, 2000).

Cependant, la gestion des expatriés est une tâche de plus en plus coûteuse et complexe pour les entreprises multinationales. Lorsqu'elle n'est pas gérée de manière adéquate, les entreprises font face à des conséquences négatives, comme l'augmentation de la réticence à accepter des affectations internationales, des taux de refus plus élevés, un turnover plus élevé et le gaspillage des compétences et des connaissances des employés. Bien que les questions liées à la carrière des employés internationaux (expatriés et rapatriés) peuvent avoir de graves conséquences sur la gestion des talents des entreprises, le succès des affectations internationales est tout aussi important puisque leurs taux d'échec sont encore importants et les coûts associés élevés.

5.1 Adaptation interculturelle

Une expérience internationale implique des aspects positifs mais aussi négatifs pour un individu qui décide de poursuivre une carrière internationale, ou qui est exposé à une expérience de travail global (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen et Bolino, 2012). L'exposition à une culture étrangère peut impliquer des niveaux élevés de stress et d'incertitude et cela peut conduire par exemple à une performance professionnelle insuffisante en raison de problèmes liés à l'adaptation à un environnement étranger.

La nécessité de comprendre pourquoi certains expatriés s'adaptent relativement bien aux environnements étrangers tandis que d'autres rencontrent plus de difficultés ont conduit à un nombre important de recherches se concentrant sur le concept d'adaptation des expatriés (Bhaskar-Schrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer et Luk, 2005; Takeuchi, 2010). En effet, dans le domaine de la recherche sur l'expatriation, la thématique de l'adaptation interculturelle est récurrente (Dabic, González-Loureiro et Harvey, 2015).

L'adaptation interculturelle se réfère au confort psychologique ressenti par une personne en relation avec différents aspects d'un environnement étranger (Black et Mendenhall, 1990). Le concept d'adaptation interculturelle, en soulignant les avantages ainsi que les coûts pour les individus et pour les organisations, comme conséquences de l'exposition à un environnement étranger est d'une importance capitale pour comprendre l'expérience d'expatriation (Bhaskar-Schrinivas et al., 2005).

La recherche sur l'expatriation a souligné l'importance de la notion d'adaptation en montrant l'impact de ce dernier sur une série important de facteurs. En général, l'adaptation des expatriés a, par exemple, un impact positif sur l'intention de compléter l'affectation internationale (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Black et Stephens, 1989; Gregersen et Black, 1990), sur la satisfaction professionnelle et la performance (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Kraimer, Wayne et Jaworski, 2001; Shaffer et Harrison, 1998; Takeuchi, Yun et Tesluk, 2002), ainsi que sur le niveau d'engagement dans la filiale dans le pays hôte (Gregersen et Black, 1992).

5.2 L'importance du partenaire et de la famille

De nombreux chercheurs ont souligné l'influence du rôle du conjoint dans la réussite de l'expatriation en général, et pour l'adaptation de l'expatrié en particulier (Black et Stephens, 1989; Mérignac et Roger, 2005).

Au début des années 1980, l'identification de l'impact de la famille/du conjoint sur l'adaptation et la réussite de l'expatriation (Tung 1981) a mené aux premières études en se concentrant spécifiquement sur les conditions de la famille et du conjoint pendant l'expatriation. Nancy Adler (1986) est la première à consacrer un chapitre entier d'un ouvrage de management interculturel aux « portable spouses » de l'expatriation. D'autres chercheurs se sont également intéressés aux conséquences des transferts sur les conjoints d'expatriés : la perturbation/interruption des liens sociaux et des routines, la solitude, l'isolement, la modification des rôles, la perte d'identité et d'estime de soi (Davoine, Ravasi et Cudré-Mauroux, 2011; Harvey 1985).

Par conséquent, pour les partenaires d'expatriés, l'adaptation à la culture du pays d'accueil peut être un processus plus long et plus difficile par rapport aux expatriés (Suutari et Brewster, 1998), car ce dernier est généralement moins exposé à la culture du pays hôte et il/elle continue généralement à travailler dans un contexte qui est relativement familier. Les partenaires des expatriés se chargent généralement de plusieurs questions pratiques et administratives liées au processus de déménagement : trouver un logement, identifier les fournisseurs de services, comme les médecins, les dentistes et les magasins d'alimentation, s'occuper de l'inscription des enfants dans les écoles locales ou internationales etc. Toutes ces tâches sont généralement effectuées dans un environnement inconnu, souvent sans la maîtrise et la compréhension de la langue locale tandis que le partenaire (l'expatrié) travaille de longues heures (Davoine, Ravasi et Cudré-Mauroux, 2011; McNulty, 2012; Mérignac et Roger, 2012).

Des études récentes ont cherché à comprendre le rôle du conjoint de manière plus exhaustive, en se focalisant en particulier sur l'impact positif qu'un partenaire d'expatrié peut avoir sur l'expatriation (Mäkelä, Kansala et Suutari, 2011), en adoptant également une perspective de genre (Cole, 2012; Davoine, Ravasi, Salamin et Cudré-Mauroux, 2013). Cependant, la plupart des recherches ont principalement considéré le partenaire

d'expatrié principalement comme un facilitateur ou un obstacle à la réussite de l'expatriation.

5.3 Nouvelles formes et nouveaux acteurs de la mobilité globale

Les difficultés liées à la gestion de l'expatriation ont poussé les entreprises multinationales à explorer de nouvelles formes de mobilité globale alternatives à l'expatriation classique (Shaffer et al., 2012). Les entreprises internationales ont à leur disposition des outils tels que les affectations à court terme, des voyage d'affaires internationaux et des projets internationaux virtuels (Collings et al., 2007; Kayworth et Leidner, 2000; Tahvanainen, Welch et Worm, 2005).

En outre, dans un contexte mondial de plus en plus incertain, les organisations sont de moins en moins capables de diriger et gérer les carrières des individus (Cappellen et Janssens, 2010). Les personnes intéressées à une expérience internationale prennent l'initiative et initient elles-mêmes leur mobilité géographique (Suutari et Brewster, 2000). Non seulement les expatriés volontaires mais aussi et surtout les migrants hautement qualifiés sont devenus une partie importante de la main-d'œuvre géographiquement mobile à l'échelle mondiale (Peiperl et Jonsen, 2007) sur laquelle les enquêtes se concentrent de plus en plus dans la recherche en management (Al Ariss, 2010; Al Ariss et Özbilgin, 2010; Cerdin, Abdeljalil Dine et Brewster, 2014), et sur laquelle les employeurs et les États dépendent pour pouvoir maintenir un avantage concurrentiel (Helbling, 2011).

D'un point de vue démographique et sociologique, au cours des dernières années, deux changements principaux se sont produits. En effet, la participation des femmes aux affectations internationales a considérablement augmentée (GMAC, 2008; Salamin et Hanappi, 2014), tout comme le nombre de couples à double carrière dans la société en général et parmi les expatriés en particulier (Harvey, 1996, 1997; Permits Foundation, 2009).

5.4 Support organisationnel

Pendant et avant une affectation internationale, les entreprises multinationales peuvent aider leurs employés en offrant un soutien à travers plusieurs pratiques qui peuvent faciliter le processus de relocation, l'intégration dans un pays étranger, et le degré d'adaptation à plusieurs aspects d'une nouvelle vie dans le pays hôte. Les recherches sur les antécédents à l'adaptation des expatriés de Black, Mendenhall et Oddou (1991) ont montré que dans le domaine de l'expatriation, le soutien organisationnel dans son ensemble a un impact positif sur l'adaptation d'un expatrié et son partenaire (Black et Gregersen, 1991). D'autres études (Kraimer et Wayne, 2004; Shaffer, Harrison et Gilley, 1999) ont montré que le soutien organisationnel, par exemple sous la forme d'une aide logistique, est positivement corrélé avec l'adaptation des expatriés.

En ce qui concerne les questions de la carrière des expatriés, plusieurs études ont montré que le soutien organisationnel lié à la carrière est significativement et positivement corrélé avec la performance des expatriés (Feldman et Thomas, 1992; Van der Heijden, Van Engen et Paauwe, 2009) et significativement et négativement corrélé avec l'intention d'interrompre l'affectation internationale (Naumann, 1993; Van der Heijden et al., 2009). Les études sur la disponibilité et la nécessité perçues de pratiques liées à la carrière ont révélé un écart entre leur disponibilité et leur importance perçues selon les expatriés (Riusala et Suutari, 2000) et aussi les départements RH des sociétés multinationales (Handler et Lane, 1997).

Dans le troisième article, nous explorons toutes ces questions dans une étude empirique dans laquelle l'adaptation interculturelle d'une population d'employés étrangers (expatriés traditionnels, expatriés volontaires et migrants qualifiés) et sa relation avec le soutien organisationnel offert par leurs entreprises sont analysées.

5.5 Résumé du troisième article

Cette recherche s'intéresse à l'adaptation interculturelle d'une population de 152 employés étrangers des multinationales basées en Suisse et de 126 conjoints. Nous

avons étudié différentes dimensions de l'adaptation et mesuré l'impact de la maîtrise de la langue locale et le lien entre le niveau d'adaptation et les différents types de pratiques de soutien à la relocation (pratiques de soutien administratif et financier et des pratiques d'information et de formation).

L'étude a été menée dans la région lémanique où se concentre une population mixte d'expatriés traditionnels et de migrants hautement qualifiés et où les entreprises multinationales sont confrontées au défi de devoir intégrer une main-d'œuvre internationale hétérogène, ainsi que leurs partenaires et leurs familles, dans le pays d'accueil. Le contexte suisse est particulièrement intéressant à étudier en raison de la forte présence d'entreprises multinationales et d'une situation où la différence entre les migrants qualifiés et les expatriés traditionnels est de plus en plus mince. En outre, l'économie suisse est fortement dépendante des immigrants qualifiés et attire un nombre impressionnant de migrants pour contrer la pénurie de travailleurs qualifiés au niveau national.

Étant donné que l'environnement suisse est hautement multiculturel et multilingue, nous nous attendions à une adaptation plus facile par rapport à d'autres pays mais l'analyse des données a mis en évidence des niveaux d'adaptation interculturelle relativement faibles pour les employés internationaux et leurs partenaires. Nos résultats montrent que la capacité à s'entretenir dans la langue locale (le français) facilite l'adaptation et que le processus d'adaptation est plus difficile pour les partenaires que pour les employés internationaux.

Nous avons découvert à quel degré les différentes pratiques de soutien à la relocation sont offertes, utilisées et perçues comme nécessaires par les employés internationaux et nous avons montré lesquelles parmi elles pourraient être utilisées pour améliorer l'adaptation des migrants. En effet, notre étude montre que certaines de ces pratiques de soutien sont positivement corrélées avec l'adaptation des employés internationaux et de leurs conjoints. Les pratiques de soutien administratif et financier sont les pratiques les plus souvent offertes par les organisations. Elles sont le plus souvent perçues comme les plus importantes par les employés internationaux. Dans la catégorie des pratiques d'information et de formation, la formation interculturelle est la pratique la plus

rarement proposée aux employés internationaux et est considérée comme la mesure la moins nécessaire par les employés eux-mêmes, même si elle est positivement corrélée avec l'adaptation, en particulier celle du conjoint. Les résultats de notre étude montrent que même si toutes ces pratiques sont positivement corrélées avec l'adaptation générale du conjoint, elles sont perçues comme moins nécessaires par la plupart des employés internationaux.

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