
Emotional identity feelings as communicative artefacts in organisations

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Abstract: The paper advances the hypothesis that the discursive introduction of 'emotions' has profound effects on the constitutional level of organisations. Our reflections depart from Luhmann's systems theory, where the concept of emotions refers to the communicatively inaccessible consciousness, whereas 'organisation' refers to a communication system reproducing itself through decisions validated by membership. Our point is that the introduction of emotions as a criterion for membership transforms the functional organisation system. Our reasoning is developed through four propositions and summed up through reflections on the employment contract. Finally it is argued that the 'emotional organisation', where existence, membership and organisation co-emerge, gives rise to incessant inclusion and exclusion operations.

Keywords: Weber; Luhmann; passion; emotional membership; governmentality; self-technology; exclusion; inclusion; contractualism.

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1 Between laziness and commitment

“Start Tomorrow – Bring Your Company Down

The trial is ended, judgement has been handed down, the hearing is over. You never will be a corporate ‘new man’. Business will have to do without another honest, faithful servant, selflessly devoted to the common goal, a pawn to those in power, a willing slave, a worthy inheritor, yoked to the needs of the team. Your company aims to enslave you body and soul, but achieves the opposite effect. It reveals a pattern of oppression to which your only sane response is implacable apathy, discreetly but unwaveringly leeching its resources. Rather than a ‘new man’, be a blob, a leftover, stubbornly resisting the pressure to conform, impervious to manipulation.”

(Maier, 2006, p.117, Conclusion)

Corinne Maier’s response to the demand for flexibility, development, change and challenge is brilliantly French and matter-of-fact when she suggests systematic laziness as the appropriate response to this new ‘hype’, but it is also very far from the response in organisational theory. Thus, Goleman (1998, pp.24–28) substantiated the need for emotional intelligence in managers with globalisation, competition, the speed of technology and not least ‘the new fear’, which stemmed from the fact that nobody could rest assured in their jobs or careers irrespective of the success of the company.

On this basis, Goleman (1995, 1998) stressed that new qualifications were necessary in order to create a successful company today and this was where emotions and emotional intelligence came to be a factor. In his book, *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, Goleman (1998, pp.118–120) listed the qualifications of the top-level workers and these included ‘commitment’, which indicated total involvement in relation to the company’s ideas and goals and ‘organisational citizenship’, which designated emotional ties to the organisation. Goleman contended that it was of the utmost importance that employees were treated fairly and respectfully, because support created trust, attachment and loyalty and “the better organisational citizens they will be” (p.120).

Thomson (1998a, 1998b) spoke about passion and emotional capital and argued the importance of feelings since “Emotions is the new paradigm, a paradigm that shows stunning returns on stock investments, customers service, product quality and profitability ..(.)...” and “[o]rganisations that capture the hearts and minds of their people demonstrate a personality filled with emotions like passion, pride and motivation”. Therefore,

“[i]nternally if it is intellectual capital driven by emotional capital that creates the value, then nurturing the assets of emotions will be the role of the communicator.” (Thomson and Powell, 1999, pp.401–408)

From a management perspective, the relationship between company and workforce has undoubtedly changed concurrently, with companies entering globalised competition under rapidly changing technological conditions and it is equally evident that the performance and loyalty of the workforce can no longer be taken for granted but has taken the form of potential action in line with laziness, whether or not these actions are manifestly visible or latently anticipated. There seems to be a simultaneous existence of new external conditions for the companies and new challenges in the internal relations, converging in a hazy indiscernability that calls for new management technologies (e.g., coaching, supervision and contracts) and new objects (e.g., the reflective and

creative self with emotional intelligence) in a new language (e.g., the language of involvement, trust and love).

We share many of the prevalent insights that these writers draw on. Contexts have gone global; uncertainty is a managerial pre-condition and flexibility a must; and we do, in fact, subscribe to the general idea that a happy and active workforce benefits profits and creativity in a company. However, alongside these shared convictions, we also harbour a certain amount of distrust of the smoothness of this reasoning. Are we really facing a situation free from contradictions? The question, of course, does not aim at the political level, as the situation obviously gives rise to different strategies and policies (e.g., lean management, innovation management or even strategic laziness). What bothers us is the lack of doubt on the level of diagnosis: under this or that condition innovation, creativity and finally emotional engagement is the automatic answer. But what happens if we question the automaton.

If one seeks to inquire into what happens when the alleged changes encounter organising and individuals and if one wants to inquire into what happens when feelings, sensitivity and emotional intelligence become the answer to organisational problems, one has, instead, to establish an observational basis incorporating the possibility that the constitutive conditions for being organisation, individual and relationship have changed. It might then turn out that passion is not just another answer to well-known questions but poses new problems and questions to the very notions of organisation and individual.

1.1 Observation of emotions

The question is not which elements make up emotional intelligence or how companies need more or fewer feelings. Instead, we have to consider thoroughly how it affects our perspective on organising and action in organisations when we include feelings in the very observation. By 'perspective on organising' we mean the way in which organising can be conceptualised and reflected upon, that is, which social phenomena are defined and which expectations we hold of these, when observing them precisely from an emotion-laden organisational perspective.

As the concept of organisation, at least since Weber, has related to emotions in an idiosyncratic way, the mere inclusion of emotions as a positive feature in the organisational observation will cause a change in how organisation is conceptualised as such. This is not a minor adjustment in the way we see organisations but rather a fundamental change in the social phenomena, which we refer to as organisation. In the form of a thesis, our assertion is that *the introduction of emotions in organisational (self)-observation implies a change in the conditions for – and process of inclusion and exclusion, which constitute the core feature of any relation between organisation and individual. And the conditions for and processes of inclusion and exclusion tend to be privatised and internalised, when passion becomes the name of the game.*

Observations operate through distinction and indication of one side in the distinction and both object and observer are created through the very choice of distinction and indication. Hence, what we are looking for when observing emotions in organisations is which distinctions operate and become linked together through indications, creating the communicative space we label organisation. This space does not indicate an inherent discursive determinism (see also Bolton, 2005, pp.72–74; Gergen, 1994, pp.222–226). Rather, what is done in the (self) observation is a scanning of the historically developed communicative expectations and clusters of expectations, as these emerge in

the semantics forming a space of potential actions (inclusion) (Andersen, 2003; Luhmann, 1995; Baecker, 2004; Stenner, 2004).

On the level of organisation theory, what we do is to observe how organisations observe themselves and thus we become second-order observers. This kind of second-order observation escapes an ontology of emotions and even if the first-order observation (the organisational practice and self-observation) were to operate with a notion of the reality of emotions (which all of us probably do), this is merely seen as yet another element to be incorporated in the second-order observation. Instead, what we do is to observe which distinctions are actually applied and how indications are connected and it is from there we hope to gain insight as to the organisational performativity of the passion and emotion hype.

2 Organisations as communicative decision machines

Before we take a closer look at the way that emotions affect organisational communication, we are going to give a brief account of the theoretical starting point on which our reading of Weber as well as of the later development is based. The underlying theoretical framework for the concepts of organisation, emotion and inclusion is Luhmann's (1995) systems theory, where concepts are always constructed in relation to communication as the basic social element. From this perspective, the concept of *organisation* is about particular conditions for communication, *emotions* are about the relationship between communication and consciousness and *inclusion* concerns the access to communicative participation.

'*Organisation*' does not signify a production space or a container of people, but instead a particular perspective on sociality. When we say 'organisation', we create a particular object and a range of expectations in the communication to be endorsed or rejected through subsequent communication. These expectations and their object carry a multitudinous potential, for example in the form of general insight into organisational theory or personal experiences from previous communication or maybe even concrete knowledge about the specific organisation in question. The horizon of expectations is simultaneously open and limited, what Foucault (2002, p.341) called a 'field of potentiality'. One might say that the communicative utterance is an offer to be taken or rejected and it is exactly where the concept of organisation comes in.

What is unique about the concept of organisation is its focus on decisions (Luhmann, 2000). Thus, when we observe through the concept of organising, we do not observe any formation of expectations in the social space, but only the expectations, which have become condensed into decisions, or, in other words, when speaking of organising, we always inquire about that which is binding in the social context (who can decide what, on who's behalf?). However, this in fact only displaces our point of observation, because the next question will inevitably be how (concrete) decisions obtain their 'binding power' from decision to decision.

A decision does not, as it is, become binding by the mere label of decision and, accordingly, organisational theory has addressed the problem of how to secure the future through binding. Whether we speak about Weber's bureaucracy, Mayo's group motivation or Cyert and March and the anarchistic trends, they are concerned with specifying conditions for decisions.

Organisations are decision machines that establish the performativity of their decisions through membership as a decision premise sine qua non. In this way, organisations are autological and autopoietical (Luhmann, 2000). Once the premise 'membership' has been established as decision, this decision is only valid to the extent that decisions are actually subsequently made on the basis of the accepted membership and this accepted and often meticulously specified membership is the fundamental frame of reference for organisational theory whether we refer to structure, process, steering, strategy or motivation.

Organisational theory and practice have also developed a comprehensive language for *non*-decided premises for membership in such a way that these can be included under the domain of the decision. Concepts like 'informal groupings', 'cultures', 'negotiations', 'leadership' and 'solidarity' are concerned with the binding yet informal premises for decisions and they typically specify variations in the performance of membership.

3 Emotions and inclusion as premises for binding communication

It is in this vein that emotions are introduced, in order to include the systems of consciousness among the controllable premises for binding communication. Thus, '*emotions*' come to function as a semantic in the social systems of communication and this applies both to the organisational systems and to the many functional systems of communication (law, economy, love, etc.), which provide the signs and language for communicative interaction about our inner life and feelings (Baecker, 2004; Fuchs, 2004). Over time, the social systems of communication have included feelings and emotions in the system's repertoire of semantics and expectations as when the law develops particular categories and sanctions in relation to emotional action or the economy develops and puts a price on amenity value, not to mention the development of therapy language within the pedagogic system (Andersen and Born, 2007a, forthcoming).

Here, the semantic of emotions appears as medium for ascription of action capacity and action responsibility in line with all other ascriptions to the individual systems (Luhmann, 1995; Baecker, 2004). As media, they are able to propagate emotions and they facilitate communication about emotions, but they do not themselves have any. We might even assert that they have come into being as a result of the progressing modernisation and rationalisation of society, that is, with reference to emotions as a phenomenon to be downplayed and perhaps even avoided (Simon, 2004).

As sign and semantic, however, 'emotions' refer to realities to which communication does not have access, since emotions operate in the system of consciousness, which is defined as an autopoietical system in its own right (Luhmann, 1995, pp.255–277). Here emotions are seen as elements in the autopoiesis of the system of consciousness, where they are referred to as 'the immune system' (Luhmann, 1995, p.274) and, thus, emotions remain immanent to the system of consciousness (Stenner, 2004). They exist, but at the same time remain inaccessible from the perspective of communication and observation and this significantly affects the notion of membership: *What is actually the point of reference, when the binding decision requires a passionate employee, i.e., refers to emotions?*

In communication, emotions represent a 'something' and this something always refers to someone, as there is no passion without a person of passion. In this way, emotions become a potent social machine for the ascription of responsibility and capacity

for action, because it concerns something to which we do not have communicative (inter-subjective) access and because it, at the same time, attributes this to a subject who becomes a legitimate participant precisely through this attribution. Irrespective of how we judge the emotion in the situation, attributing anger and joy means to individualise somebody and accord them relevance.

This ascription of relevance is to be seen as an *inclusion* in the communication on the social dimension and, in this way, it resembles other inclusion machines such as power, thought and the cultural community; however, whereas the power-based, intellectual and cultural legitimisation is specific (we know the legitimising factor, the holder of the thought or the rules of the game), the emotional inclusion and exclusion is diffuse and transient. Moreover, the attribution of emotions can be directed both at the system of consciousness and at the situation and that in itself is a sensitive distinction, containing strong fundamental inclinations in the direction of moral judgement (Baecker, 2004).

With this we have indicated the concern that carries our interest. *If* we accept that there exist closed functional systems of communication, which each contains figures of ascription and semantics of emotions; *if* we accept that these systems establish expectations with respect to reality, which opens up and closes possible spaces of communication; *if* we accept that emotions are ontological functionalities in the autopoiesis of the system of consciousness and hence radically inaccessible and, finally, *if* we accept that ascription of emotions in communication represents a path to inclusion/exclusion on the social dimension, there is ample reason to pursue the question of *what happens when the organisational inclusion/exclusion happens through the semantic of emotions.*

4 The emotional point zero of organisational theory

The proffered notion of membership is in keeping with the Weberian conceptual universe, where the decision making organisation is linked to the formalised membership in a rational construction. Rationality is vital in action theory and on a lower level the distinction between problem and solution constitutes the magical formula of all observation of organisational rationality (Luhmann, 1981).

Weber used rationality to introduce yet another distinction, that is, a distinction between instrumental rationality and value rationality, where instrumental rationality worked through the distinction between problem and solution (means/end) and this is where his famous organisational ideal type emerges. On that basis, Weber (1978) then extrapolated a number of instrumentally rational consequences and their preconditions, in order to avoid other rationalities and irrationality on all levels of decision making. On the side of consequences, we find the demands for bureaucratic organisation such as formalisation, hierarchy, competent leadership and formalised career patterns, all of which condition the communicative expectations as to the conduct of the organisation members (Weber, 1978). On the side of preconditions, Weber accepted instrumental rationality as the form of the future because, although he feared its 'iron cage'; it had the status of inevitability. At the same time he employed the modern distinction between the individual as a citizen and as a private person. The citizen belongs to the public space, whereas the person inhabits the private domain. In Foucauldian terms, one might say that Weber elaborated on the fact that the modern subjectivation was a double ascription, to the public as well as to the private (Foucault, 2002).

This duality is then employed to specify the relationship between organisation and individual and the individual is linked to the organisation through the distinction between role and person: on one side rationality, organisation, binding decisions, membership, role and inclusion and on the other side the person, the private domain and what is out of the reach of the organisation. The result is an immensely precise description of the relationship between decisions and membership, where the accepted decision premises run parallel with the definition of membership.

Moreover, the distinction between membership and privacy allows for the relation between organising and subject to be established as a contract with a specific content and specific definitions of the 'outside' of the contract, i.e., the human being who is the exclusive owner of the private sphere. This private person has the prerogative to scrutinise motives and meaning of alternative rationalities, as they fall outside the organisational domain. As a figure of observation, this concept of organisation accepts conflict as the starting point and individuality as an externality, which can not be possessed by the organisation system.

This model has been criticised over time both elegantly and insightfully, as its status of ideal type has become downplayed (e.g., Crozier, 1986). However, seen as ideal type and hence as an instrument for observation, it facilitates critical reflections on the relation between membership and emotions in organisation communication. It points to the immanent idiosyncrasy between organisation and rationality on one side and emotions and privacy on the other. Secondly, it indicates which dimensions to scan in order to capture the transformation caused by the concrete changes in the organisational conceptual network, when emotions are included rather than excluded from the observation. And thirdly, the ideal type directs our perspective towards the changing function of the membership contract, which seems to transmute from the status of agreement into a communicative occasion for subjectivation.

5 The emotional membership

On this basis, our thesis is that the already suggested changes in the organisational context in the direction of complexity and dynamics have not only impacted the way in which we speak about organisational *challenges* (Andersen and Born, 2000), they have also seriously impacted the conceptualisation and management of the essential concept of organisational *membership*. In organisations, which refer to themselves as dynamic and complex, communicative preconditions are unable to remain stable from day to day and the relationship between actor and organisation has, therefore, to be confirmed in every act of communication. This confirmation has to be sensitive to the situation as well as to the topic of the communication and under the given conditions that introduces a rich soil for interpretations and uncertainty. Therefore, the confirmation and its subsequent reconfirmation are propelled away from the specifics of the situation or topic towards the overall competency of the other as to the interpretation game and ultimately it concerns the person's capacity to relate to own competencies and, in particular, the capacity for change. Townley (1998) referred to the contracts between organisation and employee as concerning 'character', indicating that it was not enough to possess the relevant cognitive and flexible potential; one also had to demonstrate a will to use it. The expected requirement is therefore a potential and demonstrated will to engage and act, in short, a

passionate character (Thomson and Powell, 1999; Andersen and Born, 2007a, forthcoming).

With Weber as our critical father and the systems theory about communication as frame of reference, we are now going to make four propositions about the relation between organisation and emotion, before returning to the relation between organisation and individual in the light of emotions. The four propositions are:

- passion becomes a management medium in the form of an expectation about the passionate employee
- an organisational semantic is developed in order to make passion observable
- technologies are developed for the preservation of employees' passion maintenance
- the employment contracts are changed so that they take on the form of self-contract (second-order passion sign).

The first proposition is that passion becomes a medium and 'love' is its sign system in management communication. We are not claiming that employees, in fact, hold feelings of love for their work place (here we lean towards Corinne Maier and Weber). Our claim is merely concerning the establishment of organised games in the code of the love system. With the codification of passion, the employee has to work continuously to be loved by the organisation by anticipating its needs. Today, the employee is expected to identify the organisational interests and goals with the employee's own interests and goals. And in cases where the organisation does not have an explicit worldview, it is expected that the employees *anticipate* one by actively imagining the organisational view of different issues. In this way, the organisation becomes the significant other of the employee.

The responsible employee does not wait for management to assign the employee tasks and responsibilities but anticipates the organisational needs by seeing the world through the eyes of the organisation and then identifying what needs to be done and does it. It becomes meaningful and expectable to justify prioritisations and actions with "for the sake of the organisation". And by relying on anticipation, the medium of love is able to intensify the organisational communication through extensive renunciation of communication. The ideal is that no explicit 'requests' or 'orders' be necessary from the organisation (the loved one) in order for the employee (the loving) to adjust himself according to the needs of the organisation. Management, therefore, becomes a question of giving the employee the chance to give to the organisation. No more specified expectations through rules and particular responsibilities (Andersen and Born, 2007a, forthcoming).

Second proposition: As with other emotions, however, passion has the disadvantage of being invisible, regardless of how much it constitutes the person (Luhmann, 1995; Baecker, 2004). An organisation seeking to base its management on the passion of its employees bases itself on something, therefore, which is not immediately observable. This is what creates the insatiable need for signs of passion and these signs are taken from the domain and codes of care and love. Like any lover, the organisation has to be continually confirmed in the eyes of the other and the employee has to continually make himself worthy of this love. And this is not a question of essences or more or less love but of an insatiable need for signs and sign exchange, which have assumed an independent conceptual structure.

Accordingly, we see new concepts enabling reference to signs of passion or lack of these signs. A majority of these concepts are organised as pairs of concept and counter-concept, like *seeking* – or *accepting* responsibility, where responsibility-seeking is a sign of passion, whereas mere accept indicates lack of passion; or *adaptability/adaptation*, where the former indicates the willingness to develop in a symbiotic relationship with the organisation, whereas adaptation indicates that the organisation is not an internalised partner. And one of the almost epidemic ones is orientation towards *totality* or *task*, where focus on the specific task is instrumentality, while orientation towards totality is a sign of love and even of a romantic relationship, e.g., I sacrifice myself for you in all dimensions without expectations of any return (Luhmann, 1998).

Involvement and initiative represent an orthogonal conceptual pair, as they convey the very relationship between the desired but invisible and the visible but transient. Involvement is the equivalent of passion and the precondition for the employee to take responsibility, but, like passion, involvement is an invisible internal issue that resides with the individual employee. Initiative functions, therefore, as the external observable side of involvement. Initiative represents the organisation's articulated form of anticipation. An employee who is observed and described as enterprising is viewed as someone who loves the organisation. Supporting an employee's initiative means to reciprocate this love. Rejecting an initiative in turn means to reject the other's invitation to share a loving space. At the same time, this creates a range of semantics for loving and un-loving management, respectively, where controlling, ordering, regulating and exercising power define un-loving (counter-concepts), as opposed to concepts such as involvement, inclusion, delegation of competency and influence, which clearly express loving management, that is, management that gives the employee the possibility of giving.

Our third proposition is that the concepts eventually are condensed into new technologies for the employee's maintenance of passion. On the cognitive dimension, a number of technologies emerge, which can scan and measure the scope of passion and emotional involvement in the organisation in the form of emotional capital and satisfaction, which is seen as an important resource whether the focus is on solidarity, care capacity or the overall capital of positive and perhaps politically correct values. Some of these accumulate the conditions of individual employees and are seen to express the overall emotional account of the organisation.

Others pertain only to the individual employee. These technologies are personal tests, which are, on one hand, related to the tests developed by the mental health movement in the 1950s, but now with a completely different programmatic content. The tests of the 1950s measured abilities and were meant to sustain the motto about the right man for the right job. This is different today, because those who are bearers of the sign of emotional capital are expected to be adaptable with the ability to continually form the relationship between man and job. Thus, today's tests are a form of second-order test, testing enthusiasm more than potential.

In addition, however, there is an even greater growth in process technologies for the measurement and support of the individual employee's desire for, capacity for and direction of development (Andersen, 2007, forthcoming). Thus, recurrent individual reviews and prospective development talks have almost become a human right, which allows the individual to express his or her wishes and assessments and adjusting expectations about possible futures (and pasts (Sennett, 1998)), not only in an instrumental way but also emotionally. And it is hardly a coincidence that developers of

technologies discuss the relation between assessment and supervision, where employee performance and development reviews should not be mixed with wage negotiations, since that can blur the distinction between the value-rational and instrumental actor on both sides of the conversation. It is difficult to be value-rational supporter and instrumental assessor at the same time, which opens up for second-order instrumentality in the form of strategy, hypocrisy, etc., which by the way calls for further signs.

The technologies are tremendously imaginative and span reviews based on straightforward 'tax return' forms, as well as sophisticated psychological processes of interaction in which the employee is typically expected to include private network and colleagues in the self-assessment in preparation for the review. Or the review can be based around a rather complex distribution of roles and perspectives on the situation. Typically, the employee is forced to open with statements about own abilities while 'the boss' only has to offer concrete reactions, which the employee then has to consider.

"Putting the cards on the table" might function as an example of such a technology (Andersen, 2007, forthcoming). This is a 'self-technology', designed to make the employee engage in own self-development. Here, on a set of cards, the employee indicates own abilities through prioritisation. The manager also prioritises abilities and the conversation is structured with reference to the cards. First, the employee places the cards on the table and the manager inquires about their content. Then the manager places the employee's prioritised cards and explains the manager's own prioritisation. This leads to a discussion of different ways of perceiving the employee. Finally, the employee selects two competence cards as an indication of areas that need further work. The conversation then changes towards the ways in which the employee is going to operationalise the work on him-/herself. The method is designed in such a way that the employee is the one to do the self-processing, while the manager merely has to establish the procedures for the conversation. In this way, "putting the cards on the table" represents an obvious example of a self-technology (Andersen, 2007, forthcoming). And then we have not mentioned the large number of appraisal, supervision and coaching technologies, which are all characterised by the employee doubling as oneself-as-resource and as oneself-as-responsible-decision-maker.

Our fourth proposition in this specification of communicative elements concerns contracts and what happens when contract and membership reappear as continuation of technologies such as competence reviews and development of employees. Let us begin by giving an example from the competence agreements at a nursing home. In these agreements, the employee has to make promises with regard to own future professional, social and personal development. Simultaneously, the employee has to explicitly express the reflections concerning personal wishes for development, with reference to their functionality within the context of the nursing home and with regard to its values. At the end, the employee's signature on the agreement pertains to both. The reflections represent a promise about the kind of internal dialogue one is willing and able to continue about oneself in relation to the workplace. Only the employee signs the agreement, not the manager.

But what is a signature in such a case? It is nothing short of a contractualisation of the employee's self-relation. The employee enters into a contract with him- or herself, with the manager in the sanctioning role. It is still a sort of contract between manager and employee, that is, a contract about the employee's contract with herself, about his personal relationship with himself and the organisation and this has to remain accessible

and observable to the manager. It is thus a second-order contract, where the employee promises to be open for future promises (Andersen and Born, 2007b, forthcoming).

The construction has profound constitutive effects on the very contract. The Weberian contracts presuppose mutual freedom, negotiation rights, knowledge about contract as form and its consequences in case of a breach of contract. These were conditions to be met before we could even speak of a contractor and a binding contract and they would typically be met by the general social and legal macro-contract. With the second-order employee contract totally new conditions are created. There is no free and independent actor until one has made a commitment towards creating oneself as an engaged, passionate and involved employee who is in emotional harmony with the organisation. And this has to be internalised to such a degree that the organisation is considered in the employee's own self-development to be the significant other. Seen as a contractual obligation, the actor is obliged to be created as a complete, free and independent human in a specific way. Freedom, as it is, represents the ability to independently and spontaneously commit and engage oneself and that is what the personal contract is designed to form. It is a question of the obligation to obligate oneself, to give oneself to oneself as free and sensitive.

Therefore, the contract represents not only a social relation between partners of communication but also a self-preoccupation arrangement in the Foucauldian sense (Foucault, 1988), mediating between the identity in the organisation system and the self in the system of consciousness. The contract becomes a mutually organised one-sidedness, which is folded and doubled as a contract between both manager and employee and between the employee's 'I' and 'me', so that a breach of the self-contract becomes a breach in the contract relation to the organisation. And it is important to call to mind that it is not merely a question of self-commitment to action capacity, which can be tested, but about commitment to one's own inaccessible inner emotions.

The contract creates membership and, from a perspective of inclusion and exclusion, membership represents a particular premise for decisions. Membership contracts attribute relevance to individuals, access to communication and binding power to decisions. Membership equals an ascribed capacity for action and responsibility, by which the member becomes the object of social expectations whether they pertain to general expectations to the role (generalised motives) or specific expectations to the concrete individual. Seen in that light, the introduction of personality- and emotionally oriented contracts represents a strategy, the main purpose of which is to define the individual as a communicative member of the organisation in order to increase individual responsibility and efficiency of decisions as binding on the future. Or as they say in modern management language: making people feel a sense of ownership for existing and future decisions.

5.1 Exclude yourself

However, if we continue to play with this idea, we see the emergence of a very peculiar form of membership, in which the responsibility for the content of the membership is placed on the employee. It becomes a constituent part of the role (the generalised motive) to be responsibility-seeking and to be prepared to decide oneself whether one is inside or outside or relevant or irrelevant. Organisationally, the people who are defined as members are the ones who are capable of enrolling themselves through a responsibility-seeking attitude and this takes the form of decision and hence rational

decision premise. That creates an organisational communication, which is able to oscillate between observation of the employee as contributor (responsibility-seeking and hence a member of the decision communication) or the employee as resource (responsibility-accepting and hence as an administrative category on which the organisation can perform HRM). And with contracts aiming at the invisible and pervasive emotions, there is no end to the need for contracts, technologies and administrative categories to be used for the assessment of their performance.

6 Conclusion

Let us conclude by summing up the line of thought from our initial theoretical choices to their observational implications. In her book, *Emotion Management in the Workplace*, Bolton asserted, with reference to Weber, that

“however attractive the portrayal of emotional organisations may be, great care needs to be taken when speaking of ‘stripping’ [...] rationality. Organisations are not only sites of ‘love’, hatred and passion, but also sites of purposeful activity oriented to achieving specific goals.”

She went on to quote Clegg, who said that rationality “is the core of organisation’s being: it is the logic of organisation” (Bolton, 2005, p.60). We clearly agree with these statements, although our project is entirely different from Bolton’s. Where she focuses the significance of emotions on interaction from a Goffmanian perspective and hence ultimately speaks of typologies of emotions and organisational behaviour, we contend that the very concept of organisation is transformed when coupled with emotions. This is partly due to our system’s theoretical point of departure by which we see organisations as decision machines, in which each decision is linked to previous decisions through premises and these premises and decisions are validated through membership. And it is precisely the relationship between decision and membership that changes scope and form through the inclusion of emotions.

When communicative expectations are attached to emotional membership, they are linked to circumstances outside the intersubjective ‘field of possibility’ and therefore expectations are forced towards sign sensitivity and conversations *about* emotions. But communication about emotions does not merely become a topic for conversation in the organisation that the already relevant subject can introduce from outside. Rather, they become the very medium as to definition of the organisational relevance of the speaker, i.e., they become mechanisms for integration.

As mechanism for integration, the semantic of emotions possesses peculiar characteristics. First of all, it does not refer to a specified sociality in the same way that power and thought do, but instead it actualises a division between something visible and invisible escaping rational reciprocity simultaneously enticing micro-fascism, that is, self-afflicted internal regulation. There can not be more or less appropriate engagement and commitment; it is either-or. Furthermore, the emotional orientation undermines the no-touch zone and the boundary between organisational and private turns indefensible.

The mechanisms reside on the technological and organisational level, which permeates communication and discourse in the form of dispositives, i.e., the level where the possibilities for action are created and the very distribution of action capacity persists. As long as the membership falls along the lines of rational organising, there is an internal

consistency between the privatised 'outside' and the public 'inside', which supports the form of contracts. And it was precisely the movement away from lifelong vocational and total devotion towards the organisation (public, private or familial), towards the contract with its rational actor that signified the transition to modern organising. With the movement from the modern contract to the new forms, where there is no longer a semantically stabilised subject outside, the contract is transformed from reciprocity to one-sidedness.

The contract is undermined as a technology organising the relation between the autonomous individual and the unity of the organisation (Andersen, 2004). But it does not stop there, as it also changes from being a relation of exchange into a therapeutic and emotional relation, which is ultimately possessive, all pervasive, afraid of conflict, self-righteous and a never-ending production of identity. Where Weber feared that instrumentality would end up undermining value rationality and imprisoning us in an iron cage, we might instead have witnessed an erosion of the instrumental rationality, which renders the iron cage superfluous at the very time that value rationality seems to long for the internalisation of the iron cage.

In this light, the introduction of emotions as a core feature of the concept of organisation contains a transgression of the distinction between instrumental and value rationality, which has been so important for rational organisation theory (and even for its critics) and theory development is obviously necessary if we are not to end alongside Corinne Maier. No matter how alluring her standpoint sounds from at first glance, it also resounds with the echo of a long gone industrial period and is therefore out of step with the demands of the late modern individual (that is the demand to be erected and confirmed as individual from moment to moment). On the other side remains the risk of joining the shrill barking for more engagement, emotions, creativity and individuality, where the demands belong to no one and oblige everyone in a ceaseless accelerando, the outcome of which is more and more self-technologies, introducing Kafka membership and stress as dominant life form.

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