Social Mobility in Hong Kong

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in Sociology

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Nuffield College
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THESIS

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D.Phil. Thesis

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Abstract

This thesis examines the micro-process of social mobility in modern Hong Kong. It also studies Hong Kong's mobility regime in a conventional macro-comparative fashion. By applying the core model of social fluidity developed in the CASMIN (Comparative Analysis of Social Mobility in Industrial Nations) project to the mobility data collected in the 1989 Hong Kong Social Mobility Survey, I point to several distinctive features of Hong Kong's mobility regime. This exercise also allows me to engage in the ongoing debate concerning the degree of commonality and variation in relative mobility rates across industrial nations. Having made this macro-comparison, I turn to explore the micro-mobility process. Drawing on worklife data collected in the 1991-92 follow-up study, I consider the following issues: (a) typical mobility paths in Hong Kong, (b) how social networks facilitate the job search process, and (c) how career beginning affects subsequent mobility outcome. In this study, I also test and apply a new technique, Optimal Matching Analysis, which compares and classifies complete career sequences. Thus, apart from offering substantive findings on social mobility in Hong Kong, this thesis also seeks to make a technical contribution to the analysis of life course data.

To my parents

Chun Mou Chan and Wai Fong Poon

much love and admiration

Acknowledgments

I first became involved in mobility studies as a research assistant of the 1989 Hong Kong Social Mobility Survey. The change of my "job" from routine supervision of fieldwork to that of data analyses and thesis writing is, I guess, a form of worklife mobility. One of the things that I try to argue in this thesis is that social networks and social support is crucial for mobility. This I can happily confirm with my own experience. Many people gave me a lot of support, advice and assistance. To them, I would like to say a big and warm THANK YOU!

This study got off the ground with the support of the investigators of the 1989 survey: Thomas Wong, Tai Lok Lui and Robert Chung. They kindly allow me to use some of the 1989 data in this study. Specifically, a father-son mobility table forms the basis of the analyses of Chapter 3, and in Figure 4.1, I use further data on first job.

The rest of this thesis is based on interviews I did in 1991-92. The fieldwork of the follow-up study was a great challenge, but it proved to be very rewarding. I am truly grateful to my 80 respondents who generously shared part of their life stories with me.

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Contents

		Page
List of Tables		
List of Figures		
Chapter 1	The Micro-Process of Social Mobility	1
Chapter 2	The Hong Kong Context	33
Chapter 3	A Comparative Analysis of Social Mobility in Hong Kong	63
Chapter 4	Typical Mobility Paths	104
Chapter 5	Social Networks and the Mobility Process	142
Chapter 6	Career Beginning and the Mobility Outcome	184
Chapter 7	Summary and Discussion	222
Appendix A	The 1989 Survey and the Follow-Up Study	234
Appendix B	Design matrices for the core model of social fluidity and for the Hong Kong variant	237
Appendix C	Interview Schedule, Follow-Up Study	239
Appendix D	Letters Sent to Respondents, Follow-Up Study	265
Bibliography		268

Tables and Figures

Table

1.1 The CASMIN class schema

2.1 Numbers of immigrants from China (legal and illegal)

2.2 Distribution of Hong Kong's immigrant population by former occupation in mainland China and by occupation in Hong Kong as of June 1954

2.3 Distribution of Hong Kong's working population by industry

2.4 Distribution of entrepreneurs by occupational origin

2.5 Distribution of entrepreneurs by first job

2.6 Class schemata (Tsang 1992)

2.7 Loglinear modelling of a Hong Kong mobility table, based on class schema of Oxford Mobility Study

2.8 Design matrices of models fitted in Table 2.7

2.9 Parameter estimates of loglinear models of Table 2.7

3.1 Fitting Hong Kong mobility data with CASMIN core model and modified models

3.2 Parameters in log-additive form for effects in the CASMIN core model, and in variant models for Hong Kong and other countries

3.3 Postulated effects of hierarchy, inheritance, sector, and affinity in the cells of the 7 x 7 inter-generational class mobility table

3.4 Effects parameters under the Hong Kong variant model

3.5 "True" and counterfactual outflow mobility rates of urban Japan

3.6 "True" and counterfactual outflow mobility rates of urban Sweden

3.7 Distribution of respondents by class of origin and class of destination for Hong Kong, Japan and range for European countries

3.8 Decomposition of total mobility rates (TMR) into total non-vertical (TNV) and total vertical (TV) mobility, and of total vertical mobility into total upward into total upward (TU) and total downward (TD) mobility for Hong Kong, Japan and range for European countries

4.1 Optimal matching analysis -- Substitution matrix 1

4.2 Typical paths into the service class, substitution matrix 1

4.3 Optimal matching analysis -- Substitution matrix 2

4.4 Optimal matching analysis -- Substitution matrix 3

4.5 Typical paths into the service class, substitution matrix 2

4.6 Typical paths into the service class, substitution matrix 3

4.7 Typical paths into the service class, substitution matrix 3, standardised sequences

4.8 Respondents on different mobility paths by various socio-demographic variables

5.1 Source of job news by class of job entered into

5.2 Source of job news by labour market experience

5.3 Type of relationship with job contact by class of job entered into

5.4 Class position of job contact by class of job entered into

5.5 Frequency of contact with, and subjective assessment of closeness to, job contact by class of job entered into

5.6 Whether contact knew respondent's family and close friends by class of job entered into

5.7 Duration of relationship with job contact by class of job entered into

6.1 Type of relationship with job contact by labour market experience

6.2 Qualification of respondents when first left school by mobility outcome

6.3 Parental attitude towards respondent's education by mobility outcome

6.4 Whether respondents had discussed career plan with, and/or received career advice from, parents by mobility outcome

6.5 Number of employer by mobility outcome

6.6 Number of major career change by mobility outcome

Figure

3.1 European ranges of inflow rates and position of Japan and Hong Kong

3.2 European ranges of outflow rates and position of Japan and Hong Kong

4.1 Outflow to entry class and destination class by origin class, all respondents of main survey

6.1 Quartiles of the distributions of age of leaving school for the first time, first job, and first marriage for mobile and immobile respondents, and of age of entering the service class for mobile respondents

Chapter 1

The Micro-Process of Social Mobility

This thesis examines the micro-process of social mobility. The context of my investigation is modern Hong Kong. Thus I have two objectives. As a contribution to mobility studies in general, I seek to explore how class mobility actually takes place; how macro-sociological findings often reported in comparative mobility studies are linked to the social action of individuals. My second objective pertains to a more local and substantive concern: in what ways is Hong Kong more (or less) open than other societies, and how is class inequality perpetuated in this particular industrial society?

Perhaps there is little need to make a case for my second objective (the fact that suitable data are available provides some motivation to undertake this study; also, it is natural to be curious about the society in which one was born and grew up). My first objective, however, may need some explanation. This introductory chapter seeks to explain why it is of theoretical and substantive importance that we know more about the micro-mobility process. To this end, I will briefly review the development of comparative mobility studies as well as past efforts to specify the mobility process. My argument is that we do not yet have a satisfactory theory of the mobility process. I will make some suggestions of how we can begin to develop such a theory. In particular, research into career dynamics and social network analysis will be discussed.

Stating the problem

It is important for us to know more about the micro-mobility process because

conventional comparative mobility studies are inadequate on two counts: (a) there is a question which has not been satisfactorily answered -- why is it that the relative mobility rates of all industrial countries are largely the same? and (b) there is also a question which has not been asked -- how do people actually become mobile? These two questions are related. I would argue that a study of the micro-mobility process should throw light on how unequal mobility chances are generated (the second question), and by implication, its invariance across countries (the first question). Let me elaborate these two points.

The unanswered question

Comparative mobility studies have always been concerned with the extent and the sources of variations in mobility rates. After more than thirty years of empirical investigation, it is now commonly accepted that the relative mobility rates of all industrial nations are largely similar.[1] This is a major empirical finding, but we do not know very well why this should be the case. To substantiate this point, I will briefly review the development of comparative mobility studies.

This field of study developed in two phases. The first phase was based on national mobility surveys conducted in the 1950s, and can be represented by the work of Lipset and Zetterberg. After studying the published results of nine national mobility surveys, they come to the conclusion that, "the overall pattern of social mobility appears to be much the same in the industrial societies of various Western countries" (1959:13, original emphasis).

For our present purpose, several points are notable. First, Lipset and Zetterberg

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[1]Relative mobility rates are defined in terms of odds ratios. See Hout (1983) for an introduction to basic concepts in mobility research.

pitch their analysis at, what we now call, the level of absolute mobility rates. They argue that because all industrial societies experience similar changes in their economic and occupational structures, they should have similar absolute mobility rates. Second, the class/occupational schemes of the nine surveys are different, so they have to collapse the schemes to a threefold distinction of non-manual, manual, and farm. This enables them to achieve some nominal comparability across the surveys, though the issue of real non-comparability still exists (Goldthorpe 1985). This problem of data quality seriously weakens their argument.

In any case, and this is the third point, Lipset and Zetterberg have overstated the commonality in absolute rates that can be made of their data, particularly when mobility flows from the farming classes are taken into account (Jones 1969). Indeed, when data of a higher standard of comparability became available, significant variation in absolute rates became even more evident (Grusky and Hauser 1984; Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992a).[2] Mobility researchers often interpret such variation as largely a result of the specificities in the economic and political history of individual nations. The size and the rate of contraction of the farming classes is particularly important in this regard.

Although the hypothesis of Lipset and Zetterberg has been discredited, the central concern of comparative mobility studies remains unchanged. In particular, Featherman, Jones and Hauser (1975) argue that the observed variance in absolute mobility rates is due to factors exogenous to the processes that transmit social advantages across generations, and it is these processes which are common to all

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[2]Grusky and Hauser report that, "not only is there highly significant variation in observed mobility rates among industrialized nations, but there is no less variation among these nations than among nations that vary widely in the level of industrialization" (1984:22).

industrial countries. Hence, once the effect of the exogenous factors are controlled, cross-national similarity in mobility rates, at the relative level, will become apparent. As they put it (1975:340):

> This new hypothesis differs [from that of Lipset and Zetterberg] in that it is specified in terms of circulation mobility, and states the genotypical pattern of mobility (circulation mobility) in industrial societies with a market economy and a nuclear family system is basically the same. The phenotypical pattern of mobility (observed mobility) differs according to the rate of change in the occupational structure, exogenously determined ... by (for example) technological change, the supply and demand of specific kind of labor ..., and changing social values affecting ... the demand for higher education, the rate of economic change, family size, and the spacing of children.

This argument, often labelled as the FJH hypothesis, is of great theoretical significance because it contrasts sharply with several widely accepted views of how mobility rates should vary with macro-sociological variables.[3] For example, Treiman, characteristic of liberal theorists of industrialism, argues that, "the more industrialized a society, the higher the rate of 'exchange' mobility" (1970:221). In other words, relative mobility rates or social fluidity of industrial societies will, in his view, increase concomitantly with economic development. The FJH hypothesis, however, "allows an initial developmental effect on mobility, but it implies there is no further effect once a certain level of industrialization is reached" (Grusky and Hauser 1984:20). Likewise, the FJH hypothesis also contradicts arguments which say that state socialist countries are more open than capitalist countries (Parkin 1972), or that social fluidity varies according to the cultural make-up of a society.

Given its importance, the FJH hypothesis has, not surprisingly, been subjected to many empirical tests. Some researchers, such as Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a),

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[3]Note that although Featherman, Jones and Hauser use the dated terminology of "circulation" and "structural" mobility in this paper, it is clear from the context of their application that they are referring to what we now call relative and absolute mobility rates.

have offered empirical support to a weak version of the hypothesis, while others have argued against it (Ganzeboom, Luijkx and Treiman 1989, Grusky and Hauser 1984, Wong 1990).

Let us consider this ongoing debate in more detail. On the supporting side, Erikson and Goldthorpe, working under the CASMIN (Comparative Analysis of Social Mobility in Industrial Nations) project, have studied the mobility regimes of 15 nations. They acknowledge that the relative mobility rates of these nations are not completely identical. Hence the FJH hypothesis cannot be accepted if it is held in the strictest sense. But they point out that the original verbal formulation of the hypothesis requires only a basic similarity rather than a complete identity of relative rates. In other words, there is a discrepancy between the verbal formulation of the hypothesis and the common social fluidity (CSF) model with which it is formally tested.[4] Furthermore, since the CSF model in fact accounts for almost 95% of the total association in the three-way, origin by destination by nation, table, the commonality in social fluidity across nations is very impressive indeed.

To provide a slightly relaxed framework to test the FJH hypothesis, Erikson and Goldthorpe have developed a core model to represent what they think are the key features of the cross-nationally common fluidity pattern. When this core model is fitted to individual mobility tables, they find that, for most cases, there are statistically significant deviations between the observed pattern and the model.

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[4]The CSF model can be represented by the following equation:

$$\log F_{ijk} = n + O_i + D_j + N_k + OD_{ij} + ON_{ik} + DN_{jk}$$

where F_{ijk} is the fitted value of cell ijk, n is a scale factor, O_i, D_j and N_k are the main effects of the distribution of individuals over origins, destinations and nations respectively, and the remaining terms refer to the three possible two-way associations in the table. The distinguishing feature of this model is the absence of the three-way ODN term. In other words, it suggests that the association between origin and destination is identical across nations.

However, such deviations are not systematic in nature in the sense that they cannot be interpreted in terms of macro-sociological variables such as level of economic development or political complexion of government. Instead, they have to be explained by specific features of individual societies.[5] Erikson and Goldthorpe argue, quite rightly, that deviations from the core model of a non-systematic type do not knock down the FJH hypothesis if it is taken "in a weaker, yet still meaningful and at the same time empirically more plausible sense: that is, as claiming that across industrial societies there prevails a common or core pattern of relative rates ... so that even where cross-national differences do appear, they are still better understood as variations on a common theme than as constituting a set of a distinctive types of fluidity" (Ishida, Goldthorpe and Erikson 1991:956).

Other researchers, however, have reported negative findings. For example, Grusky and Hauser contend that there is "evidence of systematic, cross-national variation in mobility parameters" (1984:31). To repeat, for Erikson and Goldthorpe, it is not variations in social fluidity per se, but those which are systematic and interpretable in terms of macro-sociological variables, that are most damaging to the FJH hypothesis. Wong (1990) and Ganzeboom, Luijkx and Treiman (1989) have also reported negative findings.[6]

Obviously, there is a need to assess and compare these conflicting results. However,

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[5]One partial exception here is that strong and persistent political intervention on the part of the state seems to be able to reduce inequality of mobility chances. However, since the objective and the outcome of political intervention are quite variable, differences in fluidity patterns between socialist countries are no less important than those between socialist and capitalist countries. In this sense, there is no evidence for a socialist type of fluidity pattern.

[6]See also Jones (1992), Hout and Hauser (1992), Sorensen (1992) and Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992b) for further exchange between the two sides of the debate.

a fair and fully-fledged evaluation should, at least, start with a re-analysis of the data sets used by the competing researchers. This is beyond the scope of this thesis, but as a preliminary assessment, one should note the following:

(a) These conflicting claims are based on analyses of different data sets. Grusky and Hauser have compared mobility data from 16 countries; Wong has studied 6 mobility tables; Ganzeboom, Luijkx and Treiman have analyzed 149 mobility tables from 35 countries. Erikson and Goldthorpe, by comparison, have analyzed 15 mobility tables -- all of them are derived from the recoding of original data at the unit record level. Surely, different degrees of comprehensiveness, data quality, comparability, etc. can be claimed by the various researchers (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992b).

(b) The analyses are based on class/occupational schemes of different details. Erikson and Goldthorpe use a 7-category schema (see Table 1.1); Ganzeboom, Luijkx and Treiman have collapsed the CASMIN schema to a 6-category version; Wong uses a 7-category schema, which is very different from the CASMIN one -- not the least in that it does not allow for any distinction between salaried as opposed to self-employment; Grusky and Hauser use the minimal threefold distinction of non-manual/manual/farm.

(c) Different assumptions about the class structure are made -- principally, in seeing social class as either a categorical or an ordinal-level variable. Only Erikson and Goldthorpe insist that there is no single hierarchy that ranks all social classes in a natural and unequivocal manner. They argue that it is neither easy, nor of great theoretical interest, to decide if movement between, say, an unskilled manual position and farm work constitutes upward or downward mobility. The class of the self-employed also complicates the problem of ranking. It includes occupations so diverse

in income and prestige that it makes little sense to suggest that it fits unequivocally in a particular slot on a linear scale. Furthermore, Erikson and Goldthorpe argue that since their principal concern lies in the issues of class interests and class formation, determining the directions of social mobility is only marginal to their endeavour. Other researchers do not share these views. Wong, for example, maintains that, "[since] there is strong evidence that occupations are ranked in terms of socioeconomic status or occupational prestige, occupation should be treated as an ordinal measure" (1990:561). It is perhaps fair to say that, for many researchers, deciding which position to take is as much a question of the availability of technical tools as that of theoretical interests.[7]

(d) It follows from (c) that Erikson and Goldthorpe use only loglinear models in their work, which do not require any presupposition of order among the class categories. In contrast, Grusky and Hauser, Wong, and Ganzeboom, Luijkx and Treiman have all employed logmultiplicative models: a set of technical tools that carry the opposite assumption.[8] It is important to note that these different tools produce divergent findings. As Wong puts it, "[variance] in social mobility may be detected if we adopt an appropriate comparative strategy and use sensitive statistical methods" (1990:560). The criteria for the appropriateness of strategy and the sensitivity of tools should be discussed explicitly. But this is not my primary concern here. For our present purpose, I believe it is adequate to note that the divergent findings reported above are

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[7]Stier and Grusky, for example, argue that, "[the] nominalist viewpoint is still favored in some quarters (see Erikson and Goldthorpe 1987a), but recent methodological development has reduced its popularity. The emergence of association models was a critical turning point in the field, because these models made it possible to exploit more fully the metric properties of occupations" (1990:737, original emphasis).

[8]To be accurate, Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a:91-92) have also developed a uniform-difference model which contains a logmultiplicative element. But it is used in relation to change over time, not to class categories.

related to the effects of study designs (data, class scheme, technical tools). Obviously, there is a need to estimate how far these effects account for the differences in the findings; or conversely, how much real difference is there.

To do so, more efforts should be spent on collecting mobility data of a high standard of comparability from more countries, such that we can repeat the many tests available to a wider range of cases.[9] But let us suppose that after repeated and more rigorous examinations, the FJH hypothesis is finally confirmed. At that time, we still have to answer one very important question: how do we explain the commonality in social fluidity across nations?

Before we go on, I should add that, even at present, among the researchers who have reservations about the FJH hypothesis, there are some who would agree that there is, indeed, a very impressive common core of relative mobility rates. For example, Grusky and Hauser state that, "[our] results make it quite clear that the 'cross-nationally common element heavily predominates over the cross-nationally variable one'. Not only does one simple model, quasi-perfect mobility, fits all of these data satisfactorily, but its coefficients do not vary greatly between countries. These findings of cross-national invariance support the FJH revision of the Lipset-Zetterberg hypothesis" (1984:26).

And for those who did not explicitly say so, I would argue that their findings are in fact consistent with the statement of Grusky and Hauser. For example, the CSF model accounts for 96% of the total origin-destination association found in the six mobility tables analyzed by Wong. (Incidentally, the association model that he

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[9]See Ganzeboom, Luijkx and Treiman (1989:9-13) for an alternative research strategy, and Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992b:284-286) for criticisms of this strategy.

prefers does no better than the CSF model -- it also explains 96% of the total association, though it uses fewer degrees of freedom.)

So, it can be argued that the position of Erikson and Goldthorpe that, "the total amount of the association between class origins and destinations that is cross-nationally variable is, in any event, only very small relative to the amount that is cross-nationally common" (1992a:389) is not that controversial. It follows that there is, indeed, a need to explain the invariance of relative mobility rates now rather than later.

There have been some attempts to provide an explanation. Featherman, Jones and Hauser, in their article that first formulated the FJH hypothesis, note, "[that] the organization of occupations across societies (at least of an industrialized type) is so similar ... is not without sociological interest" (1975:333). Such similarity can be argued as underpinning the common mobility processes that exist in all industrial societies. Grusky and Hauser take up this lead later. They suggest that, "differences in relative mobility chances arise primarily from variation in the resources and desirability accorded occupations" (1984:22). Since cross-national studies of occupational prestige have clearly demonstrated that there is substantial uniformity across societies in how economic resources and desirability are accorded to occupations, we should expect a largely common pattern of social fluidity as well. As Grusky and Hauser put it, "the same processes which produce the uniformity in prestige may also account for the invariance in mobility" (1984:26).

This line of thinking seems reasonable, but it is only a piece of theoretically informed speculation. More importantly, it leads to further questions: why should there be uniformity in occupational prestige, and how do the processes that produce such

uniformity operate? Erikson and Goldthorpe (1987b:161) in their interpretation of the original formulation of Featherman, Jones and Hauser, suggest the following:

> it is economic [i.e. the market] and familial institutions ... that primarily determine relative chances of social mobility from one generation to the next. Thus, provided that these institutions have a basically similar form, so too, it may be expected, will the pattern that such mobility chances display.

Again, this only breaks down the original question, without providing a satisfactory answer. We still have to ask why the market and the family system of different societies generate and perpetuate similar patterns of relative mobility chances. The common core of relative mobility rates remains unexplained.

To sum up the discussion of this section, comparative mobility researchers have made real and significant progress over the last thirty years. We now have many sophisticated statistical tools at our disposal, and a wider range of data sets of improved quality and comparability have become available. Given these improvements, the old hypothesis of Lipset and Zetterberg has been disproved, and although the FJH hypothesis remains contentious, all comparative studies have documented an impressive common core of relative mobility rates. Some take this as indicating a failure on the part of mobility researchers to adopt appropriate comparative strategy and sensitive tools (e.g. Wong 1990). However, one can also argue that the invariance of relative rates is a real phenomenon that needs to be explained. As Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a:389) suggest,

> rather than making the assumption that variation in relative rates is systematic and that explaining this variation represents the chief goal of macrosociological endeavour, we should suspend this assumption and, instead of concentrating so exclusively on variation, we should regard the commonality that prevails in relative rates -- and their general persistence and pervasiveness -- as providing the major focus for macrosociological attention.

If we take the latter position, then one has to admit that, so far, we do not yet have

a satisfactory account of the invariance of relative rates. Perhaps this is, in part, related to the fact that researchers are still preoccupied with the logically prior task of ascertaining the extent and the sources of variation in mobility regimes. While this is an important question, I would argue that it is time for us to address the question of how mobility is generated. This brings us to the second inadequacy of (comparative) mobility studies -- the unasked question.

An analytical lacuna

Very simply put, mobility table analyses seek to tell us how much and what types of mobility there are in a particular country over a particular period of time. What they do not address is how people actually become mobile (or immobile). The fact that mobility studies do not address the question of process has been noted by Sorensen (1986). He argues that we lack a theory of "the mechanisms that generate mobility in society ... a theory that reveals which variables produce mobility and, very importantly, how they interact in producing it" (1986:76).

The theory that Sorensen has in mind is not the one which is implicit in status attainment research, although this is sometimes described as the study of the process of stratification. It is true that a path analytic model enables researchers to compare the relative contribution of, say, education and class origin in explaining the overall variance in occupational attainment, so it does specify which variables account for attainment and how they interact in producing it. However, as Sorensen puts it, "[the status attainment model] does not suggest how it is that these variables came to have this influence. Thus we know that education makes a difference, but nothing in the status attainment literature suggests why it makes a difference for access to jobs" (1986:82-83). In other words, both status attainment study and mobility table analysis, the two major approaches that study intergenerational transmission of class

advantages, fail to tell us how mobility comes about.

The cost of not having a theory of the mobility process is not just an academic lacuna. Blalock (1991) makes this point forcefully when he notes that it is often difficult to interpret observed patterns of inequality between social groups. Empirical studies in the United States, for example, have repeatedly documented that educational returns, in terms of occupation or income, are smaller for blacks than they are for whites. How do we make sense of such findings? Are they unequivocal proof of discrimination against blacks, or is it at least possible that other factors such as different levels of effort or motivation between blacks and whites are also involved in producing these inequalities? Blalock argues that because the empirical data available to us pertain to the aggregated results of the social allocation process rather than the process itself, we really have no factual basis on which to make any interpretation. However, many sociologists are tempted to do so, and because most sociologists do not want to "blame the victim", we tend to choose the former interpretation rather than the latter. But sadly this is nothing more than imposing our political values onto empirical observations.

Blalock suggests that this is problematic on two counts. First, although we may not, because of personal political values, prefer certain interpretations, it is important that "we give our opponents' explanation a fair chance" (1991:xii). In other words, scientific integrity requires us to include variables which do not match our political values even though they may turn out to be embarrassingly powerful. To do so, Blalock suggests, we will have to revise our research strategy, in particular, to collect data that directly address the allocation process itself. Second, since we have not yet given our opponents' explanations that fair chance to be proved right and useful, we will not be able to convince people who happen to hold a different political view.

That is why the results of many sociological studies, and perhaps sociology itself, have not been taken seriously.

Therefore, it is of substantive significance that we know, rather than speculate, how inequality (in mobility chances) is generated. But what are the problems that hinder the development of a theory of mobility (allocation) process, and how should we begin to develop such a theory?

Sorensen (1986) has attempted to answer both questions. With respect to the first question, he argues that the data used in mobility studies (and status attainment research) are not suitable for the development of a theory of mobility process. Mobility researchers normally employ occupational data of just two time points (namely, son's current occupation, and father's occupation when the son was, say, 14 years old) to represent the very complex career histories of both the father and the son. This practice is very misleading because, (a) at the time when they are interviewed, respondents of mobility surveys are at very different stages of their career, and (b) people's careers change in systematic directions. In other words, although some respondents have just left school, others are approaching or have reached "occupational maturity", and some are possibly experiencing occupational decline before retirement, the current occupations of all these people are taken as their respective class destinations. Hence, the concept of class destination is highly problematic. Similarly, class origin is also a problematic concept. Given these problems, Sorensen suggests, it is not surprising that the results of comparative mobility analyses are often difficult to interpret, even though very sophisticated statistical tools have been employed.

Sorensen's criticism certainly carries weight. An obvious first step towards

developing a theory of mobility process is to collect and analyze complete work histories. But assuming that such data are available to us (and certainly they have become available in more and more countries), we still have to ask what a theory of mobility process would look like. Sorensen suggests that, "[the] complete specification of such a theory usually requires a mathematical model" (1986:76), and he has provided some examples which are sometimes called vacancy competition models (Sorensen 1974, 1975, 1977, 1979, Sorensen and Tuma 1981, Sorensen and Blossfeld 1989). Let us consider these formal deductive models briefly.

These models are slightly different from each other according to the context of their application. For example, difference equations are used when discontinuous job shifts are being considered, while differential equations are developed when mobility is seen as movement along a continuum of socioeconomic status. However, one common line of reasoning underlies all these models. Sorensen starts with two sets of assumptions. The first set pertains to the structure of inequality and opportunity -- how jobs are distributed by level of attainment, the rate at which vacancy appears, and how vacancies move in the social system, etc. The second set of assumptions are about individual resources that are relevant for job mobility -- most importantly, he assumes that the amount of human capital possessed by an individual remains constant once he/she enters the labour market. This is, of course, completely opposite to the assumption of human capital theory.

Given these assumptions, Sorensen proceeds to develop his models which all share the basic idea represented by equation 1.1:

$$dy(t)/dt = c_0 + by(t) + c_1x_1 \qquad (1.1)$$

where y(t) represents the occupational attainment of a person at time t, x_1 is a summary measure of individual resources (including both ascribed and achieved factors, such as family background and educational attainment), and c_0 captures unmeasured resource variables. In other words, Sorensen suggests that the rate of change in attainment is affected by two factors: (a) the amount of resources possessed by the individual, and (b) the level of attainment already achieved. The coefficient b is assumed to be negative, so that for any individual (for whom x_1 is a constant), "the higher the [present] achievement the less gain will take place. Eventually the rate of change will be zero, and at that time the level of achievement will be $y(e) = -c_0/b - c_1x_1/b$" (Sorensen 1975:462).

Within a social system, b is the same for everyone, and differences in individual attainment are explained by the different values of x_1. However, the value of b varies between social systems. In fact, b can be shown to be related to two parameters -- one governs the distribution of jobs, and the other represents the rate of appearance of vacancy. So b can be understood as a measure of the opportunity structure of a social system. Essentially, what Sorensen does is to estimate and compare the value of b for different systems. He has, for example, estimated the value of b for blacks and whites in the United States, and is able to show that the opportunity structure for blacks is worse than that for whites (Sorensen 1975). In his more recent work, he uses more or less the same logic to compare the opportunity structure facing the different birth cohorts in post-war Germany (Sorensen and Blossfeld 1989).

As theories of mobility process, how good are these models? Let me start by stating what my position is not. Sociologists often dismiss formal mathematical models, perhaps too offhandedly, as being based on unrealistic assumptions, or because they usually do not fit empirical observations very well. Even Sorensen admits that,

"formalized theories of social processes are rare in sociology, and the mathematical models that are used are often not good theories" (1986:76). However, unrealistic assumptions can, in principle, be replaced by more realistic ones, more parameters can be included in the model, and goodness of fit may be improved accordingly, so there is nothing wrong in mathematical formalization itself. In fact, Sorensen's models are very useful in that, as noted above, they explicitly make the long-recognised distinction between opportunity structure and individual resources as two separate factors that affect mobility outcome. Accordingly, they allow the researchers to compare the opportunity structure across social systems, net of differences in individual resources. It seems to me that this is where the strength of these models lies.

However, I would also argue that Sorensen has failed to address, directly and fully, the central concern of social mobility and status attainment research, namely the transmission of social advantages across generations. This is so because the parameter which measures the opportunity structure, b, is only a function of structural variables, namely, the distribution of jobs and the rate of appearance of vacancies. Nowhere in its derivation can we find measures of interests, or actions taken by individuals and families to protect the class advantages they already have, or to improve their current class position. Instead, these factors are lumped, and lost, in another part of the model -- the summary measure of individual resources (in actual practice, educational attainment is often used as a proxy for all relevant individual resources).

The need to bring out the interaction between individual actions and the opportunity structure can be better understood if we consider more closely the various contexts in which Sorensen's models are applied. As noted above, they allow us to test

whether there is more opportunity in social system A than in social system B. But such comparison makes sense only when the social systems under comparison are distinct from each other. For example, it is interesting and legitimate to ask, other things being equal, whether the cohort of Germans born in 1940 enjoy better mobility chances than those born in 1950; or similarly, whether the employees of bureaucracy A enjoy more opportunity of internal promotion than those in bureaucracy B. However, it is more problematic when, say, the opportunity structures facing the blacks and whites of America are compared. This is so because the blacks and the whites are not two completely segregated groups, each competing among themselves in their own labour markets. One can surely argue that the whites have better opportunity partly, at least, because the blacks have worse.

The problem here is that Sorensen's models stipulate that the same amount of opportunity is available everywhere to everyone in a social system; differential attainment within that system is explained by the different capacity of individuals to make use of such opportunities. So when he seeks to suggest that, overall, less opportunity is available to blacks than to whites, he has to conceptualize them as belonging to two distinct social systems. I think this is not what we want to say. What we need is a theory that specifies the different opportunities and constraints that people in various structural positions have, and how they make use of the resources available to them (not just formal credentials) to compete for more advantageous positions in the class structure. To use a common sociological idiom, it is the complex interplay between structure and actions that should be the object of study.

However, to repeat a point made earlier, the fact that Sorensen's models are unsatisfactory for our purpose does not imply that formalization is a futile enterprise. There is obviously room for improvement, and this calls for greater research effort.

Having said this, I would also argue that we need to know more about the mobility process first before a better model can be developed. Hence, the present study will be undertaken in an inductive rather than a deductive vein.

Let me recapitulate the arguments so far. I have noted that comparative mobility researchers are unable to explain one of their most important empirical findings, namely the invariance of relative mobility rates across nations. I then argue that if we knew more about how unequal mobility chances are generated, we would be in a better position to account for their invariance across nations. Unfortunately, our knowledge of the micro-process of mobility is truly meagre, and the few attempts which seek to tackle this problem (status attainment studies, Sorensen's vacancy competition models) are, for my purpose, unsatisfactory. Nonetheless, some positive lessons can be drawn from these attempts. First, a theory of mobility process should make use of complete work history data rather than occupational data of only two or three time points. But the use of career data should not distract us from our central concern of how social advantages are transmitted across generations. In other words, for our purpose, we are interested in understanding the career dynamics because we would like to know at what stage in the life course and in what ways are social advantages passed on from father to son. Second, this theory should take into consideration the effects of the opportunity structure and individual purposive actions for mobility, as well as the interaction between the two.

The micro-process of social mobility

I have now cleared the ground for my exploration of the mobility process. In a sense, I will have to start from scratch. However, a few studies are relevant to this inquiry. In particular, a simple scheme of thinking about mobility opportunity suggested by Skvoretz (1984) is a useful starting point. Skvoretz notes that three

types of factors, namely positional, historical (or temporal) and resource factors, affect mobility outcome.

Positional factor captures the idea that, other things being equal, there are certain positions within a stratified system which offer more mobility chances to their incumbents than do other positions. Similarly, there can be some historical periods which offer more mobility opportunities than others, such that, for example, if one's worklife starts in the former rather than the latter period, one is more likely to achieve mobility. Finally, individual resources has long been recognised as a key determinant of mobility. Let us consider this scheme, especially the positional and the resource factors, more carefully.

Positional factor -- typical mobility paths

The fact that certain positions regularly offer better mobility chances than others has been successfully documented by researchers of organizational careers. Gaertner (1990), for example, suggests that the various jobs within an organization can be differentiated according to the function they serve with respect to an employee's career -- there are entry positions where new-comers join the organization and receive initial training, plateau positions that serve as outlets for underperformers, exit positions where people leave the organization, etc. Most interestingly, she suggests that there are "assessment positions" in which the incumbents enjoy greater visibility of their work and acquire new skills. Consequently, assessment positions often are stepping stones to higher level positions.

Having made these distinctions, Gaertner then employs data derived from personnel records to trace how a sample of public school administrators in the U.S. move within the hierarchy of an education authority. Taking each job shift as a mobility

event, she constructs a cumulative mobility table similar to those analyzed by Featherman and Selbee (1988). By applying loglinear models to the table, she is able to show the degree of interconnectedness of the various posts in the hierarchy. This then allows her to identify the assessment positions of the hierarchy.

The question for us is threefold. First, whether there are occupations in the national labour market which are equivalent to assessment positions in organizations, in the sense that they regularly offer better mobility chances. Second, if there are indeed such positions, why is it that they can offer better opportunities? Third, how do incumbents of such positions get to where they are in the first place?

Generally speaking, to answer the first question, we need to compare the work history of two groups of people -- they should come from the same class origin, but only one group has achieved mobility into some desired class of destination, which, in this study, is the service class (see Table 1.1).[10] If we can discern typical job sequences among the mobile people which cannot be found from those who are immobile, then the sequences identified can be taken as mobility paths that lead to the service class.

Of course, social mobility into the service class takes many different routes, and the explanation for mobility outcome would not be the same for all of them. For example, a school child of working class background could be very bright academically. He/she went to university immediately after finishing secondary

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[10]The service class is made up of large proprietors and "[employees who] exercise delegated authority or specialized knowledge and expertise in the interest of their employing organization ... such employees must then be accorded a legitimate area of autonomy and discretion and, to this extent, their performance will depend on the degree of moral commitment that they feel towards the organization rather than on the efficacy of external sanctions" (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992a:42). See Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a:35-47) for discussion of the CASMIN class schema.

school, and the degree he/she obtained, in turn, enabled him/her to take up a recognised professional job. This is an instance of direct entry into the service class. In this case, it is the school child's success in examinations rather than his/her career experience which explains the mobility outcome.

However, there are also indirect routes into the service class where work experience is much more relevant. We can imagine a second working class person who dropped out from school at a much younger age than the first one. He/she has worked as a wage worker for several years before a chance to return to college appeared. He/she took up the chance, obtained better qualifications, and eventually got a service class job. The interesting question here is whether certain types of lower level jobs typically precede belated entry to college. If so, is it because a system of promotion and training is established for these jobs only? These are empirical issues to be examined.

We can also envisage a third situation in which someone left school with minimum or no qualification. He/she became a wage worker for some years and then started a business with a few partners. Here, as in the second situation, it would be interesting to know if certain types of jobs typically precede entrepreneurship. To use a term of Broom and Smith (1962), I am concerned with the "bridging occupations" in class mobility -- occupations in which one acquires skills, attributes or other resources that would facilitate subsequent mobility.

This brings us to the second question -- what accounts for the bridging quality of the typical mobility paths identified? With respect to organizational careers, Gaertner suggests that assessment positions offer better chances of promotion because "[these] positions usually imply a qualitative change in job content, allowing incumbents to

develop skills that will be necessary at higher levels and allowing members of the organization to observe the incumbent's performance closely. These observation and skill development characteristics of the positions increase the probability that capable people will be promoted to positions of greater responsibility" (1990:136).

This explanation is unlikely to be wholly applicable in the context of class mobility in the national labour market. So, how do we explain why some types of work experience (job sequences) offer better chances of mobility than others? As noted above, Broom and Smith suggest that certain occupations allow their incumbents to develop useful skills, attributes and other resources. More specifically, they have suggested five bridging attributes:

> The first and vital attribute we call resocialization to emphasis the redirection of the perspectives and aspirations of the occupant. The second attribute, independency, indicates the dissociation of the occupant from ties and commitments that would restrict his mobility. We identify health and physical bearing as a third attribute. Fourth is access to information or to individuals in influential or useful positions. Fifth is financial competence. (1963:323, original emphasis)

The notion of bridging occupations is very suggestive. But the formulation of Broom and Smith is inadequate in two senses. First, two of the five attributes that they refer to, namely health and physical bearing and financial competence, describe the incumbents rather than the structural locations.[11] Second, they have not provided any systematic evidence of how these attributes are distributed over a wide range of occupations, and whether they have any real effects on mobility outcome. Instead, they have only made some impressionistic comments on how these attributes may operate in five occupations (servant, soldier, teacher, pedlar, and sportsman) which can only be taken as illustration of what the attributes mean.

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[11]I am grateful to John Goldthorpe for alerting me to this point.

Having said this, it should also be noted that Broom and Smith have anticipated some of the key ideas in subsequent research on job search behaviour -- access to information and to individuals in influential and useful positions. To anticipate a later point, one major concern of the present study is to test what types of social contacts are most useful for class mobility. This question of social networks is also relevant for the third question -- how do incumbents of the bridging occupations get to where they are in the first place? Did they more or less wander into such positions without much planning beforehand, or have they received advice about the greater promise that these jobs provided? If so, where did this advice come from?

Resource factor -- strength of weak ties?

Individual and family resources have long been recognised as key determinants of mobility outcome. This is evident from the variables included and tested in status attainment models. However, the resources factors that are habitually considered are, (a) parental socioeconomic status, and (b) respondent's education attainment. Both of them refer to attributes that are lodged in the individual person rather than the social relationship in which individuals are embedded. It has now become more widely recognised that social relationships are also a form of resources which individual actors may employ in their purposive actions. For example, Coleman (1988:S100-S101) suggests a threefold distinction between physical, human and social capital.

> Social capital ... comes about through changes in the relations among persons that facilitate action. If physical capital is wholly tangible, being embodied in observable material form, and human capital is less tangible, being embodied in the skills and knowledge acquired by an individual, social capital is less tangible yet, for it exists in the relations among persons. Just as physical capital and human capital facilitate productive activity, social capital does as well.

To demonstrate the effect of social capital on individual performance, Coleman

examines the dropout rate of school children of various backgrounds. He does not have much direct evidence to test his ideas, but using network concepts, he is able to offer some quite plausible accounts of observed statistical patterns. For example, he finds that, after controlling for other relevant variables, the number of times a child has changed school previously has a significant positive effect on his/her chances of dropping out. Coleman interprets this relationship as follows: very often a child changes school because the family has moved to a new community. The parents of this child, being new members of the community, probably do not know the parents of other school children, so there is no intergenerational closure of network (see Coleman 1988:S107, Fig. 2). Consequently, the parents find it harder to monitor the behaviour of their child, and so the latter is more prone to dropping out than others. Put more abstractly, the parents lack the social capital that is available in an enclosed intergenerational network.

As noted, Coleman does not have any direct evidence of the effect of social networks (social capital) on purposive action (paternal supervision of children). However, this idea has received more attention and direct tests in studies of job search and matching. Granovetter, for example, argues that "advancement [in the labour market] can depend on knowing about appropriate job openings at just the right time" (1983:202). Since the flow of job information is a function of the characteristics of the social networks in which individuals are embedded, social networks should have some effects on a person's labour market performance. To address this problem, Granovetter (1973, 1974) studied the job search behaviour of a sample of professional, technical and managerial workers in a Boston suburb. He discovered that the majority of his respondents first heard about their present job from personal contacts rather than through formal channels such as advertisements or employment agencies. He also found that those who got their jobs through personal contacts were

generally better paid, more satisfied with their job than those who used formal methods. But the most interesting finding is that among those who used personal contacts to get their job, more people received job information from weak ties than from strong ties (strength of ties is defined primarily in terms of frequency of contacts). This looks counter-intuitive at first glance because close friends should have stronger motivation to help each other, including that of forwarding job news. Put differently, why is it that job information is more likely to flow through weak ties? Granovetter is able to account for this with a network theory.

Simply put, Granovetter argues that the people to whom we are close probably know each other, that is, if A is strongly related to both B and C, it is likely that there is a link between B and C.[12] If we take bridging ties as those social ties the absence of which would disconnect two persons or two groups of people, then strong ties are very rarely bridging ties. Conversely speaking, it is weak ties that connect an individual to distant and otherwise unrelated social circles. As Granovetter put it, "there is ... a structural tendency for those to whom one is only weakly tied, to have better access to job information one does not already have. Acquaintances, as compared to close friends, are more prone to move in different circles than one's self. Those to whom one is closest are likely to have the greatest overlap in contact with those one already knows, so that the information to which they are privy is likely to be much the same as that which one already has" (1974:52-53). Granovetter summarizes this argument as "the strength of weak ties" (SWT) thesis.

The SWT thesis has attracted a lot of attention. Accordingly, it has been subjected

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[12]Granovetter relies partly on cognitive balance theory to support this claim. The theory suggests that psychological strain will be created if A is strongly related to both B and C, but the latter two persons are not positively related to each other (see Granovetter 1973:1362-1363).

to repeated tests in various contexts (e.g. Lin, Ensel and Vaughn 1981, Marsden and Hurlbert 1988, Flap and de Graaf 1988, Wegener 1991, see also Granovetter 1983 for his response to some of the earlier papers). Generally speaking, these tests confirm Granovetter's findings, but they also point to how the effects of social ties may vary for different social groups. For example, it is found that the rich, the better educated, and those who are in administrative, managerial and professional occupations are more likely to use weak ties than the poor, the not-so-well qualified and the manual workers. More importantly, Lin, Ensel and Vaughn (1981) suggest that the effect of weak ties on occupational attainment is an indirect one -- it is more likely that weak ties rather than strong ties connect an individual to a well-placed contact in the occupational structure, and such contacts are useful for subsequent job attainment. This is particularly true for those of low occupational status since their close associates are probably of low occupational status too. However, it is also likely that they are often forced to rely on strong ties in job search because weak ties that reach to higher status are rare. Granovetter further argues that "in lower socioeconomic groups, weak ties are often not bridges but represent friends' and relatives' acquaintances; the information they provide would then not constitute a real broadening of opportunity" (1983:208).

These studies clarify how weak ties facilitate the process of job mobility, but it should also be noted that, in certain situations, strong ties can also be useful in facilitating purposive social actions. Consider the social support literature in which researchers ask the following question: which type of social support would be forthcoming from whom, under what conditions? The key notion here is network density -- the extent of the interconnectedness among the people one knows.[13] Social support researchers

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[13]But as it is argued earlier, those people to whom one is strongly tied probably know each other. Hence, strong tie and high network density are related phenomena.

argue that information flows more effectively within a dense network. This implies that one's behaviour would be closely "tracked, evaluated and sanctioned" in a dense network. For example, Uehara, in her study of how single mothers cope with unemployment, argues that "in the rare event that members [of a dense network] who are viewed as capable fail to come forth with support, words spread rapidly throughout the network, and criticism of the offender is likely to come from various members. Those who would criticise are also those who would provide assistance in times of need; members can thus ill afford to be considered uncooperative" (1990:540).

Roughly the same line of argument has been used by Bott (1971). In discussing variations of conjugal roles, she observes that the more connected (i.e. higher network density) is the social networks within which a family is embedded, the more segregated are the conjugal roles of husband and wife. This, she argues, is because in a dense network, relatives and friends are under greater informal pressure to help each other. Such external support would then become an alternative source of emotional support as well as assistance for household tasks. As a result, there is less need for task-sharing and joint activities between husband and wife (1971:60).

Intergenerational class mobility definitely requires substantial support and assistance from one's associates. It follows that being embedded in a dense social network may also facilitate mobility. Of course, a person can enjoy the support of a circle of close friends who know each other, and is, at the same time, weakly tied to many other people who could pass on job or business information. The effects of weak ties and dense network are not necessarily incompatible with each other. The task for us is to map out the conditions under which one of these effects become more important. Bearing in mind that there are multiple mobility routes that lead to the service class,

it could be the case, for example, that weak ties are particularly important for those who seek mobility through getting a salaried service class job (since what is often needed is information), while the effect of dense social networks is more crucial for those who are looking for a reliable business partner. Some of these ideas will be tested in this thesis. Let me sum up the arguments of this introductory chapter.

I have argued that mobility researchers cannot account for one of their most important empirical findings, namely the invariance of relative mobility rates across countries. I have also argued that to provide such an account, we need to know more about the micro-process of social mobility. We do not yet have a satisfactory theory of the mobility process. But research into the following will be relevant to the development of such a theory: (a) the career paths along which people become mobile, and (b) the effect of social networks on job search and/or the formation of business partnership. I will look into these issues below. Let me round off this chapter with a brief outline for subsequent chapters.

Chapters outline

In Chapter 2, I discuss several features of the post-war Hong Kong society which are relevant to understanding its stratification order and mobility regime. More specifically, the following topics will be covered: Hong Kong's industrialization experience, its migration history and population characteristics, popular perception of inequality and opportunity. In Chapter 3, I extend the CASMIN analysis to Hong Kong, with a view to (a) testing some of the results reported by Erikson and Goldthorpe, and (b) revealing the distinctive features of Hong Kong's fluidity pattern. (The mobility data used in this chapter come from the 1989 Hong Kong Social Mobility Survey. See Appendix A for detail of the survey.)

Readers will see that Chapter 3 is essentially a replication of Erikson and Goldthorpe's work in the context of a new case: I will be using standard tools to test a well defined hypothesis. This is not the case when I turn to explore the micro-mobility process in subsequent chapters. Indeed, it is not entirely clear as to, not only what techniques to use, but also what questions to ask in a study of the micro-mobility process. In such a exploratory situation, it is advisable that a small study be used to test out the feasibility and desirability of the various ways of approaching the problem. This is what I did in a follow-up study conducted between November 1991 and June 1992 in which I revisited 80 respondents of the main survey. My respondents were all from class IVab or VIIa origin, and they were found in class I+II, IVab or VIIa at the time of 1989 survey. In other words, the mobility experience of these 80 people include the following types: upward mobility into the service class, immobility in class IVab or VIIa, and mobility between class IVab and VIIa. (Detail of the follow-up study is provided in Appendix A.) Because of the small N of the follow-up study, the results presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 should only be regarded as tentative.

There are several differences between Chapter 3 and Chapters 4, 5 and 6 that need to be highlighted. First, the unit of analysis for Chapters 4, 5, 6 is not the national stratificational system, as is appropriate for macro-comparative research, but the individual who strives to advance in the class structure. Second, the question I ask in these three chapters is, in a sense, more restricted than that of Chapter 3. To elaborate, Chapter 3 is a general study of Hong Kong's mobility regime. I am interested in all aspects of its mobility pattern that are discernible by the CASMIN core model. However, in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, I am concerned with upward mobility

into the service class only.[14] Third, Chapter 3 is about class mobility between generations, and the only piece of information it uses is a father-son mobility table. In contrast, in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, I turn to study the worklife process, and so in place of the father-son table, I will be analysing complete work history data collected in the follow-up study.

More specifically, Chapter 4 seeks to identify the "bridging occupations" or the "typical mobility paths" of Hong Kong. To do so, "Optimal Matching Analysis", a cluster analysis technique that compares and classifies complete career sequences will be tested and applied. Thus, apart from offering substantive findings about mobility paths in Hong Kong, this chapter also seeks to make a technical contribution to the analysis of life course or work history data in general. Chapter 5 studies the effect of social networks on job search. In particular, Granovetter's SWT thesis will be examined critically. Chapter 6 studies the career beginning of the 80 respondents, with a view to linking up my findings on the worklife process and the pattern of intergenerational transmission of class advantages.

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[14]As explained above, the CASMIN class schema is not meant to be a linear hierarchy, and so its categories are not ordered. But Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a:123-125) argue that the service class, when compared to other classes, is distinctively more attractive as class of destination, and it offers more resources as class of origin that it is placed at the top level in a three-level hierarchical distinction among the classes (see discussion in Chapter 3). It is only in relation to mobility flow into and out of the service class that upward and downward mobility is defined respectively (cf. Goldthorpe 1987:43).

Table 1.1 The CASMIN class schema[a]

Eleven-category version		Seven-category version
I	Higher-grade professionals, administrators and officials; managers in large industrial establishments; large proprietor	I+II "service class"
II	Lower-grade professionals, administrators and officials; higher-grade technicians; managers in small industrial establishments; supervisors of non-manual employees	
IIIa	Routine nonmanual employees, higher grade (administration and commerce)	III "routine non-manual"
IIIb	Routine nonmanual employees, lower grade (sales and services)	
IVa	Small proprietors, artisans etc. with employees	IVab "petty bourgeoisie"
IVb	Small proprietors, artisans etc. without employees	
IVc	Farmers and smallholders; other self-employed workers in primary production	IVc "farmers"
V	Lower-grade technicians; supervisors of manual workers	V+VI "skilled workers"
VI	Skilled manual workers	
VIIa	Semi- and unskilled manual workers (not in agriculture etc.)	VIIa "non-skilled workers"
VIIb	Agricultural and other workers in primary production	VIIb "farm workers"

[a]Source: Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a:38-39, Table 2.1)

Chapter 2

The Hong Kong Context

This chapter provides an overview of the post-war Hong Kong society, focusing, in particular, on those features which bear on its mobility regime. I will start with a review of public perception of mobility chances, which, as will be clear, is generally optimistic. Then I will consider three factors that may explain the presumed openness of Hong Kong's class structure, namely demographic fluidity, economic dynamism, and the prevalence of small firms. Having considered these "favourable" factors, I will turn to some counter-evidence, principally those reported in two recent mobility studies.

An open society?

> Hong Kong has become to a much larger degree than 40 years ago a place where the individual can and must succeed on his own merit and achievements. There is considerable social mobility, and examples of millionaires who have risen from rags in 20 years are well known to all. If the poorest, least advantaged citizens are Chinese, so too are the very wealthiest men, and also the expanding middle classes. The effort required to raise one's economic and social status (the two are very closely associated) is enormous, but it has been achieved by many, and the constantly changing pattern of economic activity in Hong Kong as well as improvements in universal education have both contributed to making upward mobility more possible. (Baker 1983:472)

Many social scientists (e.g. Lau 1982, Lee 1982, Scott 1989) consider Hong Kong as a relatively open and meritocratic society (though I would hasten to add that their claims are often based on personal impression rather than systematic evidence). Some also argue that the concept of social class itself has become obsolete, and thus class analysis is irrelevant to the understanding of Hong Kong society. Lee, for example, contends that, "it is no longer realistic to describe Hong Kong as a class

society" (1982:31). According to Lee, this is due to the following changes during the post-war period: (a) growing affluence since the 1970s, (b) internal fragmentation of the major social classes in terms of income and other firm-specific conditions, (c) the emergence of new social divisions according to residential communities, consumption patterns, professional affiliations, and so on, (d) a trend for social selection to become progressively more meritocratic, and hence for higher mobility rates. With respect to the last point, Lee (1982:25-26) claims that,

> family background, race, sex and other ascriptive factors are no longer as important as they were in the past, in deciding a person's achievement. Technical competence has become the central criterion for appointment and promotion in most industrial and administrative bureaucracies. Achievement in competitive examinations testifies in objective terms a person's ability and qualifies him for a job. In this way, the bureaucracies level off social differences and break down barriers to social mobility.

For Lee, the summary effect of these changes is that "the 1970s marked the end of ideology in Hong Kong". Readers will recognize that this is a set of familiar arguments about the fading away of social class. Similar arguments have sometimes been found to be empirically wanting in other countries. Whether they are valid for Hong Kong remains to be tested. For my present purpose, I am most interested in the last claim on the trend for social selection to become progressively more meritocratic and mobility rates to become higher.

In this regard, it should be noted that most Hong Kong people agree with Lee in that they also see Hong Kong as an open, meritocratic society. Surveys of social attitudes conducted since the 1970s have repeatedly reported that something between 60 to 80 percent of the respondents endorsing such views as, "that Hong Kong is truly a land of opportunity and people get pretty much of what they deserve here", or "Hong

Kong offered opportunities for upward mobile common people".[1] In other words, there is a general optimism about mobility chances, at least since the 1970s. However, there are several reasons for treating these findings cautiously. First, many of these surveys were about young people. Some of them were conducted in selected localities. This opens up the question of how far they represented the opinion of people of all ages across the whole territory.

Second, given Hong Kong's geographical proximity to mainland China, and the fact that 36% of Hong Kong's population were born there (see Hong Kong 1991 census), it is possible that many respondents were implicitly comparing these two societies when questions about mobility chance or efficacy of individual effort were put to them. Since there is little scope for career choice or job mobility in China (Walder 1986, Davis 1992), one may argue that the reported optimism simply means that most Hong Kong people know that the formal freedom of choosing and leaving jobs that they enjoy in Hong Kong does not exist in China. In this sense, personal effort or merit does make a bigger difference in Hong Kong. My point is: perhaps Hong Kong people do see themselves as living in an open society, but only by comparison to their neighbours across the border.[2]

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[1]See Chaney and Podmore (1973), and Lau and Ho (1982). In a survey conducted in 1985, 88% of the respondents agreed that, "Hong Kong [is] a place full of developmental opportunities. Hence it is individual efforts that count in one's success or failure" (Lau and Kuan 1988:63-64). Similarly, in a 1986 survey, 84% of the respondents agreed that, "provided a person had the ability and worked hard, he should have the opportunity to improve his social and economic status" (Lau and Kuan 1988:64-67). In the same survey, 26% of the respondents considered themselves as belonging to the lower class, and 73% the middle class. At the same time, 44% of the respondents considered their fathers as belonging to the lower class and 49% to the middle class. In other words, by their own judgement, more people felt that they had achieved upward mobility than suffered downward mobility.

[2]This interpretation may explain the apparently contradictory finding that when respondents were asked in more concrete terms about their own mobility prospects, they were much less optimistic. For example, over 70% of the respondents in the 1990 Hong Kong Social Indicators Survey said that they had little or no chance of

Third, can we assume that the same optimism existed in the 1950s and 1960s? Empirical evidences from this period are very sketchy. Nonetheless, a survey of the background, aspirations and performance of form 5 students done in 1967 suggests that although "[an] emotional commitment to success is distributed widely throughout the class structure" (Mitchell 1969:76), many students believed that they had little chance to succeed in Hong Kong.

> they feel Hong Kong is a closed society that provides very little opportunity for people like themselves. Most pupils have a very pessimistic view of Hong Kong, as seen in responses to the question: "How much opportunity is there in Hong Kong for you to be a success in your career?" Only five per cent feel there is "a great deal" of opportunity, 15 per cent feel there is "quite a bit," 69 per cent say "some, but not too much," and 12 per cent say there is "very little or none". (Mitchell 1969:82, emphasis added)

The picture painted by Mitchell is a far cry from the more recent surveys cited above. Some corroborative but indirect evidence for Mitchell's finding can be found in the commentaries on a youth riot in 1966.[3] The Commissioners of Inquiry for the incident stated in their report that they "do not believe that political, economic and social frustrations were the direct causes of the 1966 riots". But they noted that the rioters were overwhelmingly young, poorly-educated, poorly-paid, inadequately-housed and over-worked males, and the "comments of some social scientists stressed a growing awareness amongst young people of the social and economic conditions in Hong Kong and a growing sense of frustration at their limited chances in life and the apparently wide gap between their aspirations and their achievement" (1966:147-148). A recent commentator also concurs with this view. He thinks that the riot was

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getting a better job (see Wong 1992:168).

[3]There was a riot in early April 1966 which lasted for five days and caused some casualties and quite substantial monetary loss. The Commissioners of Inquiry for the incident subsequently produced a lengthy report, which contains extensive discussion on the social and economic conditions of the rioters, as well as those of young people of Hong Kong in general, see "Kowloon disturbances, 1966: Report of Commission of Inquiry".

developed from these conditions,

> The economic, political and social structure of colonial Hong Kong had produced a grey industrial world in which sixty- to seventy-hour working week, often in unsafe and unhealthy conditions, over-crowding and limited prospects of upward mobility were the norms for young males. They did not have the optimism about their economic future or even the cultural values which had carried their fathers through the difficult years of the 1940s and 1950s. (Scott 1989:89, emphasis added)

On the whole, the evidence we saw suggest that the often reported (and celebrated) optimism needs to be qualified: it is a relatively recent phenomenon (which may reflect real changes in the opportunity structure), and its contextual meaning has to be taken more carefully. But having made these qualifications, one will have to agree that most Hong Kong people are optimistic about their mobility chances. What can we make of this popular optimism? Since the present study is concerned with actual instances of mobility, one may argue that subjective perception of mobility prospects is only of secondary relevance. However, as Parkin put it, "optimistic attitudes concerning mobility chances cannot be sustained in the face of continuously disconfirming evidence" (1972:156). Thus, given the "consistent" optimism on the part of the general public (since the 1970s), and the following features of Hong Kong society (in short, its demographic fluidity, economic dynamism, and the prevalence of small firms), there is good ground to argue that social mobility rates, at least in the absolute sense, are indeed quite high in Hong Kong.

Population and immigration

Hong Kong is an immigrant society. The first post-war census reported that in 1961 slightly less than half (48%) of the population were born locally. This figure rose to 60% in 1991. Not surprisingly, over 90% of the immigrants came from mainland China. Although there is little systematic data on their class origin, it should be safe to assume that many of them had experienced drastic occupational change and thus

class mobility. For example, if the immigrants were predominantly of rural origin, the shift from farming to industrial labour is, by definition, a form of class mobility. Given the obvious connection between immigration and class mobility, let us consider Hong Kong's immigration history briefly.

Table 2.1 shows the number of immigrants from mainland China between 1946 and 1989. The only systematic study on the background and condition of the immigrants was a survey conducted in 1954 by Hambro on behalf of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Hambro reported that "the majority [of the refugees] come from urban, non-manual occupations, with an education level far above the standard of the Chinese population in general" (1955:63). This is contrary to what I have expected, namely that most immigrants were from the countryside. Nonetheless, as can be seen from Table 2.2, while one-tenth of the immigrants were previously farmers or fishermen, less than 2% of them stayed in farming or fishing after their arrival in Hong Kong, so, in terms of worklife movement, there was indeed an outflow from primary production to industrial occupations. More generally, Hambro (1955:45) observed the following,

> [there is a] considerable shift of occupations amongst immigrants after their arrival in Hong Kong. The general features of this shift are: (i) An almost complete reorientation of farmers, mainly towards other manual occupations; (ii) A considerable increase in the proportion of manual occupations; (iii) A considerable reduction in the proportion of higher occupations; (iv) A hugh rise in the proportion of the unemployed.

He also estimated that, in terms of occupation and social status, about two-thirds of the refugees had experienced downward mobility (Hambro 1955:64). Regarding the immigrants who came to Hong Kong after 1954, I can only speculate on their social origin from smaller surveys and journalistic accounts. My impression is that while there were more peasants among the post-1954 immigrants, a sizable group of them

had at least some industrial experience.[4]

Immigration also affects mobility rates indirectly. For example, the emigre capitalists from Shanghai played a key role in building up Hong Kong's textile industries during the 1950s (Wong 1988). At the same time, the constant influx of labour had kept wages down. Both factors contributed to Hong Kong's export-oriented industrialization. Economic growth has, in turn, induced changes in the occupational and class structure, which led to more structural mobility. The causal chain between migration, economic growth, changes in the occupational structure, and mobility rates is long and intricate. So I will not make further speculation here.[5] Suffice it to say that immigration from China is an important source of structural mobility in Hong Kong.

Economic shifts

A second factor that may heighten mobility rates is Hong Kong's economic dynamism. Before the Second World War, Hong Kong thrived on commerce and entrepot trade. In 1931, manufacturing employed about one-fifth of the working population (see Table 2.3); and most of the pre-war industries, such as ship-building, ship-repairing and rope-making, were developed around port activities. The economy was severely disrupted by the Japanese occupation. But after the War, the entrepot

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[4]Referring to a survey conducted by a welfare agency, Siu suggests that, "85 percent of the recent immigrants are between the ages of 15 and 30, predominantly male. Seventy-nine percent are of rural origin" (1986:2, emphasis added). On the other hand, a report on the wave of refugee-influx in 1962 claims that, "[there] are some grounds for thinking that the Canton workers who were being sent back to the countryside were so discontented that the authorities want them out of the city at any price, even that of letting them out of the country; in order to avoid an explosion in the city they were helped on their way to Hongkong" (Far Eastern Economic Review, 7 June 1962, p.498, emphasis added).

[5]See Hout and Jackson (1986) for a discussion of the relationship between emigration, aggregated demand of the economy, and unemployment.

trade recovered rapidly. However, the communist revolution in mainland China in 1949, and the subsequent United Nations embargo against China (as a result of the Korean War) brought the trade to a sudden halt. The loss of this traditional source of income forced Hong Kong to switch to manufacturing in the early 1950s.

Because of the inflow of capital, labour and industrial expertise from China, the liberalization of world trade, and other trading advantages gained through Hong Kong's British connection (e.g. the Commonwealth Preferential Tariff System), Hong Kong's export-oriented industrialization soon gathered momentum. In 1961, 43% of the working population were employed in manufacturing. By 1971, this figure rose to 47%. But since the late 1970s, consequent on changes such as growing protectionism from Europe and the United States, competition from other countries with even cheaper labour cost, Hong Kong has experienced yet another wave of economic restructuring (Lui and Chiu 1993). This time the change is towards finance, commerce and service, and away from manufacturing. By 1991, manufacturing accounted for only 28% of the working population.

The post-war economic history of Hong Kong deserves a more detailed treatment. But it will serve our purpose to note simply that the transitions outlined above took place in a very short period of time. The economy of Hong Kong is truly in a state of flux over the past 40 years. Such economic dynamism provides, in a modified sense, an "open frontier" for the people of Hong Kong.[6] As firms, branches of industry, even the whole manufacturing sector, come in and fade out in quick succession, one possible scenario is that people in previously booming sectors may

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[6]Although I have discussed Hong Kong's economic dynamism in term of the overall shift from manufacturing to the service sector, the same argument also applies to shifts between individual branches of industry (e.g. the short-lived wig and denim booms in the 1960s and the 1970s respectively).

quickly lose their advantaged positions, while those of humble origins are able to exploit new business niches or employment opportunities in growing sectors. In other words, rapid economic shifts may lead to more rapid circulation of people between social classes, i.e. higher (relative) mobility rates. (Alternatively, the old privileged classes may keep their economic and social advantages by transferring their resources to the new sectors. For example, a textile manufacturer may pull down his factory building and become a property developer. Which of these two scenarios is true is an empirical question.)

The prevalence of small firms

The factories of Hong Kong are distinctly small in size. In 1986, 99% of all industrial establishments belonged to the small or small-medium sectors (defined as factories employing 0-49 and 50-199 people respectively). Together, these two sectors accounted for almost three quarters (73%) of all manufacturing workers, and each of them contributed to about a third of the gross output (Sit and Wong 1989:25-27). One can argue that the prevalence of small firms also facilitates social mobility.

Some preliminary evidence for this claim can be found in a survey done by Sit and Wong (1989) on the proprietors of Hong Kong's small/small-medium factories. The survey shows that close to two-thirds (64%) of the industrial entrepreneurs were born in mainland China. In terms of class origin (see Table 2.4), about a third (35%) of them came from "merchant" families,[7] one-fifth were of peasant origin, a quarter came from the working class (i.e. father being artisan/skilled worker or manual worker), and less than 5% were of "industrialist" background. The last figure leads

[7]The precise meaning of the term "merchant" is unclear. In the context of the local usage of the term, it can refer to owners of trading firms, shop-keepers, pedlars, in fact, most self-employed persons.

Sit and Wong to suggest that, "the small industrial sector is a very competitive arena and it is difficult for entrepreneurial families to maintain vocational continuity in this sphere" (1989:93).

Sit and Wong (1989:69-71) also report that most of their respondents became factory owners when they were still quite young: 44% of them were in their thirties, 25% were even younger; and 80% of them had held only one previous job. Not surprisingly, most (close to 80%) of those with prior work experience were employed in manufacturing. This is important because the majority of the entrepreneurs were not particularly well qualified, and they had to pick up technical and managerial skills through work experience (Sit and Wong 1989:100-102). From Table 2.5, it can be seen that close to 60% of the entrepreneurs started their worklife on the factory shop-floor as operatives, about one-fifth were clerks or executives, while those who began their career as managers or minor shareholders constituted only a very small minority (Sit and Wong 1989:102-108).

To launch their business, almost all of the surveyed entrepreneurs had to rely on their own funds; less than 1% of them were able to obtain loans from banks. This certainly limited the size of their investment and the scale of their operation (hence the small size of the average Hong Kong factory). But as Sit and Wong put it, "it does prove that small businesses function as easy entry points for people with the desire and ambition to run their own show and be manufacturers" (1989:147). Putting these observations together, they (1989:104) suggest that going into small scale manufacturing is a typical mobility path for people coming from disadvantaged background.

> The typical pattern for about 80% of the entrepreneurs is that they worked in one job, accumulating capital and know-how, before becoming employers ... our respondents usually have few career

> options open to them at first so that they tend to take up a job which they regard as below their worth ... the entrepreneurs tend to secure their employment mostly in the industrial sphere where educational qualifications are not particularly important. As a result, they gain industrial experience which later facilitate their transition into entrepreneurial role.

It should be noted that many of the self-made entrepreneurs surveyed by Sit and Wong belonged to class IVab rather than class I+II of the CASMIN schema. However, the movement from, say, class VIIa to class IVab is still a significant one, and perhaps class IVab functions as a stepping stone for subsequent movement into the service class. As Szczepanik (1958:21-22) observes,

> Most Hong Kong firms, both commercial and industrial, started as modest ventures of single proprietors, gradually changing into a partnership and sometimes into a private company ... thus the original capital normally has to be provided from the founder's past personal savings, supplemented perhaps by a loan from friends and relatives. The expansion of the firm depended subsequently on the volume of profits ploughed back and on the credits provided by banks, wholesalers, docks, and godowns.

Of course, a small factory may go bankrupt instead of grow into a larger concern. This is an empirical issue which I will return to in Chapters 3 and 4. For the moment, let me simply note that the prevalence of small firms may also facilitate social mobility.

Counter-evidence?

Having considered three factors that may lead us to expect Hong Kong to have relatively high mobility rates, I will now examine some counter arguments. Two recent papers on social mobility in Hong Kong are particularly relevant. The first paper is by Tsang (1992). From a 5% sample of the 1981 census, he selects all households in which (a) there were at least two generations -- a father and at least a child, (b) both father and child were economically active, and (c) the child was between the age of 15 and 27. The current occupations of the father and the child

were then taken as the child's origin and destination respectively. The mobility table constructed in this manner contains 19,375 cases (10,440 of which refer to father-son data, 8,935 were father-daughter data).[8] For his class schema, Tsang adopts the eightfold occupational classification of the 1981 census. He has made some distinctions within certain groups so that there are 14 categories in the full version of his schema;[9] this 14-category schema can be collapsed to a 10-category version and a 5-category version (see Table 2.6).

Having constructed the mobility tables, Tsang fits a perfect mobility model (i.e. independence model) and a quasi-perfect mobility model (quasi-independence model) to them.[10] Not surprisingly, they do not fit any of the three tables satisfactorily by conventional standard of goodness of fit. But by inspecting the residuals of the (non-fitting) perfect mobility model, Tsang makes the following inferences about Hong Kong's mobility pattern. From the residuals of 14 x 14 table, he argues that the tendency for immobility is strongest for the two classes of "hawkers" and

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[8]It should be noted at the outset that Tsang's analysis pertains to occupational mobility in early worklife. If it is true that (a) most people achieve occupational maturity in their mid-thirties, and (b) that the general direction of career mobility is from less advantaged positions to more advantaged ones, then Tsang should have underestimated the extent of upward mobility. He should also have missed some counter-mobility to higher socioeconomic positions in later career, and thus overestimated the degree of downward mobility.

[9]These distinctions are: (a) employers and non-employers are separated for both the "Professional, Technical & related workers" and "Administrative and Managerial worker"; (b) "supervisors and foremen" originally grouped in sales, service, and manufacturing sectors now form a group of their own; (c) "Hawkers" and "Domestic Helpers" are separated from "Sales workers" and "Service workers" respectively; (d) manufacturing workers are divided, according to skill levels, into "Operative workers", "Technicians and Craftsmen", and "Manufacturing Laborers". See Tsang (1992:52-57) for elaboration of the recoding.

[10]In the case of the 5 x 5 table, Tsang also tests a Revised Quasi-Perfect Mobility Model in which not only the diagonals cells but also the cells representing exchanges between Classes 1 and 2 (see the five class version of his schema in Table 2.6) are blocked out.

"agricultural workers and fishfolks", and that mobility crossing the manual/non-manual boundary is rare (1992:60-66). From the 10 x 10 table, he claims that, "the phenomenon of class inheritance is much more likely to happen at the two extremes of the hierarchy" (1992:71). From the residuals of the 5 x 5 table, he suggests that, "there are relatively greater opportunities for inter-class mobility between professional and managerial classes and the routine non-manual workers" (1992:74-75). Given these findings, Tsang suggests that, "four definite closures of mobility opportunities prevail, showing that four social classes exist in the social structure of Hong Kong" (1992:81), namely non-manual, skilled manual, semi-skilled manual, and unskilled manual.

Generally speaking, Tsang's findings -- principally that (a) the tendency for immobility is stronger at the two ends of the occupational hierarchy, and (b) that there is more short-range mobility within the manual or non-manual class than long-range mobility that crosses the manual/non-manual boundary -- are consistent with results obtained in other mobility studies (e.g. Hout 1983). However, it has to be said that they are based on data of quite doubtful quality, and somewhat unsatisfactory analyses.

Let me elaborate my misgivings. I believe that census data are unsuitable for mobility studies. To see this, readers should note that (at least in Hong Kong) census data are collected by living quarters, not families. In other words, there are occupational (and other) data of those family members who live together in the same dwelling, but those who did not live with their father at the time of the 1981 census had no chance of appearing in Tsang's mobility tables at all. The crucial question is whether there is a systematic relationship between intergenerational cohabitation and social class. If so, Tsang would have introduced serious bias into his study.

Tsang is well aware of this problem. In defense of his data, he compares the 5% sample he uses for constructing the mobility tables with a separate 20% sample of the same census. He finds that there is relatively little difference between the two samples in terms of average educational attainment, monthly income, and socioeconomic status.[11] Moreover, the differences that exist are not in the same direction. On the ground of these findings, he argues that the 5% sample contains "no apparent bias in market and class situations" (1992:29). This line of defense is, however, inadequate because income and education are incomplete measures of market and class situations. Other factors such as job security, promotion prospects, and the degree of autonomy that one enjoys and the authority that one exercises at work, etc. are equally important in determining class position. Thus, the question of bias remains unanswered.[12]

My second misgiving concerns Tsang's substantive claim. It seems that he only seeks to show that there is no such thing as perfect mobility in Hong Kong. As noted above, he fits a perfect mobility model and a quasi-perfect mobility model to his data. When it turns out that they do not fit the data satisfactorily, he (1992:84) concludes that,

> Hong Kong, in an absolute sense, is not an open society. That is because within her social structure, there prevails a number of "lines of social cleavage" along which class inheritance and monopolization of social mobility opportunities are constituted and maintained.

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[11]This is a composite index Tsang constructs on the base of education attainment and income.

[12]However, since income and education are indeed the principal components for socioeconomic indices, Tsang's argument stands stronger for the status attainment analysis that he undertakes in a separate paper (Tsang 1993). In that case, I would like to see further comparison between the two samples across a whole range of measures of central tendency and variability of income and education than just their arithmetic means.

This is certainly true, but rather uninformatively so. In fact, one would be very surprised if there is perfect mobility in Hong Kong, or that social origin and other ascriptive factors no longer play any role in the social allocation process. What is of interest is a detailed description of the pattern of unequal mobility chances in Hong Kong (which Tsang has to some extent done, though on the basis of a non-fitting model). I would also like to know whether this pattern is changing over time, and how does it differ from the patterns of other countries. Tsang is also aware of this criticism. However, it is difficult for him to ask comparative questions. To start with, there is no comparable time series of mobility data in Hong Kong, and the fact that his respondents are all young people, aged between 15 and 27, makes it impracticable for him to split his sample into smaller age cohorts to study mobility trends.[13]

As for cross-national comparison, Tsang takes a theoretical decision to rule out such attempt. Much in the line of Burawoy's (1976) criticism of the comparative status attainment research of Treiman and Terrel (1975), he argues (1992:86) that,

> most of the mobility studies in Western societies are neither culturally nor historically comparable to this study, which is based on the social structure of an oriental city still under British colonial rule in the early 1980s. As for our neighbouring countries, such as the three other Newly Industrialized Economies in East Asia, namely Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea, we still find that their social structure are not comparable to the uniqueness of that of Hong Kong. On the one hand, the occupational structures of both Taiwan and South Korea in which a large proportion of their incumbents engages in agricultural production are apparently not comparable to that of Hong Kong whose incumbents are mainly employed in manufacturing and servicing industries. On the other hand, the major difference between the social structures of Hong Kong and Singapore is their ethnic compositions. Singapore is a multi-racial and multi-cultural society, while Hong Kong is inhabited by a population of which the majority is Chinese. Taken together, if we are to make any comparison of the social

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[13]But there are other analyses which are straightforward to carry out, and will be of interest to mobility researchers, such as a comparison of the father-son and the father-daughter mobility tables.

> mobility processes among these societies, we must deal with the aforementioned structural differences sensibly and not to homogenize their heterogeneity.

This is an exceptionalist argument by fiat. Hong Kong is said to be unique, and thus incomparable to, apparently all countries, East or West. I will not repeat Treiman's (1976) rejoinder to Burawoy here. Suffice it to say that insofar as we can agree that Hong Kong shares some generic features with Britain, Japan or Singapore (e.g. all being industrial societies), the question of whether Hong Kong is really so unique is a matter for empirical examination. Thus, it would be interesting to see whether, and if so, how the small size of Hong Kong's primary sector or its ethnic homogeneity affects its mobility pattern. I will take up the task of cross-national comparison in Chapter 3. Let me turn to the second mobility paper.

Wong and Lui (1992b) have analyzed the data of the 1989 Hong Kong Social Mobility Survey, and they report the following findings. First, the class structure of Hong Kong has undergone significant changes over time, including a big expansion of the service class and a sharp contraction of the petty bourgeoisie (1992b:42-47).[14] Second, the absolute mobility rates of Hong Kong are quite high. For example, in terms of inflow rates, "about 60% of class I are upwardly mobile newcomers, with no hitherto non-manual background or experience ... [as for] the unskilled working class ... more than one-third of its membership came from people with petty bourgeois background ... as for the inflow into petty bourgeoisie, nearly 40% was from the three blue-collar classes" (1992b:50). On the whole, their judgement is that,

> there has been a remarkable increase of opportunities, if the expansion of the "room at the top" [i.e. the service class] is anything to go by. And the society is, based on the absolute mobility rates ... open and mobile. (1992b:48)

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[14]Wong and Lui (1992a, 1992b) adopt the sevenfold class schema of the Oxford Mobility Study (see Goldthorpe 1987).

However, in terms of relative mobility rates, the picture is very different. Wong and Lui have fitted five loglinear models to their mobility tables. They find that, "the broadly white-collar classes tend to recruit among themselves" (1992b:68), and "the non-manual and manual boundary does not look like some semi-permeable barrier allowing for upward and downward mobility" (1992b:69).

In short, their argument is this: changes in Hong Kong's class structure, especially the expansion of the service class, have brought about more mobility chance. This shows up as high absolute mobility rates and, in particular, a heterogeneous service class (in terms of class origin). However, not everyone is equally capable of taking advantage of these opportunities. Thus, alongside with high absolute rates, there is substantial inequality in relative mobility chances. Such findings are quite typical of mobility studies (e.g. Goldthorpe 1987). Together with Tsang, Wong and Lui pose a notable challenge to the general optimism about the openness of Hong Kong. However, as with Tsang's paper, I find their analyses rather unsatisfactory.

First, although not mentioned above, Wong and Lui have employed, in the same paper, several dated and flawed measures (e.g. Yasuda and Boudon indices, indices of association) to support their argument of unequal mobility chances. These indices have produced some results which are inconsistent with their subsequent loglinear models. For example, from the Boudon indices they calculated for Hong Kong, Wong and Lui claim that, "it is clear that the upper service class, the petty bourgeoisie and the unskilled manual class have a lower mobility rate than the other classes" (1992b:44). However, their loglinear models show that the propensity for immobility of the petty bourgeoisie is among the weakest of all classes. This sets the petty bourgeoisie apart from the service class which has the strongest tendency for

immobility (Wong and Lui 1992b:66-67). Wong and Lui have not tried to resolve this inconsistency, apart from admitting at one point that the Yasuda and Boudon indices "are not quite up to the task of ascertaining openness and opportunities" (Wong and Lui 1992b:44). Given their knowledge of the problems of these flawed measures, it is curious that they have used them at all.

More seriously, the loglinear modelling of Wong and Lui also has its problems. As noted above, one of their central claims is that, "the non-manual and manual boundary does not look like some semi-permeable barrier allowing for upward and downward mobility" (1992b:69). This claim is, apparently, based on their observation that, under a cross-boundary model, the parameter estimates for the two cells that refer to movement between class III on the one hand, and class V or VI on the other, are almost zero in magnitude. However, this crucial model is not nested within the other models they tested. Indeed, it is fitted to a different mobility table. (Without explanation, Wong and Lui have dropped class IV from their table altogether, and then collapsed the remaining 6 classes into 4, before they fitted the cross-boundary model to the data.) It is inappropriate to compare the cross-boundary model with other models (which do not suggest any cross-boundary mobility).

Even if the cross-boundary model is to be evaluated on its own, the conclusion of a relatively impermeable manual/non-manual boundary does not follow from the evidence presented. To arrive at this position, Wong and Lui need to show that cross-boundary movement is particularly unlikely, or formally speaking, that the interaction term for the two cells concerned is negative and statistically significant. They are, in fact, very close to zero (0.09 for cell IV+V-III, and -0.05 for cell III-IV+V, they are probably insignificant as well). This means that the two cells are

effectively at the neutral fluidity level.[15] In my judgement, the inference to be drawn from this finding is that there is, in fact, little barrier to short-range mobility between the two classes concerned, apart from those that arise from changes in the marginal distributions. The most that one can say is that there is no particularly strong tendency for cases to be found in the two cells. But there is no tendency for cases not to found there either.

To test how well a nested cross-boundary model will fit the "original" 7 x 7 table, I have repeated and extended the analyses of Wong and Lui. The results are reported in Table 2.7. Models 1 to 4 are suggested by them (1992b:63-70). Readers can see that the two QPM-corners models achieve a satisfactory fit with the data (but note also that, in terms of G^2, Model 4 does not represent an improvement to Model 3). Turning to Table 2.8, readers can see that 8 of the 15 parameters of Model 3, and 10 of the 19 parameters of Model 4 are not significantly different from the baseline neutral fluidity level (i.e. level 1). These insignificant parameters are redundant, and Models 3 and 4 are clearly over-parametrized. So before fitting my cross-boundary model, let me first fit a more parsimonious QPM-corners model.

Model 5 is a slight modification of the QPM model (Model 2): apart from "blocking out" the diagonal cells, it also postulates that the cells I-II, II-I are at interaction level 3, while the cells VI-VII, VII-VI are at interaction level 7. Using the same degrees of freedom as Model 2, it reduces G^2 by 9.4. It also accounts for 56% of the total

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[15]Wong and Lui's cross-boundary model can be formally represented as follows:

$$\text{Log } F_{ij} = a_0 + O_i + D_j + b_{ij}Z$$

where F_{ij} is the fitted value of cell (i,j); a_0 is the grand mean; O_i, D_j are the two marginal effects; b_{ij} is the cell-specific interaction term; for cells on the main diagonal and for the following cells: (1,2), (2,1), (2,3) and (3,2), $Z = 1$; otherwise, $Z = 0$. They have shown that b_{ij} practically equals 0 for the cells (2,3) and (3,2). Thus, an alternative model which specifies $Z = 1$ for the diagonal cells, and for cells (1,2) and (2,1) only will probably fit the data just as well and save 2 degrees of freedom.

association between origin and destination. However, this model does not fit the data satisfactorily. Model 6 is my cross-boundary model. It differs from Model 5 in that 6 separate levels are specified for the cells that represent short-range mobility between classes III, IV and V (see Table 2.8). This model achieves a satisfactory fit with the data by conventional standards. It uses 6 more degrees of freedom than Model 5, but G^2 comes down by 14.6, which is a significant change.

The parameter estimates of the models I fitted are reported in Table 2.9. It can be seen that, under Model 6, all 6 parameters that refer to cross-boundary mobility are negative. However, only 3 of them are significant.[16] The 3 cells with insignificant interaction parameters are really at the neutral fluidity level. In other words, there is no significant barrier against the mobility flow that these 3 cells refer to, namely from class III to class IV, and from class V to class III or class IV.

On the whole, my re-analysis of Wong and Lui's table gives a picture which is quite different from theirs. I have shown that a much simpler QPM-corners model (Model 5) accounts for 56% of the total association between origin and destination, though it is still unsatisfactory by conventional standard of goodness of fit. My cross-boundary model achieves a satisfactory fit with the data. This means that there are, indeed, mobility barriers against short-range movement that crosses the manual/non-manual boundary. But on closer inspection, these barriers seem to apply only to mobility from class III to class V, and from class IV to class III or V. Certainly, improvement can be made to Model 6. But I will leave further loglinear analyses of Hong Kong's mobility regime to Chapter 3.

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[16]It should, however, be noted that the shortfall to significance of these three parameters may be an artefact of the relatively small N of the Hong Kong mobility table.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have argued that given the demographic fluidity, the economic dynamism and the prevalence of small firms in Hong Kong, there are some ground to think that mobility rates, at least in the absolute sense, are quite high in Hong Kong. Also, most Hong Kong people are optimistic about their mobility chances (at least since the 1970s). This optimism calls for empirical verification. Two attempts have been made recently to assess Hong Kong's mobility regime, though, in my judgement, they are both unsatisfactory. So much work remains to be done. Having cleared the ground for my analyses, I will turn to a comparative analysis of the mobility pattern in Hong Kong.

Table 2.1 Numbers of immigrants from China (legal and illegal)[a]

1946	486,000	1968	16,928
1947	371,000	1969	10,846
1948	166,000	1970	12,179
1949	262,000	1971	15,136
1950	-242,000	1972	37,626
1951	27,000	1973	98,503
1952	22,000	1974	62,920
1953	-57,000	1975	35,343
1954	-28,000	1976	40,599
1955	N.A.[b]	1977	47,000
1956	57,500	1978	108,500
1957	63,813	1979	180,700
1958	43,156	1980	124,500
1959	28,181	1981	N.A.[c]
1960	N.A.	1982	N.A.
1961	40,407	1983	27,000
1962	90,668	1984	27,700
1963	27,813	1985	27,730
1964	27,641	1986	27,100
1965	15,277	1987	27,300
1966	14,530	1988	28,000
1967	15,307	1989	27,300

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[a]Sources: Hambro (1955), Table IX (1946-54); Sit (1981), Table 1.2 (1961-79); Hong Kong Annual Report, various date (1956-60, 1980, 1983-89).

[b]Not available.

[c]Since October 1980, all illegal immigrants, if found, are repatriated back to mainland China. Hence, the relatively low and stable level of immigration afterwards.

Table 2.2 Distribution of Hong Kong's immigrant population by former occupation in mainland China, and by occupation in Hong Kong as of June 1954 (column percentage).[a]

	Mainland China	Hong Kong		
		HK-born	pre-war immigrants	post-war immigrants
Farmers	9.6	-	1.1	1.6
Fishermen	0.2	-	0.7	0.2
Coolies and amahs	0.8	5.0	11.4	11.0
Cottage craftsmen	1.4	3.2	6.8	9.5
Industrial labourers	2.7	7.8	8.6	12.6
Independent craftsmen	1.9	3.3	4.5	2.7
Hawkers	2.4	6.1	8.5	7.4
Clerks and shop assistant	9.9	6.6	6.5	5.3
Business men	5.3	2.1	2.2	1.6
Professional and intellectuals	10.0	1.7	1.9	3.5
Army and police	16.4	1.2	2.1	0.2
Other	4.7	6.5	4.6	4.8
Unemployed	2.0	8.0	11.5	15.1
Housewives	32.7	28.5	29.6	24.5

[a]Source: Hambro (1955), Table XXIX and Table XXXI.

Table 2.3 Distribution of Hong Kong's working population by industry (column percentage)[a]

	1931	1961	1971	1981	1991
Agriculture & fishing	13.7	7.3	4.0	2.0	*[b]
Mining & quarrying	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.1	*
Manufacturing	19.1	43.0	47.7	41.2	28.2
Electricity, gas & water	0.4	1.1	0.6	0.6	*
Construction	4.5[c]	4.9	5.3	7.9	6.9
Wholesale & retail trade, restaurant & hotel[d]	-	14.4	16.0	19.1	22.5
Transport, storage & communication	15.1	7.3	7.2	7.6	9.8
Financing, insurance real estate & business service	20.6	1.6	2.6	4.7	10.6
Service	-	18.3	14.7	15.4	19.9
Others	4.7	1.4	1.6	1.4	2.1
Public Administration & defense[e]	5.0	-	-	-	-
Professions	2.1	-	-	-	-
Entertainment & sport	1.4	-	-	-	-
Personal service	13.0	-	-	-	-

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[a]Source: Hong Kong Census, various years.

[b]Grouped under "Others".

[c]Originally as "building and decorating".

[d]This category and the category of "Service" were not present in the 1931 census.

[e]This and the next three categories were present in the 1931 census only.

Table 2.4 Distribution of entrepreneurs by occupational origin (column percentage)[a]

Father's occupation	Entrepreneurs (1978)[b]	Entrepreneurs (1987)
Merchant	40.5	34.7
Farmer/Fisherman	21.3	19.0
Artisan/Skilled worker	10.7	16.5
Industrialist	8.9	4.8
Manual worker	7.7	8.1
Professional	7.0	6.5
Manager/Executive	1.0	1.6
Civil servant	0.7	1.6
Hawker	0.0	2.0
Others	2.2	5.2
N	403	248

[a]Source: Sit and Wong (1989) Table 7.11

[b]Sit and Wong have conducted a similar survey in 1978. This column lists the corresponding figures for the 1978 survey.

Table 2.5 Distribution of entrepreneurs by first job (column percentage)[a]

First job	Entrepreneurs (1978)	Entrepreneurs (1987)	
Shareholder	9.0	3.8	
Manager	5.9	5.9	
Executive	24.2	8.9	20.7
Clerk		11.8	
Mechanic/Engineer	60.8	17.3	57.8
Supervisor		8.4	
Worker		22.8	
Apprentice		9.3	
Others	0.0	11.8	
N	388	237	

[a]Source: Sit and Wong (1989) Table 8.

Table 2.6 Class schemata (Tsang 1992)[a]

Full version	10-category version	5-category version
1 Professional, technical & related workers - employers		
	1 Professional, technical & related workers	
2 Professional, technical & related workers - except employers		1 Professionals, administrators & managers
3 Administrative & managerial workers - employers		
	2 Administrative & managerial workers	
4 Administrative & managerial workers - except employers		
5 Supervisors & Foreman	3 Supervisors & Foreman	
6 Clerical & related workers	4 Clerical & related workers	2 Routine non-manual workers
7 Sales workers - except hawkers	5 Sales workers - except hawkers	
8 Operative workers	6 Operative workers	3 Skilled manual labourers
9 Technicians & craftsmen	7 Technicians & craftsmen	
10 Service workers - except domestic workers	8 Service workers - except domestic workers	
		4 Semi-skilled manual labourers
11 Manufacturing labourers	9 Manufacturing labourers	
12 Sales workers - hawkers		
13 Agricultural workers & fishfolks	10 Unskilled manufacturing labourers	5 Unskilled manual labourers
14 Service workers - domestic workers		

[a]Source: Tsang (1992:55) Table 8.

Table 2.7 Loglinear modelling of a Hong Kong mobility table, based on the class schema of Oxford Mobility Study

Model	G^2	df	p	model comparison	rG^2	df	p
1 Perfect Mobility	101.2	36	0	-	-	-	-
2 Quasi-Perfect Mobility	54.2	29	0	-	-	-	-
3 QPM-Corners I	27.3	21	>.10	-	-	-	-
4 QPM-Corners II	20.0	17	>.20	M4 - M3	7.3	4	>.10
5 QPM-corners III	44.8	29	<.05	M5 - M1	56.4	7	<.05
6 Cross-Boundary	30.2	23	>.10	M6 - M5	14.6	6	<.05

Table 2.8 Design matrices of models fitted in Table 2.7 (underlined levels are significantly different from the neutral fluidity level, i.e. level 1[a])

Model 2

2	1	1	1	1	1	1
1	3	1	1	1	1	1
1	1	4	1	1	1	1
1	1	1	5	1	1	1
1	1	1	1	6	1	1
1	1	1	1	1	7	1
1	1	1	1	1	1	8

Model 3

2	3	1	1	1	1	1
4	5	1	1	1	1	1
1	1	6	1	1	1	1
1	1	1	7	1	1	1
1	1	1	1	8	9	10
1	1	1	1	11	12	13
1	1	1	1	14	15	16

Model 4

2	3	4	1	1	1	1
5	6	7	1	1	1	1
8	9	10	1	1	1	1
1	1	1	11	1	1	1
1	1	1	1	12	13	14
1	1	1	1	15	16	17
1	1	1	1	18	19	20

Model 5

2	3	1	1	1	1	1
3	3	1	1	1	1	1
1	1	4	1	1	1	1
1	1	1	5	1	1	1
1	1	1	1	6	1	1
1	1	1	1	1	7	7
1	1	1	1	1	7	8

Model 6

2	3	1	1	1	1	1
3	3	1	1	1	1	1
1	1	4	9	10	1	1
1	1	11	5	12	1	1
1	1	13	14	6	1	1
1	1	1	1	1	7	7
1	1	1	1	1	7	8

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[a]The neutral fluidity level refers to situations in which only the effect of the marginal distributions apply to the cells concerned.

Table 2.9 Parameter estimates of loglinear models of Table 2.7, level 1 being the baseline neutral fluidity level, asterisked parameters are significant at the 5% level

Model 2 Quasi Perfect Mobility

L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	L7	L8
1.40*	1.03*	0.89*	0.37	-0.02	0.37	0.61*

Model 3 QPM-Corners I

L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	L7	L8	L9	L10	L11	L12
1.46*	0.49	0.75	1.09*	0.78*	0.19	0.05	0.55	-0.85	-0.07	0.75*

L13	L14	L15	L16
0.55	0.66*	0.70*	0.93*

Model 4 QPM-Corners II

L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	L7	L8	L9	L10	L11	L12
1.56*	0.66	0.09	0.86	1.28*	0.23	0.52	0.94*	1.07*	0.18	-0.05

L13	L14	L15	L16	L17	L18	L19	L20
0.46	-0.94*	-0.16	0.65*	0.45	0.56*	0.60*	0.83*

Model 5 QPM-Corners III

L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	L7	L8
1.61*	0.86*	0.83*	0.27	-0.09	0.52*	0.81*

Model 6 Cross-Boundary

L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	L7	L8	L9	L10	L11	L12
1.84*	1.09*	0.27	-0.24	-0.69	0.92*	1.22*	-0.58	-0.82*	-0.74*	-0.86*

L13	L14
-0.54	-0.76

Chapter 3

A Comparative Analysis of Social Mobility in Hong Kong

This chapter examines Hong Kong's intergenerational class mobility regime from a comparative perspective. More specifically, I fit the core model of social fluidity developed in the CASMIN (Comparative Analysis of Social Mobility in Industrial Nations) project to a Hong Kong mobility table. This exercise serves two purposes. First, Hong Kong is used as a further test case for some of the results reported by Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a). Second, by way of this comparison, I hope to bring out some of the distinctive features of Hong Kong's fluidity pattern.

The CASMIN project

Let me start by recapitulating from Chapter 1 the central hypothesis of recent comparative mobility research. Mobility researchers are interested in the extent and the sources of variations in mobility rates across nations. The FJH hypothesis, originally formulated by Featherman, Jones and Hauser (1975), postulates that cross-national variations in absolute mobility rates (i.e. inflow, outflow and total mobility rates) are due to factors exogenous to the processes that transmit social advantages across generations (but these processes are largely common for all industrial societies). The effects of the exogenous factors are manifested in the marginal distributions of the standard mobility table. Thus, if the margins, and hence the exogenous factors, are statistically controlled for, it will become apparent that mobility rates, at what is now commonly called the relative level, are largely the same for all industrial societies with a market economy and a nuclear family system.

The FJH hypothesis has been subjected to many empirical tests. In particular,

Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a), working under the auspices of the CASMIN project, have developed a core model to represent their conception of the cross-nationally common fluidity pattern. When this model is fitted to individual mobility tables of European nations, they find that the deviations between the model and the observed fluidity patterns are (a) small in magnitude, and (b) non-systematic in nature, in the sense that they are better understood as arising from the specificities of the social and economic histories of individual nations than in terms of macro-sociological variables. Erikson and Goldthorpe argue that this is sufficient evidence for a weak version of the FJH hypothesis.

Having found support for their argument among the European nations, they turn to examine a few non-European cases. In particular, after studying the fluidity pattern of Japan, they report that, "Japan does not display any greater deviations from our model of core social fluidity than those found among European nations ... and there would thus seem little basis for proposing a distinctive Japanese type of fluidity pattern, rather than seeing Japanese fluidity as representing simply another national variation on the common theme that our core model serves to define" (Ishida, Goldthorpe and Erikson 1991:987, emphasis added; see also Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992a:343-352).

In other words, Japan falls within the range of the European nations. But this does not settle the larger question of whether there is an East Asian type of social fluidity. This is because, as Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a:173) themselves argue, it is not deviations per se, but those which are systematic, and thus have to be understood in terms of macro-sociological variables, that are most damaging to the FJH hypothesis. It follows that to address the question of East Asian exceptionalism in social fluidity, we need to examine more than one industrial country from East Asia, and see if they

deviate from the core model in the same way. If that is the case, we will have good ground to argue for an East Asian type of social fluidity, and the FJH hypothesis will have to be further qualified accordingly. With this concern in mind, this chapter put the CASMIN core model to yet another test in the context of modern Hong Kong.

East Asian Exceptionalism in social fluidity

But is there a prima facie case for this exceptionalist argument? It seems to me that some preliminary evidence can be found in the distinctive industrialization experience of the East Asian countries. Indeed, Japan together with the East Asian Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs), South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong, have often been taken as providing a distinct model of economic development (Deyo 1987, Gereffi and Wyman 1990).[1]

The term "East Asian growth model" is often used to mean several things, such as a strong developmentalist state, export-oriented industrialization, and a repressive labour control regime. For our present purpose, the strong state is of particular relevance because the strength of the East Asian states has allowed them to implement, quite apart from their industrial policies,[2] other programmes which have directly affected the class structure and the extent of class inequality in their country. For example, the land reform of Taiwan and South Korea in the 1950s drastically

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[1]It must be said that there are different views on what the East Asian growth model means. One school of thought stresses the common cultural make-up of the East Asian countries (e.g. Berger 1989). Others argue that the rapid growth of East Asia is the result of unfettered operation of the market (Belassa 1981). I cannot go into the relative merits and flaws of these approaches here. I will only note that I subscribe to what Evans and Stephens (1988) call the new historical comparative political economy approach.

[2]Indeed, the type of industrial policy found in South Korea or Taiwan is absent in Hong Kong. But see Schiffer (1991) for an unorthodox view of the state's role in Hong Kong's economic growth.

equalized rural income. Subsequent policy in both countries of squeezing agriculture to promote industry has kept rural income low relative to the urban sector. This has induced an exodus of labour from farms to urban factories, and thus helped to bring about "a swifter, more abrupt, and more intense proletarianization [in Korea] than occurred in 19th and 20th century Europe" (Koo 1990:669, see Sen and Koo 1992 for a similar argument about Taiwan). In Hong Kong, the massive public housing programme can be seen as a wage paid by the state to its working class tenants. This programme lessened the pressure for higher wage claims, and thus helped to maintain Hong Kong's export competitiveness in labour cost. It also has some redistributive function (Ho 1989, Castells, Goh and Kwok 1990).

It is also relevant that the East Asian states adopt an export-led industrialization rather than import-substitution. Given the level of technology available to the East Asian nations when they began industrialization, the decision to export meant that they had to rely on light, labour intensive industries such as garment, footwear and toys. The effect was a higher level of employment than would have been possible under an import-substitution regime. It is true that the wage rate in East Asia was low by Western standards, but a high level of employment seems to have an overall income equalizing effect. Indeed, compared with their Latin America counterparts, the East Asian countries have managed to sustain industrial growth with a relatively egalitarian income distribution (but see Evans 1987 for caveats).

It is interesting to note that a strong, lasting socialist government is often thought to be capable of ameliorating inequality, including that of mobility chances (e.g. Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992a:164-166). The East Asian states are generally more concerned with promoting growth than distributive justice in their countries. Indeed, most of them have long avowed to be anti-socialist. However, as a side effect of their

industrialization program, they may have inadvertently brought about the same equalizing effect as socialist governments, insofar as class mobility is concerned.

The pace of industrialization of the East Asian nations also distinguishes them from the Western countries. For the latter, industrialization took place over a relatively extended period of time. Consequently, there was a clear temporal order in gross population flow between economic sectors -- first from agriculture to industry, and then from industry to services. In contrast, because of the compressed industrialization of East Asia, the contraction of the agricultural classes was concomitant with the expansion of both the manual working class and the white collar classes at more or less the same time. This could have affected the propensity of mobility flow between social classes.

Taken together, features such as high speed economic growth, a strong developmentalist state, export-led industrialization and a relatively egalitarian income distribution have led many researchers to suggest that the East Asian NICs offer a distinct model of economic development. To the extent that this is true, would it not be reasonable to suggest that there is an East Asian type of social fluidity as well?[3]

Two general problems

I am going to address this question with data collected in the 1989 Hong Kong Social Mobility Survey, but before I proceed to model fitting, two general problems need to be addressed. They are: the relatively small sample size (N=752), and empty cells (all 14 cells of the two columns representing destinations IVc and VIIb). One can argue that these two problems are partially related: if the sample is bigger, then,

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[3]See Burris (1992) for a similar argument for a distinctive process of class formation among the East Asian NICs.

in principle, there is a greater chance for us to have some respondents of class IVc and VIIb -- thus, overcoming the empty cell problem. That is to say, the empty cells can be regarded as sampling zeros. While there may be some truth in this position,[4] I would argue that it makes good sociological sense to consider the empty cells as structural zeros. Hong Kong has been described as an "industrial colony" and a "city-state". Its geographical setting, namely the absence of any significant rural hinterland, has very much constrained the development of its economic and class structure. The 1986 by-census reports that only one percent of the working population are employed in agriculture. This means that finding employment or business opportunity in the tiny primary sector of Hong Kong is, for most people, extremely difficult. In this sense, I would argue that it is sociologically meaningful and legitimate to take mobility flow into class IVc or VIIb as structurally impossible. The imagery here is a highly advanced industrial society where the size of the primary sector has dropped to its absolute minimum. Accordingly, the only significant mobility flow is that within and between the secondary and tertiary sectors. The hidden story is, of course, that millions of farmers elsewhere, especially in China, are involved in producing food and other primary goods for Hong Kong.

Looking at the problem from a slightly different angle, the Hong Kong survey can be regarded as a study of urban social mobility. Similar results could be obtained if we chose to study the mobility experience of inhabitants of Tokyo, London or any other major cities in the industrial world. The crucial difference here is that in the

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[4]The 1989 Hong Kong mobility survey used two address lists. The first and principal one was a random sample of all residential addresses of the urban area. The second and much smaller one was a sample of segment addresses which listed clusters of cottages found in the rural, not-so-accessible, and relatively thinly populated parts of Hong Kong. The response rate from the second address list was lower than that from the first list. This may have led to an under-representation of farmers and farm workers in the sample.

case of Tokyo (or London), because there is no legal/political restriction on geographical migration, we should be able to detect more population movement into and out of the city. Some of the outward movement could be mobility flow into the rural agricultural classes. In the case of Hong Kong, however, political boundaries have decidedly segregated the mobility processes within Hong Kong itself and those found in its neighbouring rural population. It is against this unique historical and political context that the argument for treating the empty cells as structural zeros is put forward.

Consequently, in the analyses below, I will be modelling a 7 x 5, rather than a 7 x 7, mobility table. It follows that the CASMIN core model is not fully applicable to Hong Kong. As we shall see, two of the design matrices of the core model which refer specifically to the agricultural classes have to be dropped. This is somewhat unfortunate because one of key findings of the CASMIN project is that, "it is sector effects -- barriers to mobility between agricultural and non-agricultural classes -- that play by far the major role in producing negative parameters" (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992a:136). By disallowing mobility into classes IVc and VIIb, and also, by partially overlooking the propensity for immobility of farmers,[5] I will not be able to examine an important aspect of social fluidity (i.e. sector barriers) in the Hong Kong context. However, this does not nullify the significance of this attempt to compare Hong Kong's fluidity pattern with the core model along other dimensions. That is to say, I recognize that an important feature of Hong Kong's fluidity pattern (i.e. the absence of sector effect) is obviously unique. Accordingly, I limit my objective to that of testing how well the CASMIN core model captures the fluidity pattern between the

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[5]Readers should note that the Hong Kong mobility table only records those farmers who had first been geographically mobile (from the mainland to Hong Kong), and then became socially mobile. By definition, those who were geographically immobile (i.e. those who stayed in rural China) would not appear in this study.

non-agricultural classes of Hong Kong.

The fact that there are relatively few cases (N=752) in the Hong Kong table must be seen as a mixed blessing. On the one hand, small sample size often makes it easier to obtain a model that satisfies the conventional standard of goodness of fit. Subsequent analyses will show that, by such a standard, the core model fits the Hong Kong case very well -- in fact, better than it does for most countries in the CASMIN sample.[6] On the other hand, small N also implies that, generally speaking, it will be more difficult to obtain statistically significant parameters. This seems to be at work in the following analyses as well. There is a need to estimate how far the shortfall in the statistical significance of these parameters is an artefact of the small sample size. However, this is beyond the scope of this thesis. Let me briefly recapitulate the testing procedure of Erikson and Goldthorpe, and report the results of fitting the CASMIN core model to the 7 x 5 Hong Kong mobility table.

The CASMIN core model

The CASMIN core model of social fluidity is a "topological" model with eight matrices. These matrices are designed to capture four types of effects, namely hierarchy, inheritance, sector, and affinity. Very briefly, these effects can be

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[6]The full CASMIN sample contains fifteen countries which fall into three main groups. First, there are nine European countries (England and Wales, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Poland, Scotland, and Sweden) which form the core of the CASMIN data set. The data of these countries were recoded from the unit record level by Erikson and Goldthorpe. Then there are three non-European cases (Australia, United States, and Japan) of which data quality is considered to be somewhat less satisfactory. Finally, mobility data of three other European countries (Czechoslovakia, Italy, and the Netherlands), which was coded by the original research teams according to the CASMIN class schema, have been made available to Erikson and Goldthorpe. This chapter compares Hong Kong with Japan and the nine core European countries.

understood as follows:[7]

(1) Hierarchy effects: although Erikson and Goldthorpe argue that their class schema does not follow a unidimensional hierarchy in a straightforward manner, they suggest that the seven classes can still be graded according to the relative advantages they offer as classes of origin, and their desirability as classes of destination. More specifically, three hierarchical levels are identified. Class I+II constitutes the first level; classes III, IVab and V+VI belong to the second level; and classes VIIa and VIIb form the third level. Class IVc, as class of origin, is included in the third level. However, as class of destination, it is included in the second level. On the base of this threefold distinction, the matrices HI1 and HI2 are designed to capture the barriers to mobility across any level boundary and two level boundaries respectively. In other words, HI2 pertains more specifically to long-range mobility.

(2) Inheritance effects: three levels of inheritance effects are postulated. The first level (IN1) is designed to measure a general immobility effect. It accounts for the propensity for people to stay in their class of origin (i.e. to be found on the main diagonal). IN2 aims to underscore the greater likelihood of immobility of classes I+II, IVab and IVc. As for IN3, it further underlines the particularly high propensity for immobility of class IVc.

(3) Sector effect: this matrix (SE) seeks to capture the barriers to mobility between agricultural and non-agricultural classes.

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[7]Given the limitation of space, I can only refer readers to Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a:121-40) for more detailed discussion of these design matrices. The matrices, and their Hong Kong variants, are shown in Appendix B.

(4) Affinity effects: the first level of the affinity effects (AF1) refers to the very small chance of mobility between classes I+II and VIIb. The second level (AF2) postulates several specific linkages between classes that would partially offset the hierarchy and sector effects. In particular, it postulates affinity between classes I+II and III on the one hand, and that between classes V+VI and VIIa on the other. This captures the often noted status distinction between white and blue collar. AF2 also postulates affinity between I+II and IVab, and that between IVab and IVc. These can be understood as affinities arising from the common factor of ownership of means of production. Finally, AF2 also postulates an asymmetric affinity from IVc and VIIb to VIIa.

Formally, the core model can be represented, in multiplicative form, by equation 3.1:

$$F_{ij} = n\, t_i^{O}\, t_j^{D}\, t_{a(i,j)}^{HI1}\, t_{b(i,j)}^{HI2}\, t_{c(i,j)}^{IN1}\, t_{d(i,j)}^{IN2}\, t_{e(i,j)}^{IN3}\, t_{f(i,j)}^{SE}\, t_{g(i,j)}^{AF1}\, t_{h(i,j)}^{AF2} \qquad (3.1)$$

where F_{ij} is the expected frequency of cell ij, n is a scale factor, t_i^{O} and t_j^{D} are the main effects of class of origin and class of destination respectively, the remaining terms refer to the effects of the eight design matrices. Erikson and Goldthorpe fit equation 3.1 to national mobility tables at three levels of strictness. The first level prescribes that the core model be fitted with cross-nationally common parameters.[8] The second level allows the core model be fitted with parameters estimated separately

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[8]With the help of a multi-dimensional scaling exercise, Erikson and Goldthorpe find that the fluidity pattern of England and France would be closest to the "core" pattern of fluidity, if it exists at all. They then take the set of odd ratios derived when a strict CSF model is applied to England and France as the "empirically-derived pattern of core fluidity". By fitting this set of odd ratios to national mobility tables, they obtain counterfactual national mobility tables which suggest what the national mobility tables would look like if the CSF model is strictly correct (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992a:115-21). The cross-nationally common parameters are estimated by fitting equation 3.1 to these counterfactual mobility tables.

for each nation. Finally, national variants of the core model are derived by introducing minor modifications to the design matrices. These modifications must be well supported by established sociological and historical analyses. That is to say, they cannot be introduced for the purpose of improving goodness of fit alone. These national variants of the core model are then fitted to the respective mobility tables. It should be noted that of all the countries they studied, only England, France and Sweden achieve an acceptable fit at level 2.[9] The rest require modifications to the core model before an acceptable fit can be obtained.

Fitting the CASMIN core model to Hong Kong data

What about the case of Hong Kong? I follow the same testing procedure in the following analyses. The results are reported in panel A of Table 3.1.[10] (To facilitate comparison, panel B, which shows how some of the same models are fitted to other countries, is included.) As expected, the independence model (model 1) fits the data poorly, but it provides a baseline for evaluating subsequent models.

Model 2 refers to the first level of fitting -- the CASMIN core model with cross-nationally common parameters. As expected, it does not fit the Hong Kong data satisfactorily. Further comparison between model 2 and model 7 suggests a complex picture. On the one hand, in terms of standardised G^2, Hong Kong is well within the European range, while Japan is outside the range. On the other hand, in terms of other criteria, the core model (with fixed parameters) fits the Hong Kong data less well than it does for both Japan and the European countries. Model 2 misplaces over

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[9]That a good fit can be obtained for England and France at the second level is expected because the core model is designed on the basis of the fluidity patterns of these two countries. It should also be noted that the core model fits Czechoslovakia satisfactorily at the second level of testing.

[10]Model fitting and other analyses are done with GLIM, version 3.77.

9% of all cases in the Hong Kong table, and reduces only 54% of the G^2 under the independence model. The same model misplaces no more than 8% of the cases for other countries, and accounts for at least some 75% of the G^2.

Model 3 refers to the second level of testing -- core model with variable parameters. Here the model achieves an acceptable fit with the Hong Kong data by conventional standard of goodness of fit. Standardised G^2 for Hong Kong falls to 19, while the corresponding figure for all other countries is above 30. Readers should recall that only three other countries -- England, France and Sweden (also Czechoslovakia if the full CASMIN sample is considered) -- achieve an acceptable fit at this level. The percentage of misplaced cases in the Hong Kong table drops to about 5%, which is within the European range. Furthermore, this model accounts for about 80% of the association between origin and destination.

Since there is no need to introduce modifications to the core model to achieve a good fit for Hong Kong, it must be said that Hong Kong's fluidity pattern is, in fact, closer to the core model than are most of the countries in the CASMIN sample. However, inspection of the parameter estimates and their standard errors (Table 3.2) suggests that further modifications to the core model for the Hong Kong case are needed.

The first thing to note about Table 3.2 is that the parameters estimated for Hong Kong (panel 3) are of the same sign as the cross-nationally common parameters (panel 2). In terms of magnitude, IN1, IN2, AF1 and AF2 of Hong Kong are notably smaller than the corresponding core values, while the opposite is true for HI2. Second, the parameters for IN3 and SE are not estimated by GLIM. This is expected because these two matrices refer specifically to the effects of mobility into the destinations IVc or VIIb. These two columns are regarded as structural zeros, and

thus have been blocked out in the estimation process. In other words, model 3 is equivalent to the core model minus the IN3 and SE terms. These two matrices are explicitly dropped in subsequent models. Third, three of the remaining six parameters of model 3 are not significant by the conventional 5% standard (for df=18, t-value should not be less than 2.10). HI1 is only very marginally insignificant (t-value=2.09), followed by AF1 (.81) and IN2 (.59).

I thus drop IN2 from the model. It has no effect on goodness of fit (cf. model 4 of Table 3.1: a rise of .4 in G^2 for one degree of freedom is insignificant). Comparison between panels 3 and 4 of Table 3.2 also shows that dropping IN2 has little effect on the estimate of other parameters. This suggests that IN2 should not be kept in the model.[11]

But should we also drop AF1 from the model? In model 5, I have done that. The result is still an acceptable fit. For one degree of freedom, G^2 rises by only 0.7 (which is insignificant). Standardised G^2 remains unchanged at 18, and there is practically no change in the percentage of misplaced cases. Turning to panel 5 of Table 3.2, it can be seen that dropping AF1 leads to only one notable change in the remaining parameters -- the magnitude of HI2 increases from -.76 to -.82. Apparently, HI2 now captures some of the effect originally measured by AF1, namely the barriers to movement from VIIa to I+II. It seems that AF1 does measure some real effects in Hong Kong's fluidity regime. For this reason, I prefer model 4 to model 5.

To recapitulate, we now a have an acceptable model (model 4) that contains five

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[11]To repeat the cautionary note, the shortfall to significance of IN2 may, to some extent, be explained by the small N of the mobility table.

design matrices: HI1, HI2, IN1, AF1 and AF2. Of the three matrices dropped, IN3 and SE are not estimated for substantive reason -- they refer specifically to mobility barriers between agricultural and non-agricultural classes, something we cannot measure for the Hong Kong mobility table. As for IN2, it is dropped because, given the presence of other matrices in the model, it is highly insignificant.

Notice that I have not introduced any modification to individual cells of the remaining matrices. Nor have I added new matrices to the core model to achieve a good fit. In this sense, the core model fits the observed pattern of Hong Kong very well. By formal convention of goodness of fit, there is no need to seek improvement to model 4. However, in view of the fact that this model does not refer explicitly to any sectoral barriers to mobility (it is likely that they are now captured partially and implicitly by other matrices), and that AF1 is designed to capture the negative affinity between the service class and farm workers, I have further fitted a national variant model for Hong Kong. In model 6, the AF1 term is included in the cell IVc-I+II.[12] This should enable AF1 to capture some sector effects to mobility for which the SE term was originally designed (namely, the barriers against mobility from farmer origin to service class destination). The result of this modification is very encouraging. By affecting only one cell, this model shows considerable improvement to model 4. For the same degree of freedom, there is a drop of 5.1 in G^2. Model 6 misplaces 4% of all cases, and accounts for about 85% of the association between origin and destination.[13] Thus, model 6 is preferable to model 4.

Three of the five parameters estimated under model 6 (HI1, IN1, AF2) are very

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[12]I am grateful to John Goldthorpe for suggesting this modification.

[13]In fact, the G^2 returned by model 6 is so small that the standardised measure $G^2(S)$ becomes inapplicable. See note b of Table 3.1.

similar to their corresponding value under model 4, while HI2 decreases from -.76 to -.55 and AF1 rises from -.51 to -1.05.[14] For 19 degrees of freedom, the critical t-value of five percent is 2.09. By this standard, all five parameters are significant: HI1 (t-value=2.09), HI2 (2.39), IN1 (3.17), AF1 (2.23) and AF2 (2.50). I take model 6 as the final model.

Table 3.3 maps out how the five parameters of my preferred model are applied to individual cells of the mobility table, and Table 3.4 reports how the cell interaction parameters under the Hong Kong model compared with those expected under the core model. Table 3.4 is expressed in percentage terms. So a value of 100 means that the cell interaction parameter under the Hong Kong model is at the same distance from the neutral fluidity level as that expected under the core model; a value of 50 means that the cell parameter under the Hong Kong model is only half the distance away from the neutral fluidity level; and a value of 200 means that it is twice the distance away.

Table 3.4 is notable on two counts. First, the parameter of 3 cells (IVc-IVab, IVc-VIIa, and VIIb-VIIa) is of the opposite sign to that expected under the core model. This is due to the absence of a large negative term (SE) in Hong Kong (cf. Table 3.3). Second, compared to the core level, there are only 3 cells (IVc-I+II, VIIa-I+II, I+II-VIIa) in which Hong Kong's interaction parameter is further away from the neutral fluidity level. There are 12 cells in which Hong Kong and the core model are of roughly the same distance from the neutral fluidity level, and 20 cells are such that Hong Kong is closer to the neutral fluidity level. To borrow an analogy used by

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[14]The direction of change of HI2 lends some support to the modification we introduce to the AF1 matrix. It seems that some of the sector effects formerly captured by HI2 under model 4 is now captured by AF1 under model 5.

Erikson and Goldthorpe, Table 3.4 suggests that although the contour of Hong Kong's fluidity pattern follows the core model closely, the Hong Kong landscape is, at the same time, much flatter than the core model. This implies that inequality in relative mobility chances is less extreme in Hong Kong than that suggested by the core model.

Let us examine Hong Kong's fluidity pattern more carefully. The parameter estimates of my preferred model (panel 6 of Table 3.2) are remarkable in several ways. In the first place, the IN1 term (.38) of Hong Kong is the second weakest of all countries in the CASMIN sample (the weakest is that of Sweden [.28]).[15] So the propensity for immobility of all social classes of Hong Kong is rather low. Furthermore, since IN2 is insignificant, Hong Kong's service class and petty bourgeoisie are not significantly more immobile than other classes. (The IN2 term of Japan is also insignificant.) Also, since there is no IN3 term in the Hong Kong model, it must be said that Hong Kong's overall immobility effect is the weakest of all the countries tested.

Second, and in sharp contrast to the above, the total hierarchy effect (HI1 + HI2) of Hong Kong is quite strong. At the level of -.78, it is the third strongest of all eleven countries considered here. More specifically, the HI1 term of Hong Kong, at -.23, is almost identical to the core level (-.22), while its HI2 term (-.55), is the third strongest of all countries. This suggests that: (a) people of IVc, VIIa or VIIb origin face considerable barriers to long-range mobility to I+II destination, and (b) that people of I+II origin are unlikely to fall as far as class VIIa, even if they were to

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[15]The size of an individual parameter depends, in part, on what other parameters are included in the model. Since slightly different variants of the core model are accepted for each nation (some matrices are dropped, or the level of interaction of individual cells changed), the same parameters are not strictly comparable across nations. Having said this, such comparisons do suggest broad differences in the strength of the various effects across countries.

suffer from downward mobility.

Third, the modified AF1 term of Hong Kong (-1.05) is the strongest of all countries (the second strongest is that of Ireland [-.93]). This is consistent with the strong HI2 effect noted above, in that it underscores the difficulty of movement from farm origins to the service class.[16]

Finally, the AF2 term of Hong Kong (.25) is the weakest of all eleven countries (the countries that have the second weakest AF2 term are Japan and Sweden [.37]). Since the AF2 matrix postulates several specific linkages that would partially offset the hierarchy and sector effects, its weakness further underlines the strength of the hierarchy effect noted above.[17]

To recapitulate our findings so far, three points are notable. First, the CASMIN core model fits the Hong Kong mobility table very well. A satisfactory fit is achieved at the second level of testing. This is true for only three other countries in the sample. Second, it follows from the first point that the pattern of unequal mobility chances described by the CASMIN model can be found in Hong Kong. However, we have also seen that most of the cell interaction parameters of Hong Kong are closer to the neutral fluidity level than are expected under the core model. Hence, Hong Kong

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[16]One cautionary note with regard to the AF1 term: the AF1 matrix pertains not only to long-range, but also to cross-sector mobility. As suggested earlier, since our preferred model does not contain the SE matrix, the AF1 term is likely to have captured some "sector" effects. Accordingly, its magnitude could have been "inflated". This makes the comparison of the AF1 term of Hong Kong with that of other countries more problematic.

[17]Since the AF2 term pertains to a number of different effects, it is possible that the small size of this parameter reflects the extreme weakness of some, rather than all, of the relevant linkages. The AF2 term should, thus, be interpreted cautiously and in conjunction with other matrices.

exhibits a relatively high degree of openness, which is the result of: (a) the absence of sectoral barriers, and (b) the weakness of inheritance effects in Hong Kong. But, and this is the third point, such relative openness is only half of the story. Indeed, I would argue that the most notable, and rather puzzling, feature of Hong Kong's fluidity pattern is that weak inheritance effects co-exist with relatively strong hierarchy effects, particularly those against long-range mobility. In other words, while it is relatively easy for our respondents to move away from the main diagonal, those who are mobile in this minimal sense face rather formidable barriers along hierarchical boundaries. The fact that a respondent has left his class origin does not necessarily mean that he will travel very far up or down the class hierarchy.

Why should Hong Kong exhibit such a fluidity pattern? There is very little direct evidence to give a satisfactory account here. Nevertheless, regarding the insignificance of IN2, I would venture to suggest the following. Since the two property-owning classes of Hong Kong, I+II and IVab,[18] are not significantly more immobile than the other classes, one or both of the following should be true: (a) direct inheritance of an ongoing business from one's father is not a particularly attractive and/or feasible career option for many people, and (b) that coming from an entrepreneurial family does not give a respondent a strong motivation, or useful social contacts, or other social skills that would help him to set up his own business later.

These are very broad statements that need to be specified more carefully and then put to empirical tests, but I believe that the relatively weak propensity for immobility of classes I+II and IVab can partly be attributed to one prominent feature of Hong

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[18]Class I+II includes entrepreneurs as well as salaried professionals, managers, and administrators. The following argument applies only to what can be called the entrepreneurial segment of the service class.

Kong's industrial structure, namely the prevalence of small firms. In 1990, for example, small and medium factories, defined as concerns employing 0-49 and 50-199 workers respectively, accounted for 99% of all industrial establishments, 74% of all manufacturing workers and 68% of the gross industrial output (Census and Statistics Department 1990).

Generally speaking, being small means that there are relatively few assets to pass on to one's successor, thus reducing the desirability of direct inheritance from the successor's point of view. Being small probably also means that the firm has a shorter life expectancy because, compared with large corporations, small firms are more vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the market. While it may be the case that small firms are constantly being set up in large number, many of them will go under within a short period of time. Casual observers and academic researchers alike have often reported some sort of entrepreneurialism in Hong Kong. This may well be true, but I would argue that a prevalent desire to become one's own boss, or indeed even a high birth rate of small businesses, should not be confused with their durability. Because IN2 is insignificant, I would conjecture that the great majority of Hong Kong's small firms do not last long enough to reach the point of intergenerational succession.[19] It follows that models of Chinese family firms, such as that proposed by Wong (1985), which postulate how their structure and dynamics change over generations are, at best, limited in their applicability to a very small number of large concerns.

Put differently, direct inheritance of property plays a relatively less important part in perpetuating class inequality in Hong Kong. This does not make Hong Kong a

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[19]Verification of this claim would call for a study of the birth and death rates -- i.e. the organizational ecology -- of Hong Kong's small firms.

classless society. Instead, given the strong hierarchy effects to mobility, I would argue that, in Hong Kong, class inequality operates more effectively through other mechanisms such as the certification of formal credentials.[20]

Counterfactual comparisons

Having described Hong Kong's fluidity pattern, let me return to the question of East Asian exceptionalism. I will compare counterfactual and observed mobility tables so as to test whether Hong Kong's fluidity pattern is more similar to the Japanese pattern than it is to those of the European countries. Given the limit of space, I will consider only one European case, namely Sweden. The choice of Sweden is based on earlier findings that it shares many common features with Hong Kong (e.g. both countries achieve an acceptable fit with the core model at the second level of testing, both have weak inheritance effects). The two counterfactual tables I construct preserve the marginal distributions of the Japanese and the Swedish mobility tables respectively, but they contain the full set of Hong Kong's odds ratios. In other words, they represent the counterfactual situations in which Hong Kong's fluidity pattern prevails in the Japanese and the Swedish class structure. By comparing the absolute mobility rates embedded in the "true" and the counterfactual Japanese tables, I can assess how far Hong Kong's fluidity pattern differs from the Japanese one. Likewise, a comparison of the "true" and the counterfactual Swedish tables will show how Hong Kong differs from Sweden in social fluidity.

Operationally speaking, I start with the fitted Japanese table under its preferred model. This represents the "true" mobility pattern of Japan after random noises have been filtered out. I then take out the two columns representing the destinations IVc

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[20]See Pong and Post (1991), Wong and Lui (1992b) for discussion of the effects of family background on educational attainment.

and VIIb. This results in a 7 x 5 mobility table, which I take as that of "urban" Japan.[21] At this point, I turn to the fitted mobility table of Hong Kong under our preferred model. This table is then subjected to a procedure of "iterative simultaneous proportional adjustments" until its marginals become those of "urban" Japan.[22] To repeat, the outcome of this exercise is a table that preserves the Japanese marginals, but contains the full set of Hong Kong's odds ratios. In other words, it shows what the Japanese mobility table would look like if Hong Kong's fluidity pattern were to prevail in that country. The same procedure is then repeated for Sweden. The "true" and counterfactual outflow rates of Japan and Sweden are reported in Tables 3.5 and 3.6.

Let us start with the case of Japan. One striking feature of Table 3.5 is that, with the exception of the I+II-I+II cell, there are fewer cases on the main diagonal of the counterfactual table than on that of the "true" table. This implies that the overall propensity for immobility is weaker in Hong Kong than in Japan.[23] But since the

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[21]This last step implies the very strong assumption that the all rural population of Japan are either farmers or farm workers. This will most certainly introduce some bias into subsequent analyses. There is also the more complicated problem that the mobility processes linking the urban and the rural classes of Japan are, no doubt, different from those which happened in the context of Hong Kong. Having noted these problems, I would also argue that, given the nature of the data available to us, this procedure gives us the closest proxy of the mobility pattern of urban Japan.

[22]The basic idea is that the multiplication of a constant across the rows or columns of a mobility table would not affect the embedded odds ratios. Thus, by repeating this procedure, one can tailor a mobility table to fit a particular set of marginal distributions, but the fluidity pattern would remain unchanged. For more detailed discussion, see Mosteller (1968).

[23]The difference between the two tables is particularly marked for the routine non-manual and skilled manual workers. This seems to be the result of the notably high propensity for immobility of classes III, V+VI, and VIIa of Japan. Erikson and Goldthorpe observe that, "[in Japan] the propensity for immobility within classes III, V+VI, and VIIa ... is twice as great as it would be in the absence of [IN1] effect ... as against only one-and-a-half times as great under the core model; while, on the other hand, a relatively low propensity for immobility is implied within class I+II and IVab" (1992a:346).

I+II-I+II cell of the true table contains fewer cases, members of the Japanese service class seem to be facing a slightly greater danger of downward mobility than their counterparts in Hong Kong.[24]

Second, compared with the "true" table, the counterfactual table has more cases in the I+II-V+VI cell and fewer cases in the I+II-III cell. Thus, although members of the Japanese service class are relatively less capable of keeping their advantaged position, if they were to suffer downward mobility, they are not as likely as their Hong Kong counterparts to fall through the manual/non-manual divide. This is consistent with the observation that long-range downward mobility from the service class to the working class is very rare in Japan (Ishida, Goldthorpe and Erikson 1991:971).

Third, from the first column of Table 3.5, one can see that if Hong Kong's fluidity pattern were to prevail in Japan, class I+II would become much more inaccessible to people from IVc or VIIb origin.[25] However, people of all other origins would enjoy better chances of mobility into the service class. This pattern accords well with our knowledge of the strong AF1 term of Hong Kong.

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[24]The CASMIN researchers also point out that, in Japan, there is a popular practice to assign young entrants to routine clerical grades, even though they are of graduate status and are expected to move up to professional, administrative, or managerial positions eventually (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992a:346-347). Thus, many of the respondents in the I+II-III cell of the original Japanese table are not really suffering from downward mobility. Instead, they are in a extended process of career mobility. Taking this into account, the small difference between the I+II-I+II cells of the original and the counterfactual tables looks even less significant.

[25]If one assumes that geographical mobility would itself require some kind of resources, then it must be the case that only the more resourceful people from farming origins can "appear" in the Hong Kong mobility table. Keeping this argument in mind, the exceptionally high barriers that prevent the sons of farmers and farm workers of Hong Kong from moving into the service class would seem somewhat puzzling.

Let us now turn to the case of Sweden. First and most importantly, readers should note that five of the seven delta values of Table 3.6 are considerably smaller than the corresponding values of Table 3.5. So the differences between the "true" and the counterfactual outflow rates are smaller in the case of Sweden than they are in the case of Japan. It follows that Hong Kong's fluidity pattern is, in fact, closer to the Swedish than to the Japanese pattern.

Second, the largest delta values of Table 3.6 are related to the two farming classes. Similar to what we saw for Japan, this is because, under Hong Kong's fluidity pattern, fewer people from class IVc or VIIb can move into the service class. Third, the counterfactual table contains fewer immobile cases for the service class and the petty bourgeoisie (though the differences here are rather small). This reflects the absence of IN2 in the Hong Kong model. In the case of the service class, the "extra" mobile cases are found in class V+VI. As for the petty bourgeoisie, the "extra" mobile cases end up in the service class. Fourth, as in the case of Japan, if Hong Kong's fluidity pattern were to prevail in Sweden, the service class would be more open to all people but those from the two farming classes.

What can we learn from these counterfactual comparisons? To start with, they have confirmed what we earlier inferred from Hong Kong's parameter estimates (e.g. that propensity for immobility is relatively weak in Hong Kong and that there are high barriers to mobility from IVc or VIIb to I+II). More importantly, they also show that Hong Kong's fluidity pattern is closer to the Swedish than to the Japanese pattern. This certainly throws doubt on any claim of East Asian exceptionalism in social fluidity.

In fact, I would take a stronger position and argue that Hong Kong's fluidity pattern

is quite opposite to that of Japan. Surely, parallels can be drawn for the two cases, principally in that IN2 is insignificant for both Hong Kong and Japan, and that both countries display a relatively high degree of openness. However, regarding the latter, I would argue that the two countries are open in quite different ways. Readers should recall that Hong Kong has weak inheritance effects but strong hierarchy effects. If we go back to panel 7 of Table 3.2, it can be seen that Japan displays relatively strong inheritance effects and weak hierarchy effects. In other words, while it is difficult for the Japanese respondents to leave the main diagonal, those who manage to do so face comparatively weak constraint on where they will end up. This is exactly opposite to the Hong Kong pattern.

In sum, I have shown that Hong Kong, as Japan, deviates from the core model, but the deviations found in these two East Asian cases are quite different. Hence, it must be said that I find no supporting evidence for any East Asian exceptionalism in social fluidity. Surely, a more conclusive assessment of this claim has to await further examination of other East Asian NICs, particularly since Hong Kong is sometimes seen as an outlying case in the East Asian growth model (Deyo 1987:243-245). However, with the best information that is currently available, the findings presented above are in line with the conclusion reached by Erikson and Goldthorpe.

Absolute mobility rates

To round off this chapter, I will briefly consider the absolute mobility rates of Hong Kong, Japan and the European countries. Table 3.7 compares their marginal distributions. It can be seen that, in terms of the origin distribution, the service class and the routine non-manual class of the two East Asian countries are, in proportional terms, of roughly the same size, and they are, by European standard, quite large. But the most remarkable common feature between Hong Kong and Japan is their petty

bourgeoisie. About a quarter of the respondents of Hong Kong and Japan came from class IVab. This is far above the European range of 3-14%. As for differences between these two East Asian countries, one may observe that while only 8% of the Hong Kong respondents came from class IVc background, 41% of them came from the two industrial working classes. The corresponding figures for Japan are almost the exact opposite of Hong Kong, namely 41% for class IVc and 12% for the two industrial working classes.

Roughly the same pattern of resemblance and contrast can be found in the destination distribution. The most notable common feature between Hong Kong and Japan is still their large petty bourgeoisie (which has shrunk from a quarter to 13%, but this figure still falls outside of the European range). Also, the service class and the routine non-manual class of Hong Kong and Japan are of roughly the same size, and they are large by European standard. Finally, Japan has more farmers but fewer industrial workers than Hong Kong (though the difference here is much smaller than that in the origin distribution).

The delta values reported at the bottom of Table 3.7 measure the difference between the origin and destination distributions. Thus they gauge the magnitude of change in the class structure over the period covered by the mobility surveys. It can be seen that, of all CASMIN countries, Japan has experienced the greatest structural change, while Hong Kong falls within the European range.

Table 3.8 reports several summary measures of absolute mobility rates.[26] It is here

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[26]Total mobility rate (TMR) is simply the percentage of off-diagonal cases. Vertical (TV), non-vertical (TNV), upward (TU) and downward (TD) mobility rates are defined in terms of the three levels distinction of the HI matrix.

that the strongest evidence for an East Asian type of mobility pattern can be found. All of the five measures reported here (i.e. total, vertical, non-vertical, upward and downward mobility rates) suggest that Hong Kong is very similar to Japan. Furthermore, with the exception of non-vertical mobility rate, they both fall within, towards the upper end of, the European range. So in terms of absolute rates, both Hong Kong and Japan are quite open, as compared to the European countries.

However, the evidence for similar absolute rates becomes much weaker if I unpack the summary measures of Table 3.8, and consider the inflow and outflow rates in individual cells. Figure 3.1 compares the inflow rates of Hong Kong and Japan with those of the European countries. Of the 49 sets of inflow rates plotted here, there are 17 in which both Hong Kong and Japan fall within the European range. Fifteen sets are such that only Hong Kong falls within the European range (while Japan is outside the range). The opposite is true for 11 sets. There are 6 sets (IVab-I+II, IVab-III, VIIb-III, IVab-V+VI, IVab-VIIa, VIIa-VIIb) in which both Hong Kong and Japan fall outside of the range. It is notable that 4 of these 6 sets involve inflow from class IVab, and here the two East Asian countries are above the European range. This is obviously related to the fact that class IVab is unusually large in their origin distribution. On the basis of this observation, one may make a limited claim of a systematic deviation in inflow rates. However, since the 4 sets amount to just 8% of total 49 sets, the claim of systematic deviation should not be overstated.

Figure 3.2 plots the outflow rates of Hong Kong and Japan against the context of the European range. Readers will see that there are 15 sets (out of the total 49 sets) in which both Hong Kong and Japan fall within the European range. Eleven sets are such that only Hong Kong falls within the European range. The opposite is true for 18 sets. There are only 5 sets in which both Hong Kong and Japan fall outside of the

range. But of these 5 sets, 3 (IVc-I+II, I+II-V+VI, I+II-VIIa) are such that Hong Kong and Japan are on the opposite side of the European range. On the whole, it must be said that, similar to what we saw for the inflow rates, the differences between the two East Asian cases are no less significant than those between them and the European nations.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have fitted the CASMIN core model to a Hong Kong mobility table. The result is a very good fit. It is true that there are discrepancies between the observed fluidity pattern of Hong Kong and the core model, principally in that the IN2 matrix is insignificant and the AF1 term has to be included in the IVc-I+II cell. However, these deviations are quite small, and more importantly, they are different from those observed in the Japanese case. Indeed, I have shown that Hong Kong's fluidity pattern is characterised by very weak inheritance effects and rather strong hierarchy effects, which is just the opposite of the Japanese pattern. This observation is confirmed in a set of counterfactual comparisons, in which I show that, in terms of social fluidity, Hong Kong is closer to Sweden than to Japan. So it must be said that I find no evidence for the claim of East Asian exceptionalism in social fluidity. Conversely put, my findings are consistent with the weak version of the FJH hypothesis as defended by Erikson and Goldthorpe.

Table 3.1 Fitting Hong Kong mobility data with CASMIN core model and modified models.

Model	G^2	df	p	$G^2(S)$[a] (1991)	Δ	rG^2
A Hong Kong						
1 independence	88.5	24	.00	195	13.0	*
2 core model, fixed parameters	40.9	24	< .02	69	9.2	53.8
3 core model, variable parameters (i.e. core model minus IN3,SE)	18.3	18	> .30	19	4.6	79.3
4 core model minus IN2,IN3,SE	18.7	19	> .30	18	5.0	78.9
5 core model minus IN2,IN3, SE,AF1	19.4	20	> .30	18	5.2	78.1
6 core model minus IN2,IN3,SE, AF1 modified	13.6	19	> .80	*[b]	4.4	84.6
B Japan (top row), European maximum (middle row) & European minimum (bottom row)[c]						
7 core model,	126.0	36		123	7.8	75.1
fixed parameters	1229.5	36		110	7.4	98.8
	58.2	36		44	2.3	82.3
8 core model,	53.5	28		53	5.2	89.4
variable	379.0	28		68	5.8	99.0
parameters	33.0	28		34	1.7	91.7
9 national	39.0	30		39	4.4	92.3
variants of the	186.2	29		43	4.6	98.3
core model	33.7	29		33	1.9	92.4

[a] $G^2(S) = ((G^2 - df) / N) \times 1991 + df$. N is the sample size, while 1,991 is the size of the smallest sample available to Erikson and Goldthorpe. The critical value of this standardised measure is 40.

[b] For this model, G^2 is smaller than df. The formula for calculating $G^2(S)$ is therefore not applicable in this case.

[c] Please note that the middle and the bottom rows are meant for marking the range of values for the European countries. Thus, the figures on one row do not necessarily refer to the same country.

Table 3.2 Parameters in log-additive form for effects in the CASMIN core model, and in variant models for Hong Kong and other countries (highlighted figures in the bottom rows are the corresponding standard errors).

Parameter		Effect HI1	HI2	IN1	IN2	IN3	SE	AF1	AF2
Panel[a]									
A	**Hong Kong**								
2	core model, fixed parameters	-.22	-.42	.43	.81	.96	-1.03	-.77	.46
3	core model, variable parameters	-.23	-.75	.32	.13	*	*	-.51	.26
		.11	**.22**	**.14**	**.22**	*	*	**.63**	**.10**
4	core model minus IN2,IN3,SE	-.24	-.76	.36	*	*	*	-.51	.25
		.11	**.22**	**.12**	*	*	*	**.63**	**.10**
5	core model minus IN2,IN3, SE,AF1	-.24	-.82	.35	*	*	*	*	.25
		.11	**.21**	**.12**	*	*	*	*	**.10**
6	core model minus IN2,IN3,SE, AF1 modified	-.23	-.55	.38	*	*	*	-1.05	.25
		.11	**.23**	**.12**	*	*	*	**.47**	**.10**
B	**Other Countries**								
7	Japan[b]2	-.16	*	.74	*	.79	-.63	-.68	.37
8	Sweden[c]	-.16	-.45	.28	.65	.78	-.62	*	.37
9	European maximum	-.33	-.64	.90	1.23	2.17	-1.37	-.93	.62
10	European minimum	-.16	-.14	.28	.65	.77[d]	-.43	-.45	.37

[a]Panel number 2 to 7 corresponds to model number of Table 3.1.

[b]Extracted from Ishida, Goldthorpe and Erikson (1991:970, Table 4).

[c]Panels 8 to 10 extracted from Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a:147, Table 5.3).

[d]The value for Poland is -.37.

Table 3.3 Postulated effects of hierarchy, inheritance, sector and affinity in the cells of the 7 x 7 inter-generational mobility table, bracketed effects are absent from the Hong Kong variant model.

	I+II	III	IVab	IVc	V+VI	VIIa	VIIb
I+II	IN1 +[IN2]	HI1 +AF2	HI1 +AF2	[HI1 +SE]	HI1	HI1 +HI2	[HI1+ HI2+SE +AF1]
III	HI1 +AF2	IN1	-	[SE]	-	HI1	[HI1 +SE]
IVab	HI1 +AF2	-	IN1+ [IN2]	[SE+ AF2]	-	HI1	[HI1 +SE]
IVc	HI1+ HI2+ AF1[a] +[SE]	HI1+ [SE]	HI1+ AF2+ +[SE]	[HI1+ IN1+IN2 +IN3]	HI1+ [SE]	AF2+ [SE]	[-]
V+VI	HI1	-	-	[SE]	IN1	HI1 +AF2	[HI1 +SE]
VIIa	HI1 +HI2	HI1	HI1	[HI1 +SE]	HI1 +AF2	IN1	[SE]
VIIb	HI1+ HI2+ AF1 +[SE]	HI1+ [SE]	HI1+ [SE]	[HI1]	HI1+ [SE]	AF2+ [SE]	[IN1]

[a]Specific to Hong Kong variant model.

Table 3.4 Effects parameters under the Hong Kong variant model.

	Effect							
Parameter	HI1	HI2	IN1	IN2	IN3	SE	AF1	AF2
	-.23	-.55	.38	n.s.[a]	*	*	-1.05	.25

	Cell Parameters						
	I+II	III	IVab	IVc	V+VI	VIIa	VIIb
I+II	42	80	80	*	101	115	*
III	80	95	100	*	100	101	*
IVab	80	100	42	*	100	101	*
IVc	117	36	[46][b]	*	36	[73]	*
V+VI	101	100	100	*	95	80	*
VIIa	115	101	101	*	80	95	*
VIIb	54	36	36	*	36	[73]	*

[a]Not significant.

[b]The interaction parameter of bracketed cells is of the opposite sign as that expected under the core model.

Table 3.5 "True" (upper rows) and counterfactual (bottom rows) outflow mobility rates of urban Japan (row percentage).

	Destination							
	I+II	III	IVab	IVc	V+VI	VIIa	VIIb	Δ
Origin								
	48.4	21.9	13.0	*	10.6	6.1	*	
I+II	51.3	16.3	10.9	*	15.9	5.6	*	8.2
	25.4	32.7	9.4	*	21.7	10.8	*	
III	36.9	23.0	10.5	*	20.0	9.6	*	12.6
	27.3	16.9	21.0	*	23.3	11.6	*	
IVab	37.9	16.1	15.7	*	20.5	9.8	*	10.6
	22.2	16.9	14.6	*	23.4	23.0	*	
IVc	8.1	20.9	18.2	*	26.6	26.2	*	14.1
	17.0	15.2	9.0	*	43.7	15.1	*	
V+VI	29.4	16.4	10.9	*	30.3	13.0	*	15.4
	19.1	14.6	8.7	*	29.1	28.5	*	
VIIa	21.8	16.5	11.0	*	27.5	23.1	*	7.0
	13.2	20.1	12.0	*	27.7	27.2	*	
VIIb	8.5	21.8	14.6	*	27.8	27.3	*	4.7

Table 3.6 "True" (upper rows) and counterfactual (bottom rows) outflow mobility rates of "urban" Sweden (row percentage).

	Destination							
	I+II	III	IVab	IVc	V+VI	VIIa	VIIb	Δ
Origin								
	57.4	8.2	6.7	*	19.5	8.2	*	
I+II	54.9	8.1	7.4	*	21.3	8.3	*	2.6
	35.8	11.4	6.9	*	29.4	16.6	*	
III	39.8	11.5	7.2	*	27.2	14.4	*	4.4
	33.2	7.9	16.2	*	27.3	15.4	*	
IVab	40.0	7.9	10.5	*	27.3	14.4	*	6.7
	18.5	8.6	10.1	*	29.6	33.3	*	
IVc	8.2	9.8	11.7	*	33.7	36.7	*	10.3
	23.9	8.3	6.7	*	37.8	23.3	*	
V+VI	29.3	7.6	6.9	*	38.1	18.1	*	5.9
	17.2	8.0	6.5	*	39.9	28.4	*	
VIIa	21.2	7.4	6.8	*	33.6	31.1	*	6.9
	19.1	8.9	7.2	*	30.5	34.3	*	
VIIb	8.4	10.0	9.2	*	34.7	37.7	*	10.7

Table 3.7 Distribution of respondents by class of origin and class of destination for Hong Kong, Japan and range for European countries (column percentage).

	Class of origin			Class of destination		
	Hong Kong	Japan	European range	Hong Kong	Japan	European range
I+II	11	14	6-14	23	24	14-28
III	9	6	2-9	10	16	2-10
IVab	26	24	3-14	13	13	2-10
IVc	8	41	5-53	0	10	1-25
V+VI	22	6	14-39	32	20	20-37
VIIa	19	6	12-26	22	14	18-30
VIIb	5	3	3-22	0	3	1-14

4 for origin and destination distributions

Hong Kong	Japan	European range
26	42	13-37

Table 3.8 Decomposition of total mobility rates (TMR) into total non-vertical (TNV) and total vertical (TV) mobility, and of total vertical mobility into total upward (TU) and total downward (TD) mobility for Hong Kong, Japan and range for European countries

	TMR	TV	TNV	TV/TNV	TU	TD	TU/TD
Hong Kong	75	52	23	2.2	35	16	2.2
Japan	73	50	23	2.2	39	12	3.3
European range	58-76	39-54	13-32	1.4-3.9	30-42	8-18	1.8-4.5

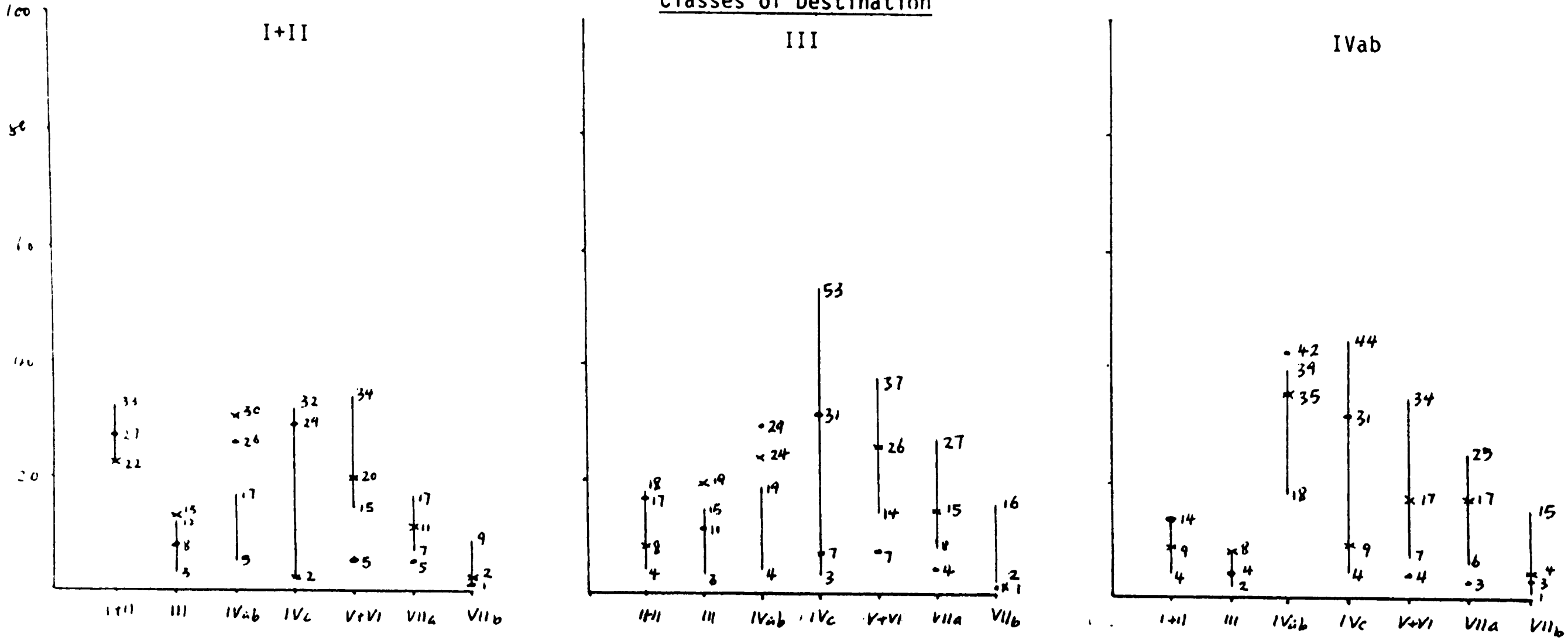


Figure 3.1 European ranges of inflow rates and position of Japan (.) and Hong Kong (x)

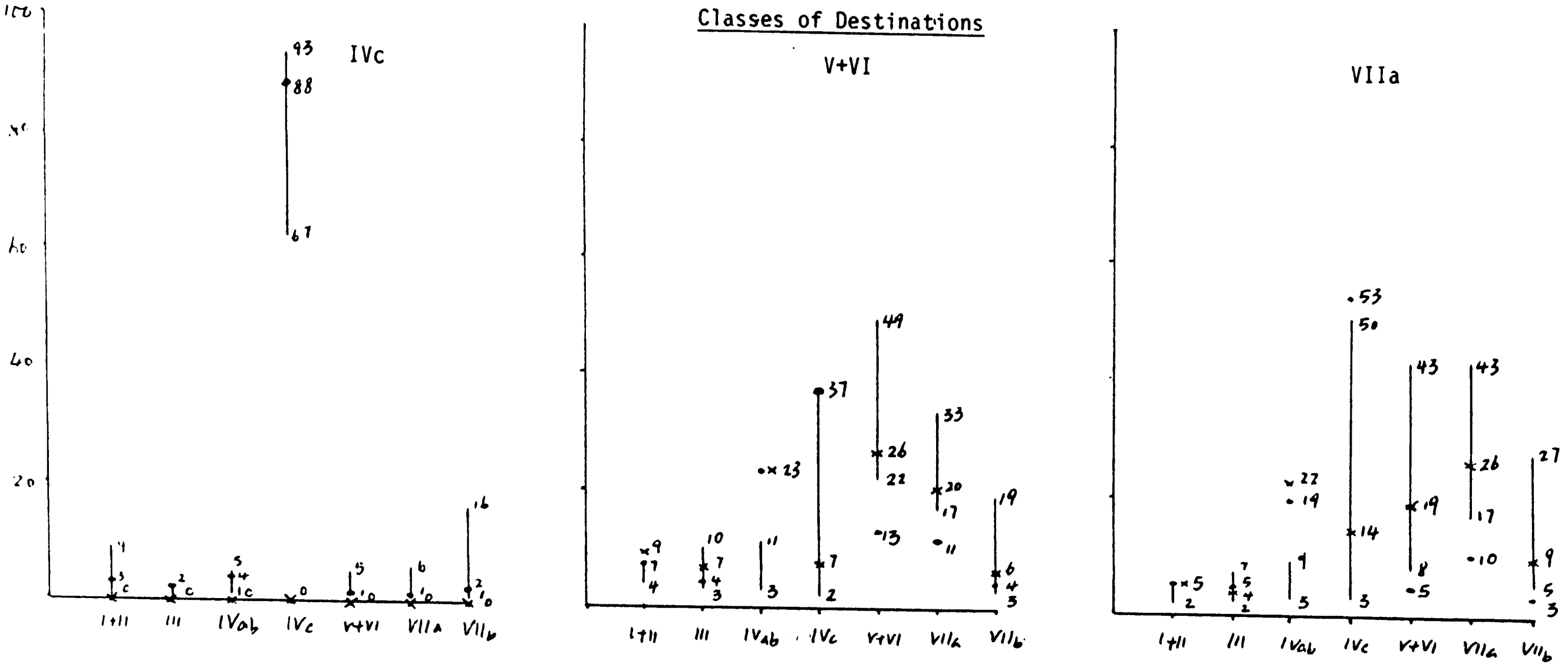


Figure 3.1 (continued)

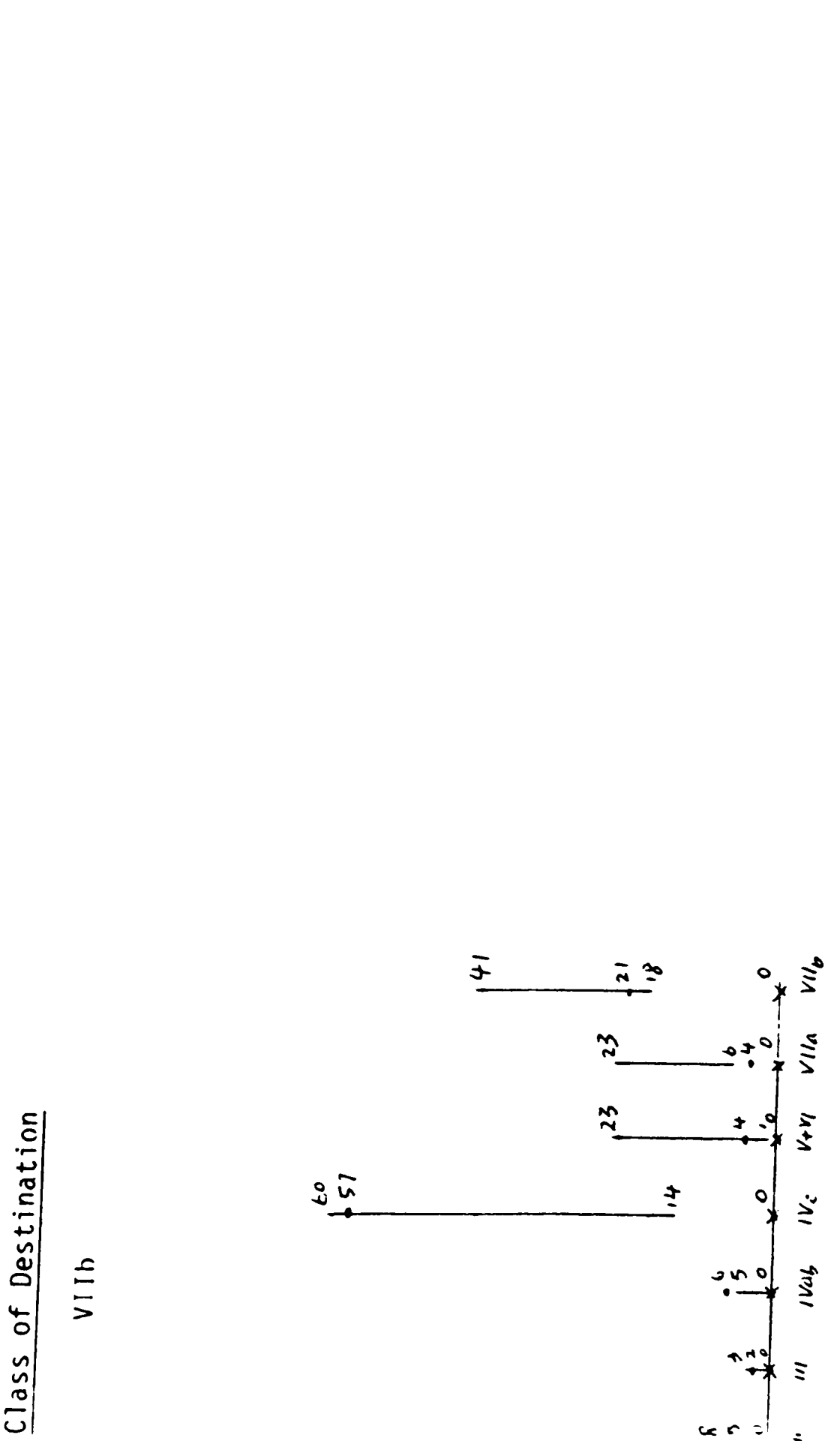


Figure 3.1 (continued)

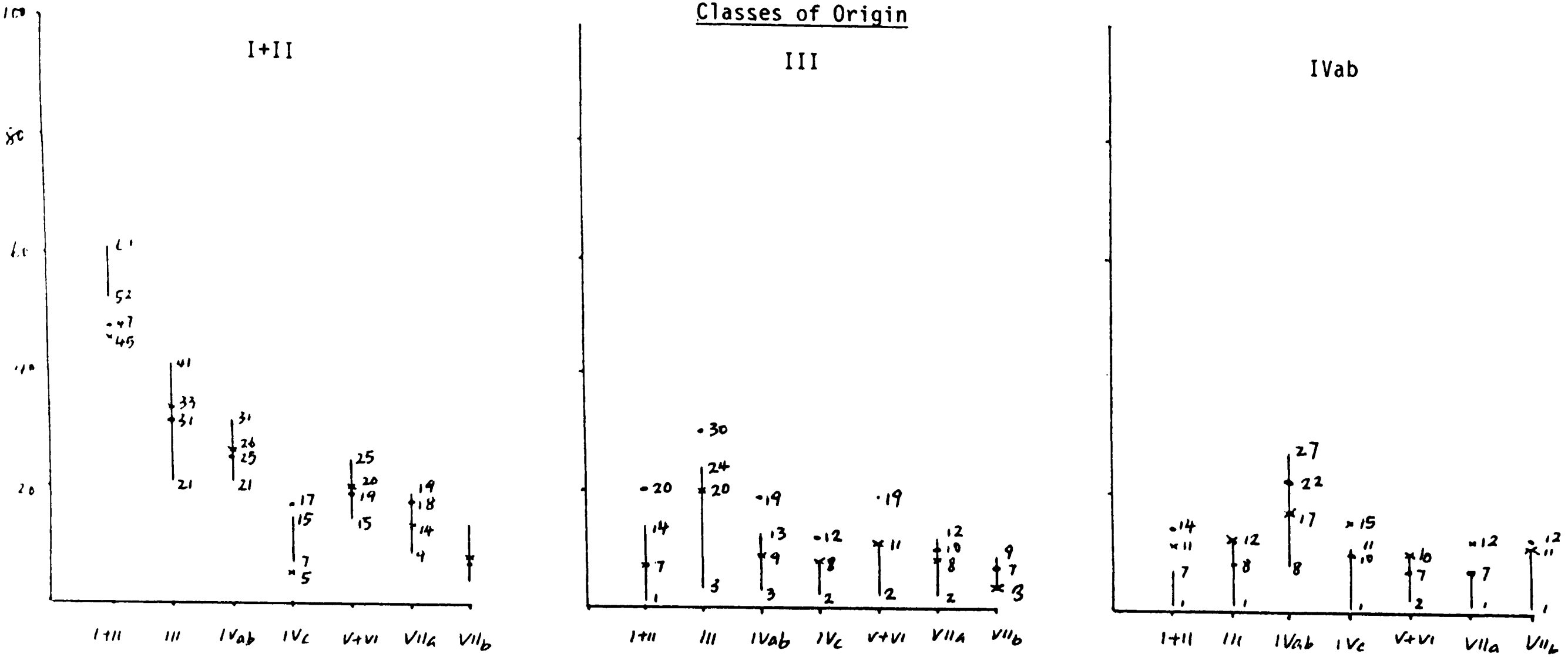


Figure 3.2 European ranges of outflow rates and position of Japan (.) and Hong Kong (x)

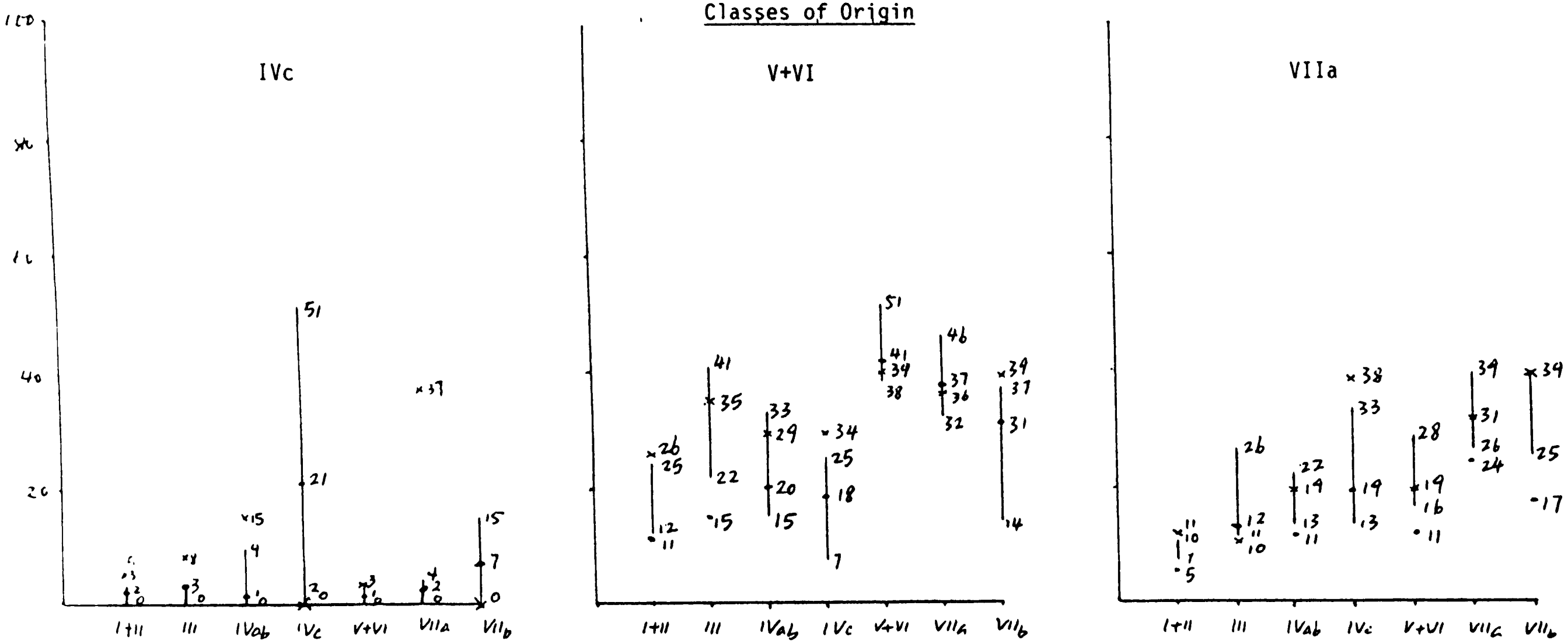
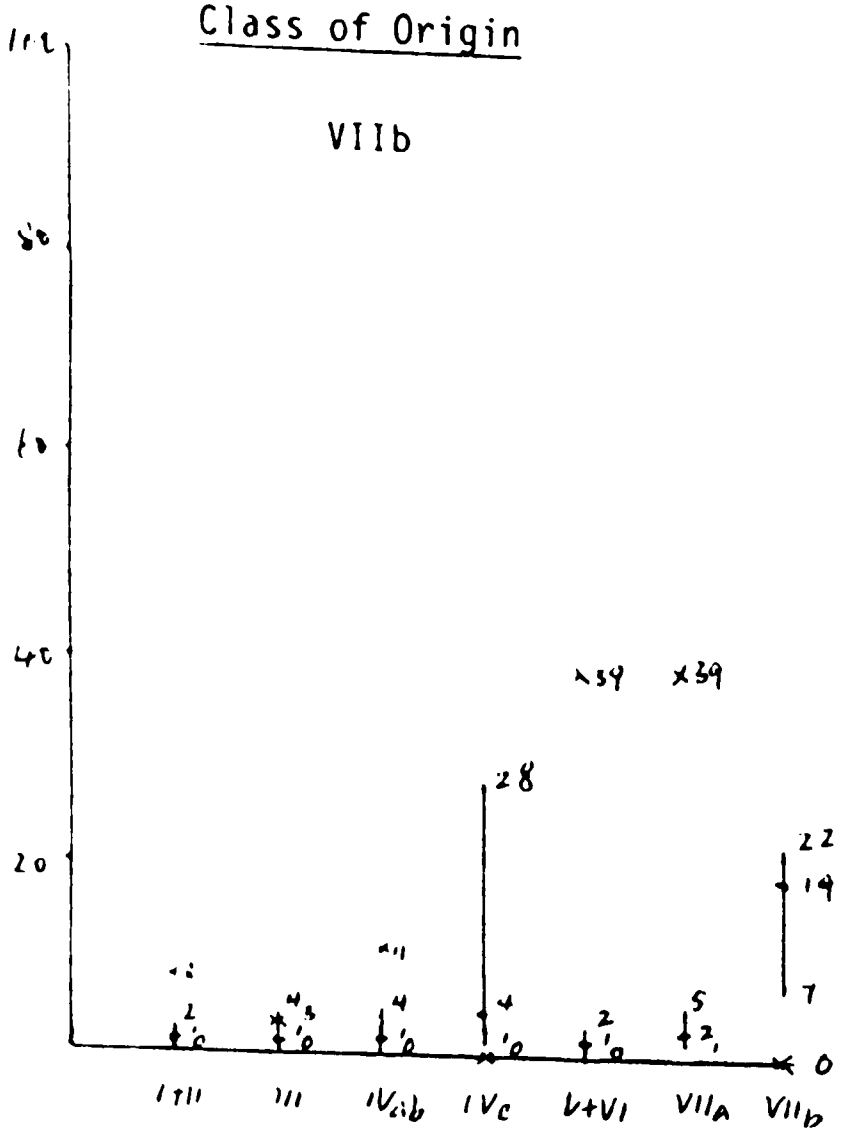


Figure 3.2 (continued)


Class of Origin
VIIb
60
40
20
0
.39
.39
28
22
19
7
5
2
4
4
4
4.5
2
1
1
1

Chapter 4

Typical Mobility Paths

As noted in Chapter 1, it is possible that certain occupations routinely offer better prospects of worklife mobility to their incumbents than do others. Following Broom and Smith (1963), I will call these positions bridging occupations. This chapter seeks to identify the bridging occupations of Hong Kong. To this end, I will study the career history of those respondents who have achieved worklife mobility into the service class. More specifically, work history data collected in the follow-up study will be subjected to optimal matching analysis, a cluster analysis technique recently introduced into sociology. But first let us consider some preliminary evidence drawn from the main survey.

Preliminary evidence

The main survey does not contain complete work history data. However, there is information on the respondents' first job.[1] So as a crude measure of worklife mobility, Figure 4.1 shows, for all respondents of the main survey, the outflow patterns from class of origin to class of first job (entry class), and then to class of destination. Since outflows of less than 10% to the entry class or less than 5% to the destination class are omitted, this figure represents the more important mobility flows between these three time points of the respondents' life course.[2]

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[1]In the 1989 survey, the term "first full-time job" was not defined in the question put to the respondents (say, in terms of number of hours worked per week). But since there is no locally recruited full-time army or any requirement for military service in Hong Kong, it should have been clear to the respondents that this question refers to civilian jobs only.

[2]Although smaller mobility flows between origin, entry and destination classes are not shown in Figure 4.1, readers should note that such exceptional cases do exist, and that, for some purposes, they are of equal theoretical importance as the norm.

Figure 4.1 is notable on several counts. First, the Hong Kong respondents have experienced a fair amount of worklife movement. For example, for those who are of service class origin, 57% have the same entry and destination class. For respondents of other class origins, the corresponding figures are: 52% for class III, 56% for class IVab, 46% for class IVc, 49% for class V+VI, 44% for class VIIa, and 51% for class VIIb. So, judging with only two observations, namely first and current jobs, about half of the respondents have stayed in the same class throughout their career. However, if occupational data at more time points were available, a greater volume of worklife movement would be revealed.

Second, with respect to the question of counter-mobility into the service class, it can be observed that for respondents of service class origin, 35% attained service class status as they took up their first job. And among the 65% who took up non-service class first job, only one in six were able to return to the service class through worklife mobility. This amounts to 11% of all respondents from service class origin. This percentage is considerably lower than the corresponding figure for England (25%) and France (18%), but it comes very close to that of the two former state socialist countries in the CASMIN sample, Hungary (11%) and Poland (8%) (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992a:288-89, Figure 8.1).

Third, for those who have experienced worklife mobility, their movement was generally short in range, and was confined by the manual/non-manual boundary. In fact, there were so few movements crossing this boundary that they were not represented in Figure 4.1 at all. In other words, the worklife movement of those who took up their first job in class III would most probably lead them to class I+II. At the same time, for those who started in class V+VI or VIIa, if they were to experience worklife mobility, they would almost invariably end up in the other

manual class or in class IVab.

For our present purpose of identifying the bridging occupations, what is most striking about Figure 4.1 is that, although Hong Kong's service class is not closed to people from any class origin, nearly all of its members started their worklife in the service class itself or in the routine non-manual class. This seems to be a distinctive feature of Hong Kong -- Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a) have documented significant worklife movement from class V+VI to class I+II in England, France, Hungary and Poland. Put differently (and disregarding the exceptional cases not shown in Figure 4.1), irrespective of class origin, any person who aspires to get into Hong Kong's service class has to get a service class job right away when he leaves school, or failing that, he should get a class III job.

In Chapter 3, I have noted that, from a comparative point of view, Hong Kong has strong hierarchical barriers against intergenerational class mobility. From Figure 4.1, one can see that these hierarchical barriers also operate against worklife mobility. Relative to manual occupations, routine non-manual jobs are the bridging occupations of Hong Kong.

Three cautionary notes are in order here. First, the routine non-manual class of the CASMIN schema is occupationally a very broad and mixed category. It includes occupations as diverse as typist, sales representative, shop assistant and radio operator (just to give a few examples). It is likely that only some, rather than all, class III jobs possess the bridging power. So it is important for us to be more specific. Here one can at least make the distinction between class IIIa jobs (routine non-manual work in administration and commerce) and class IIIb jobs (personal service work).

Second, although worklife movement from the manual classes to the service class is uncommon, if it can be shown that most of such movements originate from a small set of manual occupations, then this set of jobs can still be considered as bridging occupations. This is because, in a straightforward sense, they offer better prospects of worklife mobility into the service class than other manual occupations.

Third, what Figure 4.1 compares is the bridging power of different first jobs. It is not clear if the same conclusion will stand if we consider not just the first job, but the entire career of the respondents. This is worth pondering because job-changing rate is particularly high among young people. Many of the first jobs reported in Figure 4.1 may have lasted for only a very short period of time, and thus have little impact on the respondent's career. For example, a respondent who took up a first job with poor prospects may soon realize this, and quickly change to a more promising one. If he moved into the service class from the second job, then I would argue that the bridging occupation is his second rather than his first job. Unfortunately, this second job is not represented in Figure 4.1. The general point here is that we will have to consider the complete work history of the respondent -- the duration of each job, how one job leads to another, and so on. If this view is taken, then we should take typical mobility paths rather than individual bridging occupations as the object of inquiry.

Optimal matching analysis

This brings us to the work history data of the follow-up study. The primary question here is whether the socially mobile typically follow certain job sequences. There are several ways to approach this question. The most straightforward one is simple enumeration. For any finite set of discrete events, one can write down all logical combinations of events, and then count the frequency of their occurrence in a sample over a particular period of time (e.g. Hogan 1978, see also Berger, Steinmuller and

Sopp 1993 who consider only the empirically observed sequence types rather than all logical combinations). The problem of this approach is that it will quickly become very cumbersome as job classification becomes finer and as more detailed career data become available. Alternatively, one can devise, on theoretical ground, a few basic career types (e.g. steady promotion through bureaucracy, sharp rise to the top, etc.), and then count how many cases there are in each type (e.g. Keller 1953). The problem here is that the career types used in enumeration are theoretical constructs rather than empirically derived categories. So it begs the original question of what career types are empirically discernible.

There are other, technically more sophisticated, ways to handle work history data. Gaertner (1990), for example, fits a saturated loglinear model to a cumulative job event table. Then, from the cell parameters, she infers the transition probability between every pair of jobs. This enables her to reconstruct the typical promotion paths of her sample of education administrators. This is one way to identify typical paths empirically. However, there is a serious drawback: it disregards variation in job duration. Irrespective of how long a job was held, it appears as one observation in the cumulative table. This means that a job that lasted three months is treated with equal weight as another which was held for, say, 20 years. This is problematic to the extent that the impact of an event on subsequent mobility chance depends on its duration.

Class time budget studies (e.g. Gershuny 1993) do not share this shortcoming because the object of this type of studies is precisely the amount of time (or what portion of their career) people spent in different classes. However, these studies overlook the order in which jobs were taken up. This is unsatisfactory because although it is logically possible for, say, a school teacher of today to become an assistant secondary

principal tomorrow, and then a secondary curriculum supervisor later on, as Gaertner has shown, this job sequence is empirically less probable than the following one: teacher, secondary curriculum supervisor, and then assistant secondary principal. In other words, jobs often appear in certain order, and people are often required to have done job A before they are hired to do job B. To overlook the order of jobs is to miss an important element of the structure of worklife.

Finally, hazard rate models (e.g. Mayer and Tuma 1990) predict how episode duration (or the probability of the occurrence of an event) varies with sociological variables. It is very powerful in modelling the forces that shape the unfolding of events (e.g. what determines women's re-entry into the labour market after child bearing). However, I would argue that to ascertain what ways there are for events to unfold is a task which complements, if it does not have logical priority to, the search for causal factors of change. On the whole, it must be said that the various methods mentioned above tackle career data from different angles. Consequently, they are useful and informative in their own ways. However, none of them models the duration as well as the order of events fully and directly. This means that they do not answer the central question of this chapter -- what are the typical mobility paths that lead to the service class?[3]

To the best of my knowledge, optimal matching analysis (or optimal alignment analysis) is the most suitable tool for handling our present problem. This method, recently introduced into sociological analysis by Abbott,[4] is a direct application of a

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[3]See Halpin (1993) for an extended discussion of the strength and weaknesses of these tools for analysing work history data.

[4]Abbott and his associates have already applied this method to several substantive areas, including the development of the welfare state (Abbott and DeViney 1992), the order of professionalization (Abbott 1991), careers of musicians (Abbott and Hrycak

technique routinely used by molecular biologists who study DNA or protein sequences. In fact, since optimal matching procedure is currently not available in all social science packages, both Abbott and I resort to programs originally developed for DNA or protein sequencing.[5] Since most sociologists are probably unfamiliar with this method, let me briefly explain its nuts and bolts here (see Abbott and Hrycak 1990 for an extended introduction).

Suppose the work history of two respondents can be represented as follows:

respondent A	VIIa	VIIa	VI	VIIa	VIIa
respondent B	VIIa	VIIa	V	IVa	

What optimal matching analysis does is to count how many substitutions, insertions or deletions are needed in order to turn sequence A into sequence B, or vice versa. In this example, both respondents started their worklife as unskilled manual workers. Respondent A has taken up a skilled manual job mid-way through his worklife, but he returned to class VIIa in the end. This is largely a case of worklife immobility. In contrast, respondent B became a foreman at about the same time as respondent A took up the skilled manual job. He then moved on to become a small employer. One possible way to turn sequence A into sequence B is to substitute V for VI (third observation), IVa for VIIa (fourth observation), and then delete VIIa (fifth observation). Now imagine that each substitution, insertion or deletion incurs a

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1990), and Morris dances (Abbott and Forrest 1986). For theoretical statements of sequence analysis, see Abbott (1992, 1990, 1983).

[5]For his calculations, Abbott uses a software called the Belding Program Series. Unfortunately, I have not been able to obtain that program. The analysis of this chapter is done with the GCG (Genetics Computer Group) program PILEUP. Although the algorithms of these two programs are probably very similar, there could be minor differences, so they may give different results to the same set of sequences. The only way to check against this possibility is to repeat the analysis of this chapter with the Belding programs.

"cost" to the pair of sequences under comparison -- the more substitutions one makes, the higher the cost, and the greater the distance between the pair (the same for insertion and deletion). Depending on how much each substitution, insertion and deletion costs, a overall similarity score (or distance score, depending on how the calculation is programmed) can be given to this pair of sequences. (Deciding these costs is a theoretical issue which I will come back to later.) Once such pairwise comparison is repeated for all sequences in the sample, we will have a measure of how far every sequence resembles every other sequences. These similarity scores are then input to a clustering procedure which will tell us how many clusters of sequences there are, and what the typical sequence of each cluster looks like.

So, optimal matching is essentially a technique of cluster analysis for sequence data. Its result is sensitive to, among other things, (a) how the sequences are coded -- the job categories used, and (b) how substitution, insertion and deletion costs are defined. For the analysis of this chapter, these two issues are operationalized as follows. First, all worklife events are coded according to the full version of the CASMIN schema (see Table 1.1). As a first attempt, I believe this 11-fold schema is reasonably detailed for capturing most of the theoretically interesting worklife movement experienced by our respondents. We may want to make some finer distinctions within the 11 categories later on, but this will depend on the empirical result of this first attempt. In addition to the 11 categories of work events, there are also three categories of non-work events: unemployment, returning to full-time education, and unspecified events.[6] With reference to these 14 categories, the work

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[6]Altogether, the 80 respondents of the follow-up study reported 527 spells of various work and non-work events. Out of this total, 4 events are classified as unspecified. In some of these cases, the respondents were unspecific about a particular period of their worklife because of very frequent job changes, which makes it very difficult for them to recall their career in detail. In one case, the respondent was not fully committed to any full time job -- a few days of work were followed by

history of all respondents are recorded at yearly intervals.[7]

Second, with respect to the issue of substitution costs, what has to be decided is the relative similarity of events. For example, we may think that unskilled manual jobs are more similar to skilled manual jobs than they are to service class jobs. Hence, different substitution costs should be assigned to VIIa-VI and VIIa-I. This should be fairly uncontroversial. However, it is not so clear as to whether we should assign different substitution costs to, say, V-VIIa and VI-VIIa. In the end, these decisions have to be grounded on our conception of theoretically important divisions between social classes. Also, the usefulness of a particular set of substitution costs should partly be judged on whether they produce theoretically and substantively meaningful clustering of sequences. Consequently, there is inevitably an element of trial and error in the following analysis.

At this point, I propose to adapt the hierarchial matrices of the CASMIN core model in order to develop a provisional matrix of substitution costs (Table 4.1). This seems appropriate given the relatively strong hierarchy effects seen in Hong Kong. As noted in Chapter 3, Erikson and Goldthorpe suggest that the CASMIN class schema can be divided into three hierarchical levels: class I+II constitutes the first level, classes III, IVab, and V+VI form the second level, and classes VIIa and VIIb belong to the third level. Class IVc, as class of origin, is regarded as part of the third level, but as class of destination, it is included in the second level. Erikson and Goldthorpe hold that this three-fold division captures broad differences between the social classes in terms of their relative desirability as class of destination, and the relative

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a few days of rest, and so on. This is used as a residual category.

[7]Events lasting between 6 and 12 months are rounded up to a year, while those shorter than 6 months are disregarded.

advantages they offer as class of origin. I have adopted this three-fold distinction in Table 4.1. However, one minor change is required: since substitution matrices used in optimal matching have to be symmetrical, class IVc is always included in the second level. Table 4.1 is a similarity or proximity matrix (i.e. a large cell value denotes relative closeness between the respective pair of events). So all diagonal cells are given the largest value, 4. Cells that refer to movement within the same level are coded 3, those which denote movement crossing one level boundary are coded 2, and those which refer to movement crossing two level boundaries are coded 1. Movement between work events on the one hand, and unemployment or unspecified events on the other, is accorded with the smallest value, 0. But movement between work events and full-time education is coded 1. Finally, since, for our present purpose, there is no need to make a distinction between class I and class II jobs, cell I-II is also coded 4.

As for insertion and deletion costs, it is reasonable to think that they should vary for different events. For example, if returning to full-time education is unusual, then inserting a spell of full-time education to a job sequence should cost more than inserting a work spell. However, as Abbott and Hrycak (1990) point out, whether a particular event is unusual depends on our prior knowledge of what a typical sequence looks like. So, following their practice, I have set a fixed cost for all insertions and deletions.[8]

Typical mobility paths to the service class

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[8]In fact, the PILEUP program does not allow the assignment of variable insertion/deletion cost. To be more accurate, it calculates insertion/deletion cost according to the following formula, $C + n \times W$, where C is a fixed insertion/deletion cost (a constant for all events), n is the number of insertion/deletions needed in a particular "gap", and W is a gap-length weight. I have set $C = 5$ and $W = 0.3$.

Having defined the substitution and insertion/deletion costs, let us now turn to the substantive question of this chapter. Thirty-seven of my 80 respondents have achieved worklife mobility into the service class. This section optimally matches the work history of these 37 people. The following analysis proceeds in two stages. In the first stage, I seek to identify the typical paths that lead to the service class. My objective is to reveal their structural features: what jobs typically precede what other jobs, how long are the paths, and so on. I will also repeat the optimal matching procedure with two variant substitution matrices with a view to testing the stability of the clusterings produced. In the second stage, I will turn to the characteristics of the people who use these paths. If it can be shown that there are systematic differences between the users of the various paths, then there are grounds to argue that different types of mobility opportunity are open to different people.

The result of the optimal matching of the 37 job sequences is shown in Table 4.2.[9] Simply put, 4 clusters, or 4 typical paths, plus one outlying case which does not fit into any cluster can be identified. The sequences of the first cluster are distinguishable by a spell of "returning to full-time education" that lasted from 3 to 6 years. Those of the second cluster contain a long spell of class IIIa jobs, while the distinguishing feature of the sequences of the third cluster is a long spell of class VIIa jobs. The fourth cluster is more mixed. It includes respondents who have worked as skilled manual workers or small employers. Finally, case 39 stands out alone.

How stable is this clustering, especially with respect to the substitution costs? To

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[9]The 37 job sequences are coded up to the point of the respondent's entry into the service class. For these 37 cases, the problem of right-hand censoring does not exist. However, it is possible that some respondents who were immobile at the time of the follow-up study achieve worklife mobility later on, so there is still an implicit problem of right-hand censoring.

answer this question, I have repeated the optimal matching procedure with two variant substitution matrices. Substitution matrix 2 (Table 4.3) is simpler than the original matrix 1 in that it postulates only one salient division between the social classes, namely the manual/non-manual divide. This is an extension of what we saw in Figure 4.1 -- that non-manual first jobs offer far better chances of worklife mobility into the service class than manual first jobs. In this variant matrix, all diagonal cells are coded 3; cells which correspond to movement within either the manual or non-manual class are coded 2; those which denote movement crossing the manual/non-manual boundary are coded 1.

In contrast, substitution matrix 3 (Table 4.4) is more complex than the original matrix 1. Here I differentiate four hierarchical levels: the service class forms the first level, classes IIIa and IIIb constitute the second level, classes IVa, IVb, IVc and V form the third level, and finally classes VI, VIIa and VIIb make up the fourth level. In effect, I recognise in matrix 3, as in matrix 2, the manual/non-manual divide in mobility chance. However, I also postulate internal division within the manual as well as the non-manual classes. Most notably, because there seems to be significant worklife mobility between classes VI and VIIa (as judged from Figure 4.1), these two classes, along with class VIIb, are grouped together at the fourth level in matrix 3. Readers will recall that in matrix 1 and in the CASMIN core model, class VI and class VIIa are placed at different hierarchical levels.

Given this four-fold division, the cell values of matrix 3 are assigned as follows: the diagonal cells are given the highest value, 5; cells which denote movement within the same level are coded 4; those which denote movement crossing one level boundary are coded 3; cells corresponding to movement crossing two level boundaries are coded 2; and those which denote movement crossing three level boundaries are coded

1. Also, for both variant matrices, movement between work events on the one hand, and unemployment or unspecified events on the other is coded 0; and movement between work events and full-time education is given a slightly higher value of 1. Finally, cell I-II is given the value of the diagonal cells.

The 37 job sequences are optimally aligned again with these two variant matrices. The clusterings produced are reported in Table 4.5 (matrix 2) and Table 4.6 (matrix 3). Readers will note that these two tables are quite similar to Table 4.2. First, the two clusters of "returning to full-time education" and "class IIIa path" are found in all three tables. Second, the component sequences of these two clusters are exactly the same in the three tables. Third, case 39 stands out alone as an outlying case under all three matrices.

The notable differences between the three tables concern careers in manual jobs. But these differences correspond closely to the different matrix designs. For example, under matrix 1, where class VIIa and class VI are placed at separate hierarchical levels, a cluster of largely "class VIIa path" is identified. However, under matrix 3, where those two classes are placed at the same level, the "class VI" and "class VIIa" paths are grouped together. At the same time, a separate cluster of "class IVa path" becomes identifiable.

On the whole, I believe it is fair to say that the results of the above analysis are fairly robust. There is an impressive common core across the three tables which accounts for 21 of the 37 sequences (i.e. the two common clusters plus case 39), and the variation across the tables follows interpretable patterns. Second, when it comes to choosing between the three substitution matrices, I take it as a matter which hinges entirely on what we think is the most useful way to conceptualize the different manual

careers into the service class. Matrix 2 seems least attractive to me, because under this matrix the set of class VIIa careers are grouped under two separate clusters. As between the other two matrices, I prefer matrix 3 to matrix 1, because there seems to be more worklife mobility between classes VI and VIIa than between either of them and class IVa. Accordingly, it seems more appropriate to have a substitution matrix where classes VI and VIIa, rather than class VI and class IVa, are placed at the same hierarchical level. So, provisionally I will take the clusters of Table 4.6 as representing the typical paths of worklife mobility into Hong Kong's service class.

Time warping

To check the clusterings of Table 4.6, I will now consider an elaboration of the above analysis which, as Abbott and Hrycak (1990) point out, concerns implicit assumptions about the meaning of time. Take the examples of case 27 (whose work history can be represented as 16IIIa) and case 30 (3IIIa). Both respondents were clerical workers before they entered the service class, but it took the former 16 years, and the latter only 3 years, to do so. In the previous analysis, I have implicitly assumed that social processes operate at the same speed at all times in all cases. Under this intuitive assumption of real clock time, the two sequences are different -- to turn case 30 into case 27, 13 units of class IIIa events have to be added to the former.

However, one may also think that the two work histories are substantively similar, and that the difference in path length means only that while basically the same social processes were at work in both cases, they were much slower in producing their effects in case 27. To capture this idea, I follow Abbott and Hrycak in standardising

all sequences to the same length of 50 units.[10] Under this standardised measure of time, two sequences are equivalent if the same set of events, each taking up the same proportion of a career, appear in the same order in both sequences. The optimal matching procedure, with substitution matrix 3, is applied to the standardised sequences. The result is shown in Table 4.7.

It is evident that Table 4.7 is very similar to Table 4.6. The same four clusters are identified in both tables, and only four sequences are placed under different clusters in the two tables. More specifically, case 16, included under "class IIIa path" in Table 4.6, appears as a manual career in Table 4.7. Case 20 moves in the opposite direction. The outlier of Table 4.6, case 39, is now clustered under the "manual path". Finally, case 11, grouped under the "manual path" previously, is now included in the "class IVa path". On the whole, it must be said that the result of this section does not suggest any need for significant revision of our previous findings. Hence, the robustness of the typical paths identified is further confirmed.[11]

Furthermore, this section also tells us something substantive about the mobility

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[10]To be more accurate, since the PILEUP program can only read events in integral number of units (i.e. 3.25 years in class IIIa is unacceptable), the 37 sequences are standardised to as close to 50 units as possible. The length of the standardised sequences range from 45 to 58 units, the standard deviation being 2.5 years. Before standardisation, path length ranges from 1 to 29 units and standard deviation equals 6.5 years.

[11]Abbott and Hrycak have also proposed and tested a third, logarithmic, measure of time. The logarithmic transformation should make the difference between, say, 2 and 4 years more important than that between 10 and 15 years. In other words, it would de-emphasize the weight of very long spells in the optimal matching procedure. However, it seems to me that the logarithmic measure will require quite drastic rounding up of events into integral numbers. For example, the logarithmic transformation of 4, 5 and 6 years (real clock time) will become 1.4, 1.6 and 1.8 years respectively. After rounding up, they become 1, 2 and 2 years. It is difficult to justify why the same distance, in real clock time, between 4 and 5 years and 5 and 6 years should become so different in logarithmic time. For this reason, I have not repeated the analysis with logarithmic time.

process. To see this, I should first point out that real clock time does matter in certain types of mobility. For example, to apply for a Junior Research Fellowship in a Oxford college, a candidate is normally required to have spent no more than, say, 5 years in graduate study. Otherwise, he/she will be considered too old for the job. This is an example of what Rosenbaum (1979) calls the "tournament model of career mobility". According to this model, career processes are comparable to, say, a tennis tournament, where competing players have to proceed through certain hierarchical rounds or stages. To get to the second round, one must first win out in the first round. Moreover, a person's progress in the tournament is often measured against a timetable (which may or may not be explicit). In other words, the stage in which a person is competing at a particular age is compared to where most people of the same age can be found. Falling behind the timetable is often taken by the employer as reflecting inferior ability or potential. Conversely speaking, staying ahead of the timetable is seen as a sign of high ability, and will, in itself, attract further promotion opportunity. In other words, the speed (measured in real clock time) of a person's career progress may have ramifications for eventual mobility outcome.

But, since real clock time and standardised time give us largely the same result in the above analysis, it seems that the tournament model does not describe the mobility experience of our respondents very well. This anomaly from the tournament model is partly due to the fact that our data pertain not only to career mobility within organizations (where Rosenbaum's theory is meant to apply primarily), but also to mobility between organizations. But allowing for this, the anomaly is still of substantive interest -- it suggests that the mobility processes at work behind our 37 respondents were operating at variable speeds in different cases. Consider the following example: a back-up singer took the leading role for one evening when the

star got sick, but he/she caught the eye of the director with that single performance, and was given better parts in subsequent performances.[12] From the point of view of the hopeful back-up singer, his/her break may come within a month, five years, or indeed much longer, of singing in the chorus. The variability in waiting time (i.e. uncertainty) must give chorus singers a lot of anxiety, but as far as its effect on mobility chance is concerned, waiting time is far less determining for back-up singers than for research fellows. The result presented above suggests that the singer metaphor describes our respondents' experience better than does the metaphor of the research fellow.

Structural features of the typical paths

Let us return to Table 4.6. More can be said about the four clusters identified. For example, the six respondents of the first cluster began their worklife in either skilled manual or routine non-manual jobs.[13] They returned to full-time education (at tertiary level) within 1 to 4 years. As a result, they obtained better formal credentials which enabled them to get a service class job immediately afterwards. It can further be noted that for their tertiary education, two respondents went to local colleges, two went to Taiwan, and two went to mainland China. Finally, all 6 respondents took up salaried employment, rather than became entrepreneurs, as they entered the service

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[12]I am grateful to John Goldthorpe for suggesting this example to me.

[13]At first glance, there are two exceptions here. First, Mr A of case 15 spent his first year out of secondary school unemployed. It should be noted that Mr A had actually worked as a bank teller (class IIIa) when he left school. He left the job within 4 months, and spent the rest of the year preparing for his second attempt of the A-Level exams. In other words, Mr A had, in fact, started his worklife in class IIIa, but given our coding rule, he was considered unemployed for that first year. Second, Mr C of case 6 started his career as a warehouse administrator (class II) in Guangzhou, China, but within one year, the communist takeover of mainland China saw him fleeing to Hong Kong. He was unemployed for the next three years. During that period, he lived on his savings and a small and unstable income from free-lance contributions to local magazines.

class.

The 14 respondents of the second cluster spent most, if not all, of their pre-service class worklife in class IIIa. Three respondents (cases 16, 54, 18) appear to be exceptional in that they started as unskilled manual workers, but the respondents of cases 54 and 18 were working as office assistants during their spell in class VIIa. In other words, they were employed in white collar milieus.[14] As for case 16, the respondent was a lorry driver and a van salesman during his spell in class VIIa. He subsequently changed to and settled in a salesman career, which in fact was a continuation of one of his previous van salesman jobs. In any case, these three respondents soon moved on from class VIIa to class IIIa. The class IIIa jobs held by the 14 respondents can be differentiated as follows: there were nine clerks, three salesmen, one primary school teacher, and one architectural assistant. It should also be noted that as they entered the service class, only 2 of the 14 respondents (cases 33, 46) became entrepreneurs. The rest have stayed in salaried employment.

The four respondents of the third cluster had 3 to 6 years in small businesses before they reached the service class. Three of them were manual workers before they became small employers, while the fourth (case 19) joined the family business when he left school. It can be shown that, with the exception of case 26, their worklife mobility is related to their entrepreneurial experience, in the sense that it is the people they met, and/or the skills and expertise they developed in their business which facilitated their mobility into the service class. Given this connection, it is rather surprising to observe that only one respondent (case 30) entered the service class by

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[14]In Hong Kong, office assistants are menial workers in white collar settings. Their job is to carry out petty tasks such as making photocopies, emptying bins, picking up and delivering mail.

expanding his small business. The rest have turned to salaried employment.

The 12 respondents of the fourth cluster have all had a rather long spell in manual jobs, but they can be divided into two groups according to the type of manual jobs they held. Those of the first group (cases 10, 22, 12, 23, 14, 29, 7, 11) worked as a machine operative, hospital cleaner, body massager, packer, general factory labourer, electronic technician, construction leveller and repairman respectively. This is a very mixed group, but the commonality between these occupations should be evident when they are contrasted with those of the second group which, I would argue, have some affinity to white collar jobs. Among the second group (cases 13, 20, 4, 24), there are two office assistants, a waiter, and an estimator.[15] As noted above, although office assistants are included in class VIIa, they actually work in white collar milieus. The same can be said of the estimator. The relative affinity of this second group to the white collar world can also be seen in the fact that three of the four respondents of this group have also held class IIIa jobs. Because of this affinity, I would argue that these 4 cases can be taken as variants of the "class IIIa path". Finally, with the exception of case 11,[16] all respondents of the fourth cluster stayed in salaried employment when they entered the service class.

Overall, Table 4.6 is notable in several ways. First, the second mobility path is the largest cluster of the table.[17] This is consistent with a weak interpretation of Figure

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[15]The estimator was employed in a container-repairing company. His job required him to inspect damaged containers, estimate the cost for repair work, and liaise with relevant parties over such matters as cost and responsibility. There was also some paperwork in this job.

[16]The respondents of cases 11 and 30 are the only two people in my sample who entered the service class by expanding an ongoing small (class IVa) business.

[17]Given (a) the small N of Table 4.6, and (b) that the sample of the follow-up study is not representative of Hong Kong, observations on the relative size of the

4.1 -- that prior experience in class III improves one's chance of worklife mobility into the service class. If readers will concede that cases 4, 13, 20 and 24 (i.e. the second subgroup) of the fourth cluster can be regarded as variants of the "class IIIa path", then the numerical prevalence of the second mobility path is even more impressive.

However, there is also a strong interpretation of Figure 4.1 -- that one has to start from (and stay in) class III in order to have any realistic chance of worklife mobility into the service class. If this view is taken, then because 19 of our 37 respondents[18] were not on the "class IIIa path", Table 4.6 is not completely consistent with Figure 4.1. Readers should also note that Table 4.6 goes further than Figure 4.1 in specifying that only class IIIa possesses the bridging power. It also shows that once a respondent has taken up a class IIIa job, he tends to stay there until he reaches the service class.

Second, from the second last column of Table 4.6, it can be seen that the first two mobility paths, namely "returning to full time-education" and "class IIIa path", are much shorter than the other two. While, on average, it takes a respondent on the first or the second path about 7 years to reach the service class, it takes those on the third or the fourth path twice as long to do so. Since the standard deviation in path length is relatively large for the last two clusters, there are short sequences in these two clusters. However, upon closer inspection, readers will see that most of the shorter sequences of the "manual path" (e.g. 3 of the 5 sequences shorter than 10 years) are those which I would consider as variants of the "class IIIa path". This is

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clusters can only be taken as tentative.

[18]This includes the 6 cases of the first cluster, the 4 cases of the "class IVa path", 8 cases from the "manual path", and case 39.

in line with the point, made earlier, that class IIIa workers not only enjoy better mobility chances, their "waiting time" is also shorter.

Third, "class IVa path" is the smallest cluster of the table. This is somewhat unexpected given: (a) that Hong Kong has a large class of petty bourgeoisie (cf. Chapter 3), and (b) that Hong Kong people are often described as entrepreneurial (e.g. Sit and Wong 1989). The above analysis suggests that running a small business is not a particularly promising career option insofar as worklife mobility into the service class is concerned.

The relative unpopularity of the entrepreneurial path is also reflected in the type of service class jobs taken up by our respondents. Of the 37 respondents, only four (cases 33, 46, 30, 11) stayed as or became entrepreneurs as they took up their first service class job. Having said this, it should also be noted that, among the 34 respondents who entered the service class as salaried employees, ten subsequently went into businesses. In five instances (cases 20, 39, 42, 56, 58), the business set up was of considerable size. So, these respondents were able to retain their service class status. In the other five instances (cases 21, 40, 42, 54, 71), however, the business was of relatively modest scale, and so for them, leaving salaried employment also meant moving from class I+II to class IVab. My point here is that there were just as many people going from salaried service class positions to small businesses as the other way around.

Fourth, 15 of the 37 respondents achieved service class status by internal promotion. In other words, they stayed with the same employer as they took up their first service

class job.[19] From the last column of Table 4.6, it can be seen that 43% of those on "class IIIa path", but 67% of those on the "manual path", gained mobility through internal promotion. If this percentage can be taken as a rough measure of how often the internal job ladder is used for mobility, then it seems that people on the "manual path" are more reliant on the internal job ladder for worklife mobility than those on "class IIIa path".[20] I am not sure why this should be the case. One interpretation of this finding is that the skills and experience of the upwardly mobile manual workers are more firm-specific (i.e. less transferable between firms) than those of class IIIa workers. A second interpretation is that manual workers do not have as much information of outside service class jobs as class IIIa workers. Since I do not have much corroboratory evidence for either of these views, I will not speculate further on why we should have found the above pattern.

But the, admittedly tentative, finding that manual workers are more dependent on internal job ladder for mobility does suggest one explanation for their generally poor performance in worklife mobility. To see this, readers should recall that most manual workers of Hong Kong are employed in small and medium factories (cf. Chapters 2 and 3) where internal job ladders probably do not exist. Conversely put, only a small minority of Hong Kong's manual workers who are employed in atypically large firms have access to the job ladders on which they are relatively dependent for worklife mobility.

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[19]I am grateful to May Tam for alerting me to the importance of internal job ladder as a factor of worklife mobility.

[20]Incidentally, 3 of the 4 cases which I take as variants of "class IIIa path" (cases 13, 20, 24) involve mobility using the internal job ladder. If these 4 cases are moved to the second cluster, then the percentage of internal promotion for the "class IIIa path" becomes 50% (9 out of 18), and that for the "manual path" becomes 63% (5 out of 8). So the difference between the two paths will be narrowed. But, roughly speaking, the same argument still applies.

Some evidence for (and an elaboration of) this view can be found by listing the employers of the respondents who took the "manual path" and achieved mobility by internal promotion. They (not counting the cases which I consider as variants of the "class IIIa path") include a public hospital (case 10), a large hotel (case 12), a large knitwear factory that has several plants (case 23), a telecommunication company (case 29), and a construction company (case 7). Obviously, these employers are not the typical small and medium factories of Hong Kong. Indeed, four of them are outside of the manufacturing sector. Since the majority of Hong Kong's manual workers are, in fact, employed in manufacturing, this may suggest another reason of why manual workers are, on the whole, less mobile than others.

User characteristics

Having considered the structural features of the typical mobility paths, let us now turn to the characteristics of the users. As noted above, if one can show that there are systematic differences between the users of the four mobility paths, then there is ground to argue that different types of mobility opportunity are selectively open to different types of people. In Table 4.8, I crosstabulate basic socio-demographic variables of the respondents by the mobility path they took. From Panel A, it can be observed that of all the 36 respondents, 9 were born before the second world war, 27 were born after the war.[21] Roughly speaking, the same distribution holds for the "class IIIa path", the "class IVa path" and the "manual path", but for those on the path of "returning to full-time education", only half were born after the war. Unfortunately, since there are only 6 cases in the first column, it would be too bold a statement to claim that the mobility path of "returning to full-time education" is less

[21]The outlier, case 39, is not considered in this table.

accessible to the post-war generation.[22]

Turning to Panel B, it can be seen that 86% of those on the "class IIIa path", but only half of those on the "manual path", were locally born. Given the slightly larger Ns of these two columns and the magnitude of this contrast, I would venture to suggest that the shorter and more popular "class IIIa path" is generally less open to immigrants.

From Panel C, readers can see that those on the "class IIIa path" are generally better educated than those on the "manual path" -- 86% of the former, but only 42% of the latter, have finished upper secondary school when they took up their first job. This difference is expected given that intermediate qualifications (i.e. upper secondary education) are normally required for class IIIa but not for manual jobs.

With respect to the place of schooling, Panel D shows relatively little difference between the mobility paths. However, from Panel E, readers can see that half of those on the "manual path" were between the age of 12 and 15 when they took up their first job. In contrast, none of those on the "class IIIa path" were so young when they entered the labour market. Correspondingly, 29% of those on the "class IIIa path", but none of those on the "manual career", were over 20 when they took up their first job. In short, compared to people on the "manual path", those who took the "class IIIa path" were late starters in the world of work. This is expected given the difference in educational qualifications between the two groups.

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[22]Given the very small Ns of first and third mobility paths, I will not refer to these two columns in the following discussion unless they show particularly striking distributions.

Finally, Panel F shows that although the 36 respondents were equally divided between the two class origins, class IVab and VIIa, they are unevenly distributed by the mobility paths taken. More specifically, 83% of those on the "manual path" came from class VIIa, and 64% of those on the "class IIIa path" came from class IVab. In other words, the "class IIIa path" is slightly more open to those of petty bourgeois origin, and those coming from the more disadvantaged background of class VIIa are somewhat restricted to the longer "manual path". I am not sure why this should be the case, but this contrast can, to some extent, be explained in terms of education differential: while 83% of those of class IVab origin hold intermediate qualifications, only 56% of those from class VIIa were similarly qualified. As we have seen, there were fewer people with no intermediate qualifications on the "class IIIa path".

To sum up, those who use the "class IIIa path" are, on average, better educated than those who use the "manual path". Moreover, the former generally took up their first job at a later age, more of them were locally born, and in terms of social origin, they tend to came from class IVab rather than class VIIa. Put differently, the "class IIIa path" is less open to (a) immigrants, (b) people who come from unskilled manual background, and (c) those who do not have intermediate qualifications.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have applied optimal matching analysis to some of the work history data in the follow-up study. As a result, four typical mobility paths have been identified. Of these four paths, the "class IIIa path" and the path of "returning to full-time education" are much shorter than the "class IVa path" or "class VI and VIIa path". The "class IIIa path" is the most popular one, in the sense that it is the largest cluster identified. This is consistent with the observation, made earlier on the basis of incomplete worklife mobility data of the main survey, that routine non-manual jobs

offer much better chances of career mobility into the service class than manual jobs do. I have also argued that although some cases are formally included under the "manual path", since the respondents in question were working in white collar milieus, they can be considered as pursuing variants of the "class IIIa path".

There is some evidence to suggest that, compared with people on "class IIIa path", those who are on the "manual path" are more reliant on internal job ladder for worklife mobility. It also seems that many of the mobile manual workers were employed outside of the manufacturing sector. Given that most manual workers in Hong Kong are employed in (a) small firms where internal job ladders probably do not exist, and (b) the manufacturing sector, these findings (admittedly tentative) may partly explain why manual workers were, on the whole, less mobile than others. There is also some evidence which suggests that real clock time is not a determining parameter in the mobility process.

Finally, I have argued that the various mobility paths are selectively open to people of different background and characteristics. More specifically, the "class IIIa path" is less open to immigrants, people without intermediate qualifications, and those who come from class VIIa background.

Figure 4.1 Outflow to entry class and destination class by origin class, all respondents of main survey; outflows of less than 10% to entry class or less than 5% to destination class omitted.

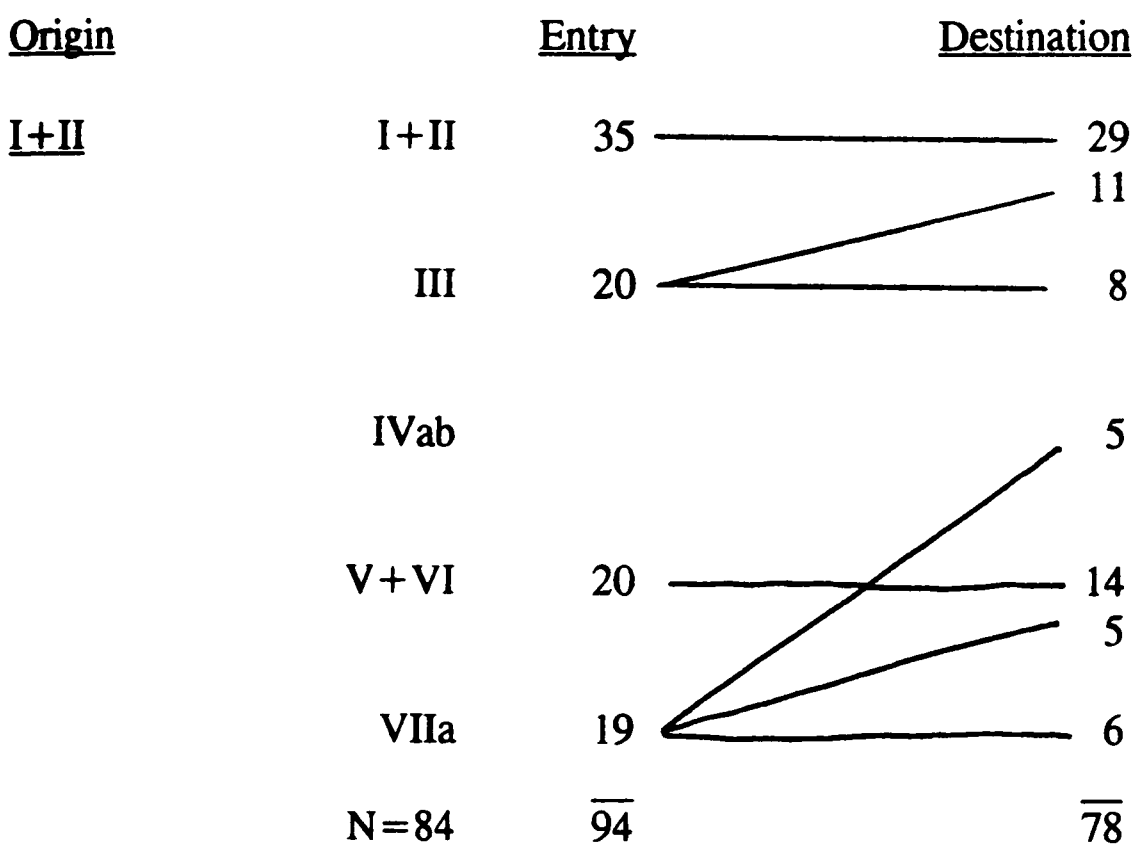


Figure 4.1 continued

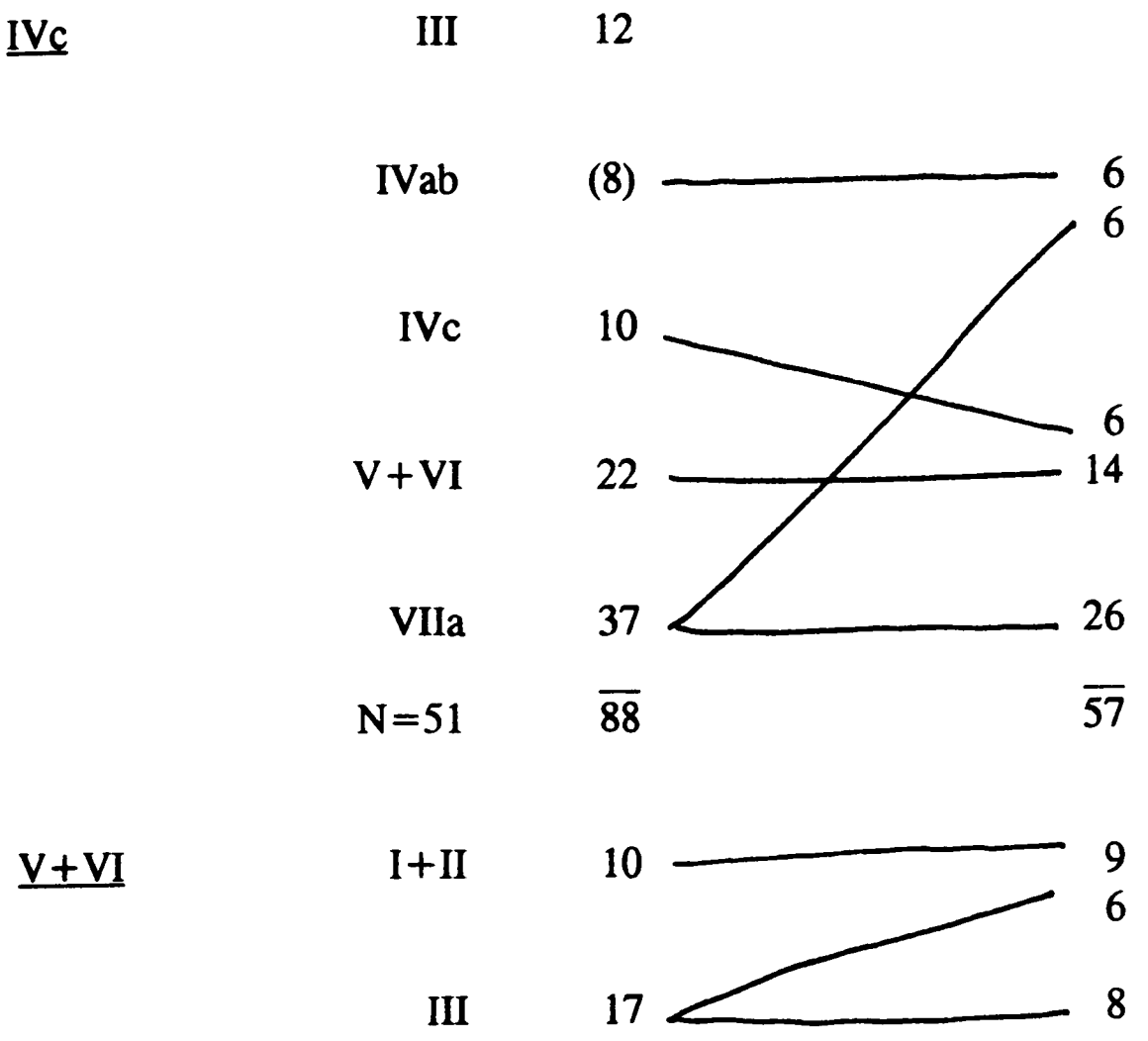


Figure 4.1 continued

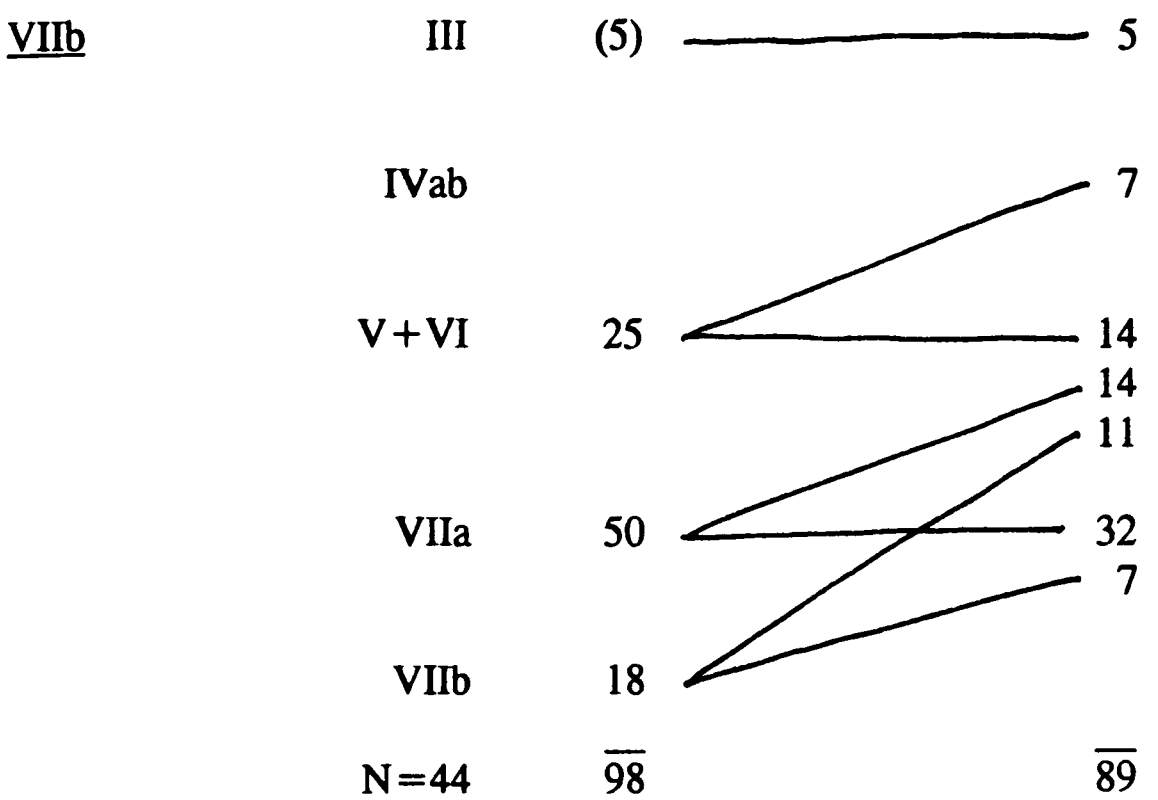


Table 4.1 Optimal matching analysis -- Substitution matrix 1

	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IVa	IVb	IVc	V	VI	VIIa	VIIb	X[a]	Y[b]	Z[c]
I	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	0
II		4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	0
IIIa			4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	0	1	0
IIIb				4	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	0	1	0
IVa					4	3	3	3	3	2	2	0	1	0
IVb						4	3	3	3	2	2	0	1	0
IVc							4	3	3	2	2	0	1	0
V								4	3	2	2	0	1	0
VI									4	2	2	0	1	0
VIIa										4	3	0	1	0
VIIb											4	0	1	0
X									4	3	3			
Y										4	3			
Z											4			

[a]Unemployment.

[b]Returning to full-time education.

[c]Unspecified events.

Table 4.2 Typical paths into the service class, substitution matrix 1

Career types	Number in group	Case number	Pre-service class career	Average path length (year)	% internal promotion
returning to full-time education	6	15	1X...3Y[a]	6.7 (s.d. = 1.9)	0%
		6	1II...3X...6Y		
		2	3VI...5Y		
		5	1VI...5Y		
		56	1IIIa...5Y		
		3	1IIIa...1Y...1IIIa...3Y		
class IIIa	14	[16][b]	1Z...5VIIa...5IIIa	6.8 (3.3)	43%
		54	1VIIa...5IIIa		
		17	5IIIa		
		21	4IIIa		
		[40]	4IIIa		
		[28]	15IIIa		
		[8]	10IIIa		
		[1]	3IIIa...1IIIb...3IIIa		
		18	1VIIa...7IIIa		
		[27]	2IIIa...1IVb...2IIIa		
		33	3IIIa		
		42	1IIIa...4Y...3IIIa		
		46	3IIIa		
		52	1II...2Y...3IIIa		
class VIIa	9	[10]	2VI...15VIIa	11.8 (7.4)	67%
		22	5VIIa		
		[12]	1VI...9VIIa...10Z...3VIIa...6V		
		[23]	7VIIa...6V		
		[24]	2VIIa...2VI...3VIIa...VI		
		14	3VIIa...1X...2VIIa		
		[13]	5VI...2IIIa...4VIIa...2V...2IIIa		
		[20]	2IIIa...3VIIa...1IIIa		
		4	4VIIa...2IIIa...1Y		
classes VI and IVa	7	[29]	22VI	17.0 (6.1)	43%
		[7]	26VI		
		19	6IVa		
		30	4VIIa...5V...4IIIa...6IVa		
		9	8V...6IVa...3V		
		11	3VIIb...1IIIb...2Y...6VI...5IVa		
		[26]	3VIIa...3IVa...3IVb...2VIIa...1IIIa		
others	1	39	1VIIa		

[a]As an example, the respondent of case 15 was unemployed for the first year after he left school. He then returned to full-time education for 3 years. Afterwards, he took up a service class job.

[b]Respondents of bracketed cases achieved mobility into the service class by internal promotion within a firm.

Table 4.3 Optimal matching analysis -- Substitution matrix 2

	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IVa	IVb	IVc	V	VI	VIIa	VIIb	X[a]	Y[b]	Z[c]
I	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
II		3	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
IIIa			3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
IIIb				3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
IVa					3	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	1	0
IVb						3	2	2	2	2	2	0	1	0
IVc							3	2	2	2	2	0	1	0
V								3	2	2	2	0	1	0
VI									3	2	2	0	1	0
VIIa										3	2	0	1	0
VIIb											3	0	1	0
X												3	2	2
Y													3	2
Z														3

[a]Unemployment.

[b]Returning to full-time education.

[c]Unspecified events.

Table 4.4 Optimal matching analysis -- Substitution matrix 3

	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IVa	IVb	IVc	V	VI	VIIa	VIIb	X[a]	Y[b]	Z[c]
I	5	5	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	0	1	0
II		5	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	0	1	0
IIIa			5	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	0	1	0
IIIb				5	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	0	1	0
IVa					5	4	4	4	3	3	3	0	1	0
IVb						5	4	4	3	3	3	0	1	0
IVc							5	4	3	3	3	0	1	0
V								5	3	3	3	0	1	0
VI									5	4	4	0	1	0
VIIa										5	4	0	1	0
VIIb											5	0	1	0
X									5	4	4			
Y										5	4			
Z											5			

[a]Unemployment.

[b]Returning to full-time education.

[c]Unspecified events.

Table 4.5 Typical paths into the service class, substitution matrix 2

Career types	Number in group	Case number	Pre-service class career	Average path length (year)	% internal promotion
returning to full-time education	6	15	1X...3Y	6.7 (s.d. = 1.9)	0%
		6	1II...3X...6Y		
		2	3VI...5Y		
		5	1VI...5Y		
		56	1IIIa...5Y		
		3	1IIIa...1Y...1IIIa...3Y		
class IIIa	14	42	1IIIa...4Y...3IIIa	6.8 (3.3)	43%
		52	1II...2Y...3IIIa		
		[28]	15IIIa		
		[8]	10IIIa		
		[1]	3IIIa...1IIIb...3IIIa		
		18	1VIIa...7IIIa		
		[16]	1Z...5VIIa...5IIIa		
		54	1VIIa...5IIIa		
		17	5IIIa		
		21	4IIIa		
		[40]	4IIIa		
		33	3IIIa		
		46	3IIIa		
		[27]	2IIIa...1IVb...2IIIa		
classes VIIa and VI	6	[13]	5VI..2IIIa..4VIIa..2V..2IIIa	15.5 (7.3)	67%
		[20]	2IIIa...3VIIa...1IIIa		
		4	4VIIa...2IIIa...1Y		
		[29]	22VI		
		[7]	26VI		
		11	3VIIb...1IIIb...2Y...6VI...5IVa		
classes VIIa and IVa	10	[10]	2VI...15VIIa	13.2 (7.2)	50%
		22	5VIIa		
		[23]	7VIIa...6V		
		[12]	1VI...9VIIa...10Z...3VIIa...6V		
		[24]	2VIIa...2VI...3VIIa...VI		
		14	3VIIa...1X...2VIIa		
		19	6IVa		
		30	4VIIa...5V...4IIIa...6IVa		
		9	8V...6IVa...3V		
		[26]	3VIIa...3IVa...3IVb...2VIIa...1IIIa		
others	1	39	1VIIa		

Table 4.6 Typical paths into the service class, substitution matrix 3

Career types	Number in group	Case number	Pre-service class career	Average path length (year)	% internal promotion
returning to full-time education	6	15	1X...3Y	6.7 (s.d.=1.9)	0%
		6	1II...3X...6Y		
		2	3VI...5Y		
		5	1VI...5Y		
		56	1IIIa...5Y		
		3	1IIIa...1Y...1IIIa...3Y		
class IIIa	14	[28]	15IIIa	6.8 (3.3)	43%
		[8]	10IIIa		
		[1]	3IIIa...1IIIb...3IIIa		
		18	1VIIa...7IIIa		
		[16]	1Z...5VIIa...5IIIa		
		54	1VIIa...5IIIa		
		17	5IIIa		
		21	4IIIa		
		[40]	4IIIa		
		[27]	2IIIa...1IVb...2IIIa		
		33	3IIIa		
		42	1IIIa...4Y...3IIIa		
		46	3IIIa		
		52	1II...2Y...3IIIa		
class IVa	4	19	6IVa	13.5 (5.0)	25%
		30	4VIIa...5V...4IIIa...6IVa		
		9	8V...6IVa...3V		
		[26]	3VIIa...3IVa...3IVb...2VIIa...1IIIa		
classes VI and VIIa	12	[13]	5VI..2IIIa..4VIIa..2V..2IIIa	14.3 (7.9)	67%
		[20]	2IIIa...3VIIa...1IIIa		
		4	4VIIa...2IIIa...1Y		
		[10]	2VI...15VIIa		
		22	5VIIa		
		[12]	1VI...9VIIa...10Z...3VIIa...6V		
		[24]	2VIIa...2VI...3VIIa...VI		
		[23]	7VIIa...6V		
		14	3VIIa...1X...2VIIa		
		[29]	22VI		
		[7]	26VI		
		11	3VIIb...1IIIb...2Y...6VI...5IVa		
others	1	39	1VIIa		

Table 4.7 Typical paths into the service class, substitution matrix 3, standardised sequences

Career types	Number in group	Case number	Pre-service class career	% internal promotion
returning to full-time education	6	15	12X...36Y	0%
		6	5II...15X...30Y	
		56	8IIIa...40Y	
		5	8VI...40Y	
		3	8IIIa...8Y...8IIIa...24Y	
		2	18VI...30Y	
class IIIa	14	42	6IIIa...24Y...18IIIa	43%
		52	8II...16Y...24IIIa	
		18	6VIIa...42IIIa	
		54	8VIIa...40IIIa	
		17	50IIIa	
		21	50IIIa	
		[28]	50IIIa	
		33	50IIIa	
		[40]	50IIIa	
		46	50IIIa	
		[8]	50IIIa	
		[1]	21IIIa...7IIIb...21IIIa	
		[27]	20IIIa...10IVb...20IIIa	
		[20]*[a]	16IIIa...24VIIa...8IIIa	
class IVa	5	19	50IVa	20%
		9	24V...18IVa...9V	
		30	12VIIa...15V...12IIIa...18IVa	
		[26]	12VIIa...12IVa...12IVb...8VIIa...4IIIa	
		11*	9VIIb...3IIIb...6Y...18VI...15IVa	
classes VI and VIIa	12	[12]	2VI...18VIIa...20Z...6VIIa...12V	67%
		14	24VIIa...8X...16VIIa	
		[16]*	5Z...25VIIa...25IIIa	
		4	28VIIa...14IIIa...7Y	
		[29]	50VI	
		[7]	50VI	
		22	50VIIa	
		39*	50VIIa	
		[10]	6VI...45VIIa	
		[24]	12VIIa...12VI...18VIIa...6VI	
		[23]	28VIIa...24V	
		[13]	15VI..6IIIa..12VIIa..6V..6IIIa	

[a]Asterisked cases are grouped under a different cluster in Table 4.6.

Table 4.8 Respondents on different mobility paths by various socio-demographic variables (column percentage)

	Mobility Path Taken				
	returning to full time education	class IIIa career	class IVa career	class VI & VIIa career	overall
Panel A		Year of Birth			
1945 or before	50	21	25	17	25
after 1945	50	79	75	83	75
Panel B		Place of Birth			
Hong Kong	50	86	75	50	67
elsewhere	50	14	25	50	33
Panel C		Education Qualification at First Job			
primary school	0	0	25	25	11
form 1 to form 3	0	14	25	33	19
form 4 to form 7	100	79	50	42	67
higher education	0	7	0	0	3
Panel D		Place of Schooling			
Hong Kong	67	93	100	75	83
elsewhere	33	7	0	25	17
Panel E		Age at First Job			
less than 16	0	0	25	50	19
16 - 20	83	71	75	42	64
over 20	17	29	0	8	17

Table 4.8 continued

	returning to full time education	class IIIa career	class IVa career	class VI & VIIa career	overall
		Mobility Path Taken			
Panel F		Class of Origin			
class IVab	83	64	50	17	50
class VIIa	17	36	50	83	50
N	6	14	4	12	36

Chapter 5

Social Networks and the Mobility Process

This chapter explores the effect of social networks on the mobility process. In particular, in view of my earlier finding (cf. Chapter 4) that far more people achieve worklife mobility into the service class by staying in wage employment than by going into business, I will examine how personal contacts facilitate the job search process. (in other words, the parallel question of how personal contacts affect the formation of business partnership will not be discussed here.) Much of the following discussion is inspired by Granovetter's "Strength of Weak Ties" (SWT) thesis. So following his lead, I will address questions such as; (a) what type of contacts are useful for "getting a job", (b) how useful contacts are acquired in the first place and maintained over time, and (c) who are more likely to have such contacts.

Job search data collected in the follow-up study will be employed to answer these questions. But it must be noted, at the outset, that only a fraction of all the job shifts considered below resulted in our respondents getting their first service class jobs. In other words, the job search process is not the same as the more specific process of class mobility that was discussed in previous chapters. However, given the need to augment the small N of the follow-up study, I will first pool all job shifts together for analysis, irrespective of their "mobility significance". Towards the end of the chapter, I will compare those moves that led to first service class jobs with other job changes.

The strength of weak ties

I have briefly discussed Granovetter's "Strength of Weak Ties" thesis in Chapter 1.

Let me elaborate his arguments here. In line with the findings of many labour economists (e.g. Rees and Shultz 1970), Granovetter (1973, 1974) reports that personal contacts are heavily used in the job search process. Based on a theory of structural balance, he argues that if bridging ties are defined as those which serve as the only connection between two persons (or two social clusters), then they are probably weak rather than strong ties (tie strength is defined by, say, frequency of contact). Hence, it is weak ties which link up distant parts of the social structure, and it is weak ties which relay to a person information from remote social circles which would otherwise be inaccessible. It follows that the more weak ties a person has, the more labour market information he/she will receive, and this will in turn facilitate job search. Hence the "Strength of Weak Ties".

Subsequent studies have generally supported Granovetter's argument, although they also reveal greater variations in network effects (e.g. Lin, Ensel and Vaughn 1981, Lin, Vaughn and Ensel 1981, De Graaf and Flap 1988, Marsden and Hurlbert 1988, Wegener 1991, see also Granovetter 1982). I have discussed some of these studies in Chapter 1. For our present purpose, it should be noted that two conditions need to be met if the SWT thesis is to be fully validated. They are; (a) replication of the weak ties effect at the aggregated level with representative data, and (b) verification that the aggregated patterns are really generated by the micro-processes suggested by Granovetter. As the studies cited above are all based on large scale sample surveys, the investigators of these surveys have sought to demonstrate the weak ties effect at the aggregated level (i.e. to meet the first condition). By comparison, the second condition has so far been overlooked. This chapter, unlike previous endeavours, seeks to test the SWT thesis at the micro level.

So what are the micro-mechanisms that Granovetter has in mind? To begin with, he

stresses that, "much labor-market information actually is transmitted as a byproduct of other social processes" (1974:52). The majority of his respondents (especially those who were better paid, more satisfied with their job) either had not actively searched for their current job,[1] or if they had, the job news they received was not related to their search effort. In this regard, Granovetter has given some vivid examples of how news of job vacancies was passed on to his respondents during chance meetings.

But individually random events do add up to stable aggregated patterns. First, Granovetter observes that job contacts are often work contacts (i.e. former colleagues, employers, or teachers) rather than relatives or social contacts. Moreover, work contacts generally lead to better job offers. Having said that, family-social contacts are important in their own ways. For instance, they are often in a better position to help a person to make a major career change (e.g. switching to a completely different field of work). This is because a person and his/her work contacts are very probably working in the same field. Also, since family members normally span a wide age range, they connect a person to a wider social world in terms of age. This may be particularly important for young workers.

Second, many job contacts are old rather than recent acquaintances. Moreover, even if little effort has been made by either party to maintain the relationship over time, old acquaintances can still function effectively as job contacts. This implies that,

> mobility seems to be self-generating: the more social and work settings one moves through, the larger the reservoir of personal

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[1]Granovetter recognises that the notion of <u>active</u> search is problematic. It is possible that many people (especially professional, technical and managerial employees) always "keep their ears open for possibilities", but they will not take any positive action until some real opportunities present themselves. He estimates that 20% of his respondents fell in this category.

> contacts he has who may mediate further mobility. It is because ties from past jobs and from before work are about as likely to be used as more recent ones that we have a cumulative effect, as if individuals "stockpile" their contacts. If only strong or recent ties mediate mobility, this could not be true. (Granovetter 1974:85)

This observation is, I should add, inconsistent with the assumption of most Markovian models of career mobility.[2] As a corollary, Granovetter (1974:85) further argues that,

> since relatively weak [ties] may be crucial, working on a job for two or three years may be sufficient to build a tie which will later be useful (though this is generally unanticipated). Too short a time may not be enough, since one's contact must have a definite impression of one's abilities and personality; staying too long in one's jobs, on the other hand, may foreclose future mobility by truncating the pool of personal contacts one might otherwise have built up.

In other words, there is an optimal duration of job tenure. Other things being equal, a person whose career is composed of jobs held for the optimal duration should enjoy better mobility chances than others.

Related to this point, Granovetter notes that while certain jobs (e.g. managerial posts) require their incumbents to deal with people, others (e.g. technical laboratory work) do not involve much personal interaction. It follows that managers will develop more contacts in their daily work routine, and they will enjoy better mobility chances. Similarly, people who are employed at the interface between firms (e.g. sales

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[2]Most Markovian models assume that the probability of a system changing to a particular state, s, at time t+1 depends only on its state at time t. In other words, there is no direct effect of the various states that the system has previously gone through from time 1 through to t-1. This is the assumption of first order dependence. For example, these models assume that the chance of a person going into self-employment next year depends only on his/her current job. It does not matter what other jobs he/she has held before. In principle, higher order dependence can be assumed and modelled. In other words, one can search further backward in time for causes. However, in practice, this will soon make the model very cumbersome (see Abbott and Hrycak 1990 for a more detail discussion of this issue). The fact that common Markovian models are not fully appropriate for explaining career mobility justifies our effort to look for typical mobility paths in Chapter 4.

persons, purchasing officers) are particularly well positioned to make and accumulate work contacts, and benefit from it.

I will not elaborate Granovetter's argument any further. It should already be clear that many hypotheses of theoretical interest and significance can be derived from his work. Unfortunately, existing studies in this area are almost exclusively concerned with the weak ties effect. What researchers often do is to add, quite mechanistically, a tie strength variable to a path analytic model of status attainment, and hope that a significantly negative parameter estimate will be returned. Such effort is, of course, useful and necessary, but I would argue that, if suitable data are available, we should pay attention to the full range of hypotheses derivable from Granovetter's work. Many of these hypotheses (such as that on optimal duration of job tenure) are amenable to, indeed they require, quantitative verification by survey data. But in the end, we will have to check whether these regularities are generated by the micro-processes suggested by Granovetter. As Burt (1992) points out, the crux of the matter is non-redundant information -- to what extent is a person connected to diverse social circles, and hence how far is the non-redundant information of these disparate circles available to him/her. The number of weak ties that a person has is only a proxy measure of how far he/she is diversely connected. In place of weak ties, Burt proposes to use "structural holes" as an alternative proxy measure. I will not compare the two measures here. My point is: since the follow-up study allows us to examine the mechanisms of information diffusion directly, we should not be unduly confined to the proxies.

Formal vs informal job search

Let us now turn to the data. Altogether, the 80 respondents of the follow-up study

reported 408 spells of wage employment.[3] The longest of these spells lasted 38 years, the shortest spanned only 3 months,[4] while the average duration of a job was 3.7 years. For every spell of wage employment under a new employer, I asked the respondent how he first heard about the job vacancy. If the answer was "from someone I know", then I would follow-up with further questions to discover how the respondent was related to his job contact. As far as possible, I also encouraged the respondent to talk about the general context in which he took up the new job.[5]

Overall, as can be seen from the penultimate column of Table 5.1, personal contact was the most important source of job information. Three quarters (76%) of all wage jobs ever held by our respondents were found through personal contacts, one-fifth were obtained by answering newspaper advertisement or "post-up" notices,[6] and only a very small minority (4%) were obtained through channels such as the government's Local Employment Service, private employment agencies, or school's job placement service.[7]

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[3]If, for example, a factory operative is promoted to become a foreman in the same factory, this will be coded as two jobs. However, since I am interested in the between-firm job search process, I consider only those jobs under different employers in this chapter. Hence the Ns of the tables is smaller than 408.

[4]For the purpose of coding, 3 months is the basic unit of event duration.

[5]Regrettably, I do not have systematic information on whether the respondent was actively looking for a new job at the time. Thus I cannot verify Granovetter's claim that most (professional, technical and managerial) jobs do not result from active search.

[6]These are announcements of job vacancies posted on lamp posts, notice-boards outside factory buildings, etc. Applicants usually walk in for interviews.

[7]This pattern is broadly consistent with the findings of two official surveys in Hong Kong on labour mobility conducted in 1982 and 1983. The 1983 survey has contacted over 39,000 persons in 14,105 households. One eighth (13.2%) of all respondents of this survey had changed jobs during the previous 12 months. And among the job-changers, 63.3% relied on assistance from their friends or relatives (personal contact) to find their current job; 27.5% answered or placed advertisements; while the rest registered with a public or a private employment agency, sent letters to firms directly, or used other means. Interestingly, the survey also reveals a

Table 5.1 also reveals that job search behaviour varies between social classes. About 80% of all manual (classes V+VI, VIIa) jobs were found through personal contact. The corresponding figure for non-manual (classes I+II, III) jobs is 63%. It seems that manual workers are, relative to non-manual workers, more reliant on personal contacts in job search.[8]

Turning to Panel A of Table 5.2, it is evident that job search behaviour also varies with labour market experience, as indexed by the number of jobs a respondent had previously held. First time job-seekers were slightly more inclined to use personal contact (81% as compared to the overall level of 76%). Then the level of use of personal contact declines such that 72% of the second, third, fourth or fifth jobs were obtained in this manner. But it rises again to over 82% for sixth or subsequent jobs.

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substantial difference in job search behaviour between male and female. While 69.9% of the male job-changers used personal contacts to find their current job, the corresponding figure for female job-changers is only 49.7%. As the findings of the two surveys are very similar, I will not report the findings of the 1982 survey here. But it is of some interest to note that since autumn 1981 the Hong Kong General Household Survey, which is conducted quarterly, has routinely asked its unemployed respondents what main action they have taken to find job. On average, 41.6% of the unemployed respondents of these surveys relied on personal contacts. In the round of the GHS done in spring 1990, respondents who were currently employed were also asked whether they had actively searched for another job in the last 30 days, and if they had, what main action was taken. It turned out that only 0.9% of the currently employed had been actively seeking jobs, but among this group of job-seekers, 58.2% used personal contacts. The same round shows that only 35.3% of the unemployed respondents used personal contacts to find a job (see Census and Statistics Department 1983, 1984, 1991).

[8]The prevalence of personal referral in job search and recruitment has been noted by many researchers (e.g. Rees and Shultz 1970), and various explanations have been put forward. For example, it has been suggested that employees would prefer personal referral to formal method because job intermediaries can usually give them job previews, making it easier for them to find jobs which match their choice. From the point of view of the employers, it is suggested that people employed through referral are usually of high ability. This is because the reputation of the intermediaries is at stake, and so they will only refer high-ability employees to the employers. Also, since intermediaries will give job previews to potential applicants, only suitable persons will apply. In other words, personal referral serves as a screening device.

This curvilinear relationship is an artefact, produced by the superimposition of two opposite trends. Panels B, C and D of Table 5.2 clearly show that the relationship between job search behaviour and labour market experience is itself a function of social class. For service class jobs (Panel B), about half of the first, second or third jobs were found through personal contact. This percentage rises steadily such that 57% of the fourth or fifth jobs, 86% of the sixth or seventh jobs, and all subsequent jobs were obtained by this means. A similar trend of increasing use of personal contact can also be seen for class III jobs (Panel C).[9] In contrast, Panel D shows a decreasing trend for working class (V+VI, VIIa) jobs: while 90% of the first jobs were found through personal contact, this percentage declines more or less steadily such that personal contacts accounted for only 70% of the 8th or subsequent jobs.

How can we explain these opposite trends? There may be different accounts,[10] but

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[9]Two cautionary notes should however be noted: (a) Panel C shows greater fluctuation than Panel B, and (b) that there are only two cases in each of the two columns representing "6th & 7th jobs" and "8th jobs & beyond" -- such a small N should make us wary of the observed trend.

[10]For example, one may explain the increasing use of personal contact to get non-manual jobs as follows: in filling entry or junior level non-manual vacancies, the employer would want to be sure that the employees have a few basic abilities (in the context of clerical work in Hong Kong, this could be basic competence in the use of English). These basic abilities can often be adequately reflected in formal credentials. Moreover, the performance and true abilities of the employees can be monitored while they are employed at junior levels. Under-performers can be put in, what Gaertner (1990) calls, plateau positions of the firm, while promising employees will be placed in assessment positions -- positions of greater responsibility and visibility which also offer better training and prospects of further promotion. In other words, from the employer's point of view, it is not essential that all employees recruited at the entry or junior levels are the best people available. It follows that formal methods can be relied upon as a relatively cheap means of recruitment for these jobs. Such hiring criteria of the employers are reflected in the relatively heavy use of formal job search on the part of young white collar employees. In contrast, to fill senior non-manual posts, the stake is much higher. The cost to the firm of having an unsuitable person employed at a senior level is much greater. Moreover, formal credentials or CVs would not be reliable to reflect many of the qualities that employers would require of senior employees. Hence, personal referral would be a more appropriate method of recruitment because it usually provides more comprehensive information about the applicants. In short, from the employer's point of view, the difference

my data support the following one. It starts with the idea that the job search method that a person uses depends, to a large extent, on how useable the various methods are to him/her. In particular, whether he/she will turn to personal contacts for job referral is contingent on him/her having useful contacts in the first place. In Table 5.3, I crosstabulate, for those jobs obtained through personal contacts, contact type by social class (of the job entered into). Overall, about a quarter (27%) of all personal contacts were relatives of the respondents, 10% were former schoolmates, and 13% were neighbours. Another 26% of the personal contacts were former or present colleagues, or other people whom the respondents knew through work, while 8% were former superiors at work. Altogether work contacts accounted for about a third of all personal contacts.

Not surprisingly, contact type varies between social classes. Nearly half (47%) of the people who helped our respondents to get service class jobs were work contacts (i.e. colleagues or superiors). However, only 26% of the contacts that led to class VIIa jobs, 32% of those that led to class III jobs, and 40% of those that led to class V+VI jobs were work contacts. In other words, while work contacts are about as useful as family-social contacts for getting service class jobs, the former are much less useful than the latter for getting non-service class jobs.

This contrast is relevant to explaining the opposite trends noted above. By definition, a respondent will not have any work contact before he enters the labour market.

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between filling entry level and higher-level non-manual jobs is similar to that between buying a relatively standardised and cheap commodity (e.g. an apple) and buying a non-standardised and relatively expensive commodity (e.g. used car). Different methods of personnel search and selection are called for. Since I do not have any evidence on employers' hiring consideration and practices, the above account is purely speculative in nature, and it certainly does not explain why the trend of getting manual jobs is opposite in direction.

However, it is likely that the longer he works, the more work contacts he will accumulate. Given the relative importance of work contacts for getting service class jobs, a trend of progressively heavier use of personal contact from a relatively low level can be expected.

Some supportive evidence for this argument can be found in cases which deviate from the general trend. Of all the service class jobs obtained through formal methods, nine were third or subsequent jobs. All of these nine cases are such that we would not expect the respondent to be able to benefit from past work contacts. For example, in three instances, the respondent was cut off from his old ties by geographical movement. To see this, consider the following case materials.

Case 3: Mr C was born in Hong Kong in 1930. After finishing secondary school, he worked as a clerk (class IIIa) for about two years. Then he went to Peking University where he obtained a degree in English. For the next 27 years, he worked in Beijing, first as a translator (II), then as a university teacher in translation (I). He returned to Hong Kong in 1980, after spending some thirty years in Beijing. Of course, Mr C could not turn to his old Beijing colleagues for job referral (although, as we shall see, one of them did help him to get a job in Hong Kong later on). An old friend from secondary school first hired him as a secretary (IIIa). Six months later, he changed to a travel magazine and worked as a translator (II). He was invited by the magazine's publisher to take up this job. This person was, however, a social friend rather than a work contact of Mr C. In 1982, he got his seventh job as an interpreter (II) in an American oil company by answering a newspaper job advertisement.

Case 15: After finishing his A levels, Mr W briefly worked as a bank teller (class IIIa). Then he went to Hong Kong Polytechnic for three years, and obtained a diploma in quantity surveying. He had then worked as a quantity surveyor (I) in two Hong Kong firms (both jobs were found through formal application, and each lasted for about a year) before he went to England for a one-year B.Sc. course. He decided to stay in England after finishing the course. Through a private employment agency, he found a quantity surveyor job (I). He held this job for 14 months. Then he returned to Hong Kong where, by answering a newspaper job advertisement, he got his fifth job as a project quantity surveyor (I).

In the above example, it would be very difficult for Mr W's English colleagues to refer him to any job in Hong Kong. Also, if Granovetter is right about optimal duration of job tenure, Mr W had not stayed in his previous Hong Kong jobs for long enough to allow useful work contacts to build up. As a result, he had to rely on newspaper job advertisements to find his fifth job (or his fourth service class job). For the other six outlying cases (i.e. those in which a respondent, who was not at the beginning of his career, used formal methods to get a service class job), the respondents were taking up jobs in new fields. As noted above, work contacts are not very useful in this situation. Consider the following case.[11]

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[11]Brief outlines of career movement of the other five cases are listed below. The last job in each case is the service class job obtained through formal method:

Case 14: factory labourer ... unemployment ... factory packer ... police constable

Case 52: secondary school teacher ... resumed schooling, sixth form ... clerical officer, civil service ... trade regulation officer, civil service

Case 58: assistant engineer, electrical factory ... unemployment ... technical assistant, aeroengineering firm ... factory inspector, labour department

Case 58: assistant engineer, electrical factory ... unemployment ... technical assistant, aeroengineering firm ... factory inspector, labour department ... technician, construction company

Case 69: site foreman, construction company ... site coordinator, construction

Case 42: After finishing secondary school, Mr A worked in his father's trading firm for a year (class IIIa). Then he went to a tertiary college to read English. Afterwards, his girlfriend's brother introduced him to work in a second trading firm as a technical clerk (IIIa). This firm was in the business of dyeing materials. In this job, Mr A was primarily responsible for typing and store-keeping. Three years later, he answered a newspaper advertisement for a post of surveyor/liaison clerk (I) in a construction company, and was hired. In this third job, Mr A's duty was to visit work sites, estimate the cost of work, and submit tender for the job.

Altogether, the nine outlying cases suggest that if a respondent, who was not at the beginning of his career, used formal methods to look for a service class job, it was probably because he had experienced considerable career discontinuities, in spatial or occupational terms, which made it difficult for him to turn to past work contacts for assistance. In other words, he was pushed to use formal methods.

To understand the opposite trend for manual jobs, readers should recall that to get manual jobs, family-social contacts (i.e. relatives, former schoolmates, neighbours) are more useful than work contacts. Since a respondent can benefit from family-social contacts right from the beginning of his worklife, heavier use of personal contacts to get entry-level manual jobs can be expected. If one further postulates that support and assistance from one's relatives and old schoolmates generally declines over an adult's life course,[12] then the downward trend in the use of personal contacts

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company ... assignment officer, Independent Commission Against Corruption

[12]See Rossi and Rossi (1990) and Cooney and Uhlenberg (1992) for evidences that parental support of various forms (gifts, advice, service, help in child care) as well as children's perception of parents as potential source of help generally decline over

to get manual jobs can also be explained. In short, the opposite trends of Table 5.2 can, at least in part, be explained by the combined effects of two factors: (a) while work contacts are more important for getting service class jobs, family-social contacts are more useful for getting manual jobs, and (b) the availability of these two types of contact change in opposite directions over a person's worklife.[13]

Related to this argument is a caveat about a possible sampling bias. If it is true that people usually have many family-social contacts (especially relatives) and few work contacts at the beginning of their worklife; and if we further assume that the class position entered into by a respondent is highly correlated with the class position of his job contact (some evidence for this claim will be presented shortly); then since all respondents of the follow-up study were of class IVab or VIIa origin, it is probable that, for their first few jobs, personal contacts would lead them to manual rather than non-manual jobs. That is to say, the respondents did not have many people in their social world they could turn to for referral to service class jobs. They were in effect pushed to use formal methods in their search for service class positions. Conversely put, if there had been some respondents of service class origin in the follow-up study, one could have expected heavier use of personal contacts to get entry level service class jobs.

A profile of "service-class-contacts"

Having reported how far personal contacts matter in getting wage jobs in general, and

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the life course of the adult child.

[13]The routine non-manual class is the anomaly here. Relatives and former schoolmates were important for getting both class III and manual jobs. However, in contrast to the trend of decreasing use of personal contact to get manual jobs, there is, for class III jobs, a tendency for increasing use of personal contacts. I do not know why this is the case.

service class jobs in particular, I will now describe the people who introduced our respondents to service class jobs (hereafter service-class-contacts). The question is: do they differ from other job contacts? I have already noted, in relation to Table 5.3, that contacts for non-service class jobs were often relatives, neighbours or old schoolmates of the respondents, while to get service class jobs, work contacts were just as important as family-social contacts.[14] So the first thing to note about service-class-contacts is that there are more work contacts among them.

It is also possible that getting a service class job depends partly on having a well-placed contact. This idea is well borne out by my data. As can be seen from Panel A of Table 5.4, more than two thirds (68%) of the service-class-contacts were themselves members of the service class; and one-fifth (21%) of them belonged to class IVab. In sharp contrast, 61% of the contacts that led to unskilled manual jobs were themselves unskilled manual workers, and 40% of the contacts that led to skilled manual jobs belonged to the skilled manual class.

In a way, Table 5.4 resembles a conventional father-son mobility table -- 52% of the cases fall on the main diagonal, and there are progressively fewer cases as one gets further away from it. To verify this impression, I have fitted two loglinear models to this contact-job table. The results are shown in Panel B. Model 1 is the independence model, which postulates no association between contact's class and the class of the job entered into. (Since we are considering only wage employment, the column representing class IVab is blocked out as structural zeros in both models.)

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[14]Table 5.3 also shows that (a) relatives constitute 41% of all contacts that lead to class III jobs, and (b) that neighbours are important sources of information about class VIIa vacancies -- one fifth of all contacts that lead to class VIIa jobs belong to this category. Given the limitation of space, I will not discuss these findings in detail.

As expected, the independence model does not fit the table very well. But it provides a baseline against which other models can be compared. Model 2 is the quasi-independence model. It acknowledges the tendency for cases to be found on the main diagonal, but it also stipulates perfect mobility among the off-diagonal cells. This simple model accounts for 92% of the total association in the table, and achieves a very good fit with the data. So, indeed, the contact-job table shares an important feature with conventional father-son mobility tables, namely the "immobility effect".[15]

On the whole, the pattern evident in the contact-job table is consistent with the argument of Lin, Ensel and Vaughn (1981) that the occupational status of the job contact (which is a measure of his/her resources) positively affects the status attainable by the respondent. In particular, people who have contacts in the service class enjoy a much better chance of getting service class jobs.

Of course, some service-class-contacts were not members of the service class. They were mostly small employers (class IVa) who hired our respondents in their own firm as managers or clerical supervisors. This is one example:

> Case 54: When Mr K left school at the age of 16, a neighbour introduced him to work as an office assistant (class VIIa) in a forwarding company (this person was a truck driver in the same firm). Within six years, he was promoted to become a senior clerk (IIIa). Then he was invited to join a second forwarding firm as a clerical supervisor (II) by the firm's proprietor, Mr A (IVa). It should be noted that Mr K and Mr A did not know each other before. By chance, Mr A met a friend, Mr C, on a plane. The latter had

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[15]Of course, it often takes models much more complex than the quasi-independence model to fit father-son mobility tables.

emigrated to the United States for some time, but before his emigration, he was the immediate superior of Mr K in the first forwarding firm. Learning that Mr A had just set up his own business, and that he badly needed some experienced people to staff several positions, Mr C recommended Mr K to him. After returning to Hong Kong, Mr A offered Mr K the job.

The above case illustrates how information about jobs and candidates is passed on during chance meetings. It is also a good example of a respondent getting a job which he has not actively searched for. Furthermore, it shows how an old acquaintance in a remote place can still act as an effective job contact. We will return to these themes later on. Let me cite another case in which a foreman introduced a respondent to a service class job.

Case 21: After he had finished secondary school, a cousin of Mr L introduced him to work as a junior clerk (class IIIa) in an electronics factory. Within four years, he was promoted to become a shipping clerk (IIIa). Then Mr L was invited to join a second electronics factory as a shipping supervisor (II). The job contact in this case was a former colleague, a foreman (V) in the first factory. She had changed to the second factory (where she also worked as a foreman) some time earlier, and when she heard that there was an opening of shipping supervisor, she recommended Mr L for the job. To anticipate a later point, Mr L was not close to this foreman at all when they were colleagues in the first factory. He did not know when she left the factory, nor had they kept contact after she had gone. Similarly, the foreman did not know how to get in touch with Mr L directly either -- she had to contact him through a friend they had in common.

This brings us to the question of the strength of weak ties. I have two measures of tie strength -- frequency of contact, and respondent's assessment of how close he was to the job contact. Let me start with frequency of contact. Panel A of Table 5.5 shows that strong ties (frequency of contact being once a week or more) accounted for about half (52%) of all jobs obtained through personal contacts, intermediate ties (less than once a week but more than once a year) accounted for about a third (31%), and weak ties (once a year or less) were responsible for only 18% of the jobs. Roughly speaking, the same relative order holds for classes III, V+VI and VIIa jobs. However, this order is completely reversed for service class jobs: weak ties accounted for half of all service class jobs that were obtained through personal contacts, intermediate ties accounted for another 38%, and strong ties were responsible for just 13%.

Using almost identical cutting points (at least twice a week for strong ties, once a year or less for weak ties, in between for intermediate ties), Granovetter observes that his respondents (a sample of professional, technical and managerial workers in a Boston suburb, N=54) received more job news from weak ties (27.8%) than from strong ties (16.7%). But the majority (55.6%) of them heard about job vacancies through intermediate rather than weak ties.

So our result is consistent with the SWT thesis. But what explains the very striking weak ties effect in Hong Kong? Perhaps the very small sample size (there are only 16 service-class-contacts) is partly responsible for this. However, I cannot preclude the possibility of a real difference between Granovetter's sample and the present one. In any case, if we turn to the subjective measure of tie strength (respondent's assessment of how close he was to the contact) in Panel B, a pattern more consonant with Granovetter's findings can be observed. While most (63%) service class jobs

were found through moderately close contacts, our respondents received more job news from people they considered as not close to them at all (31%) than from their close associates (6%). In other words, using this second measure, a relatively modest, but still impressive weak ties effect can be observed.[16]

Since our respondents did not know their service-class-contacts very well, one may think that these contacts were not involved in our respondents' family and social life. This is partly a question of network density. I have, again, two measures of network density -- whether the contact knew the family and the close friends of the respondent. Admittedly, these two measures are seriously inadequate, but as rough indices, they do point to a pattern which deserves some attention. Panel A of Table 5.6 shows that the service-class-contacts stood out from the rest -- less than a quarter (23%) of them knew the respondent's family, whereas for all other contacts, 59 to 80 percent did.

One may think that this contrast is an artefact, because (a) there were proportionately fewer relatives among the service-class-contacts, and (b) that relatives usually know one's family. So in Panel B, I screen out all contacts who were relatives of the respondents, and consider only the non-relatives. Compared to Panel A, there is a drop across the board in the percentage of contacts who knew the respondent's family. However, the contrast between the service class and other classes remains.

Turning to the question of whether the contact knew the respondent's close friends (Panel C), no sharp difference can be found between the service-class-contacts and

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[16]Panel B of Table 5.5 also shows that weak ties account for less than 8% of all non-service class jobs. Moreover, both measures of tie strength suggest that members of the routine non-manual class are most inclined to use strong ties.

other job contacts. In fact, the outliers of this Panel are those that led to skilled manual jobs, but the difference here is clearly not as big as those seen in Panels A and B.

Finally, I will consider for how long the respondent had known his contact. Readers can see from Table 5.7 that one-fifth of all contacts were very recent acquaintances of our respondents -- they had known each other for one year or less. Relationships that had stood for 6 to 10 years, 11 to 20 years, and over 30 years each accounted for about a quarter of all cases. Six percent of the cases were relationships that had stood for 21 to 30 years. For reasons unclear to me, no contact had known the respondent for 1 to 5 years.

Against this general picture, what distinguishes the service-class-contacts is their uneven distribution. Close to 80% of them were clustered in two groups -- "between 6 to 10 years" and "over 30 years"; and there were fewer recent acquaintances among the service-class-contacts. I am not sure why this should be the case. I also cannot explain why there is no observation in the two categories of "1 to 5 years" and the "11 to 20 years". However, the fact that nearly half (47%) of the service-class-contacts had known the respondents for over 20 years is consistent with Granovetter's suggestion that old associates are just as effective job contacts as recent ones. The following is an example of an old acquaintance acting as a job contact from afar.

> Case 3 (see above): Mr C was born in Hong Kong. But for 30 years, he had worked in Beijing as a translator (class II) and a university teacher (I). After returning to Hong Kong, he had worked as a secretary (IIIa), a translator (II), an interpreter (II), and a book editor (II), and had even run a small translation company (IVa) for three years, before he was offered a job of chief editor in

a major dictionary publisher. The managing director of this publishing house had earlier attended a conference in Beijing where he met a former subordinate of Mr C. Although the latter had not kept close contact with Mr C since he left China, he recommended Mr C to the managing director for the post of chief editorship in the publishing house.

I will shortly present more case materials to illustrate how job news travels from the employer to the applicant, but let me first sum up our findings so far. On the whole, our findings are consistent with Granovetter's argument. Service-class-contacts were often work, rather than family-social, contacts. Seventy percent of them were members of the service class, and about half of them were old acquaintance of our respondents. It seems that little effort had been made by either the respondents or the contacts to maintain their relationship over time. They rarely met each other, and less than 10% of the respondents regarded their job contacts as their close friends. Therefore, it can be said that most of the respondent-contact relationship were weak ties. Also, only a quarter of the contacts knew the respondent's family, and just a third of them knew the respondent's close friends. All but the very last of these characteristics were peculiar to the service-class-contacts.

Let us look at more case materials. Given their numerical prominence, I will first consider the work contacts. I can distinguish at least three ways in which work contacts passed on job news to the respondents. The first and most straightforward mechanism operates as follows: an old colleague of the respondent moves to a different firm; he/she subsequently hears about a vacancy, and passes on the news to

the respondent.[17] Case 21 cited above is an example of such chain-like movement of personnel between firms. The following is another example.

> Case 18: When Mr N dropped out from school after form 3, he joined a construction company as an office boy (class VIIa). He got on very well in this job. Within three years, he was promoted to become an architectural trainee (IIIa) and then an architectural assistant (IIIa). He was also sponsored by the company to attend a 4-year part-time course in Building Management at Hong Kong Polytechnic. Unfortunately, the company went bankrupt soon after he finished the course. For the next 12 months, Mr N shifted between three different jobs. However, when the managing director of the construction company became a vice president of a property development firm, he offered Mr N the job of project coordinator (II) in the new company.

The key to the second mechanism is part-time work. For various reasons (e.g. supplementary income), a respondent may take up a part-time job. This usually brings him into contact with a wider range of people than his main job would allow. Some of these people may later become job contacts. Consider the following cases.

> Case 3 (see above): Mr C had previously worked as a translator (class II) and a university teacher in translation (I) in Beijing. After coming to Hong Kong, he worked as a secretary (IIIa), a translator (II) and an interpreter (II). While employed in these jobs, he also did some freelance translation work in his spare time. While looking for a publisher for his work, he came to know a

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[17]One can easily think of variants of this first mechanism. For instance, instead of changing to a second firm to take up a wage job, the former superior or colleague could have set up his/her own business.

general manager of a publishing house. After reading Mr C's work, the manager offered him a post of guest editor (II) responsible for the publication of two other books.

Case 6: Mr W was born in mainland China in 1929. After secondary school, he worked briefly as a warehouse administrator (class II) in Guangzhou, but a year later, the communists won the civil war in China, and Mr W fled to Hong Kong. He did not know anyone in Hong Kong, could not speak the local dialect (Cantonese), and his command of English was minimal. Because of these disadvantages and the generally adverse economic conditions of the time, he was unemployed for his first three years in Hong Kong. During this period, he lived on his savings and a small and unstable income from freelance contributions to local magazines. Since there was no prospect of employment in the near future, Mr W decided to go back to school. He enrolled in a newly established tertiary college to read Chinese and History. He had won a small scholarship to support his study, but to earn supplementary income, he also worked part-time for a research institute/publisher for three years. Upon his graduation, he was invited to take up a full-time researcher post (II) in the institute.

Case 19: After leaving school, Mr C worked in his father's "dry-storage yard" (class IVa). In this family business, they maintained, repaired, tested and sometimes built yachts. They were also involved in speedboat brokerage. If someone was looking for a speedboat, Mr C would scout for a model and test the boat for the buyer. After one of these deals, the buyer told Mr C that he was also looking for a skipper (I) for his yacht. Mr C expressed interest in the job and was hired.

Notice that Case 19 also illustrates how a former client can subsequently become a work contact. I take this as the third mechanism of the "work contacts effect". To elaborate, the operation of a small business often requires at least one partner to keep frequent contact with people outside the firm. The work contacts thus accumulated may provide useful job leads later on. The following is further example.

> Case 9: Mr H left school as a form 5 graduate. Then he had worked for eight years as a field supervisor (class V) in a small packing-removal company before he set up his own packing-removal firm (IVa). He was encouraged to do so by the principal client of his former employer -- a large international removal company for which smaller companies worked as subcontractors. The management of this international company was unhappy with Mr H's former employer, and it promised to place orders with Mr H if he set up his own firm. Mr H heeded the advice, and the business went well. Six years later, the client company decided to set up its own operation department. Jobs which would have been subcontracted out under previous arrangement would now be done by its own staff. As a result, it would no longer place orders with Mr H, but it offered to incorporate Mr H and his staff into its new operation department. Under such circumstances, Mr H returned to wage employment and became an operation supervisor (V) of the client company. Soon after he joined the company, a colleague (but Mr H first came to know him as a client) left the firm to set up his own removal business. He asked Mr H to join him. Mr H felt at that time that he should stay with his former employees. So he declined the offer. About two years later, Mr H received the same offer again. He accepted it and became an operation manager (II).

The details of the above cases vary considerably, but it should be clear that all three

mechanisms are consistent with the central idea of the SWT thesis. Having old colleagues scattered in different firms, taking a part-time job, or operating a small business all brought respondents into contact with a larger number of people in different circles. As a result, the respondent received more non-redundant information, and this, in turn, enhanced his mobility chances. Thus interpreted, the case material is consistent with Granovetter's argument.

Let us now turn to the family-social contacts. Consider the following examples.

> Case 17: Mr K was a form 5 graduate. Attracted by the job security of the civil service, he became a clerk (class IIIa) in the labour department upon graduation. But gradually he became dissatisfied with the poor promotion prospects in the civil service. Five years later, his girlfriend's father invited him to work in his firm (a manufacturer-cum-retailer of decorative lights). He accepted the offer and became an assistant manager (II).

> Case 27: Mr M left school after form 6. He had then worked as an account clerk (class IIIa), and had also run a small music shop (IVb) before he settled in a career as a salesman. Starting from the post of salesman (IIIa), he was gradually promoted to become a senior sales executive (II). While working as a salesman, he also operated a trading firm with a colleague on a part-time basis for about 3 years. Then he was introduced to his present job as the manager (II) of a trading firm by his cousin, Mr D. Mr D had been to Taiwan for his university education, and had met his wife there. A relative of Mr D's wife was setting up a toy factory in mainland China, and needed someone whom he can trust to head a branch office in Hong Kong (in order to support the operation of the mainland's factory). When Mr D learnt about

this vacancy, he recommended Mr M for the job.

It is certainly hazardous to generalise on the basis of just a few cases, but bearing this warning in mind, the two cases (especially the last one) cited above do suggest that the job referral process mediated by family-social contacts can be very convoluted. In other words, family-social contacts do sometimes connect a person to distant social circles, and thus made available to him the non-redundant information of these diverse settings.

Contacts at the turning point of careers

As noted above, only a fraction of all the job shifts considered in this chapter led to our respondents getting their first service class jobs. Moreover, not everyone took up their first service class job under a new employer. A respondent could have entered a firm as a routine non-manual or even a manual employee, and then received promotion to a service class position within the firm. In this case, one may argue that the key event or the turning point of the respondent's career was his entry to the firm rather than his promotion. But the job contact at this turning point was not classified in the last section as a service-class-contact.

Consider also the example of Mr M of case 2. He left school after form 5 and became a construction leveller (class VI). Three years later, he returned to school to do his A levels. Then he went to Taiwan for his university education. The degree in engineering he obtained there enabled him to work as an engineer (class I) when he returned to Hong Kong. In this case, one may argue that the key event of Mr M's career was his return to school and higher education rather than his appointment to the engineer job.

The general point here is that for some respondents, the turning point of their career was temporally prior to their transition into the service class. By focusing, in the last section, on the service-class-contacts, I have overlooked some people who were crucial in the mobility experience of some of our respondents. It is important for us to ask whether, and if so how, the contacts at the turning point of careers (labelled hereafter as key contacts) differed from the service-class-contacts. This section seeks to answer this question. The main problem here is to decide the turning point of a respondent's career. Generally speaking, I have used two rules which are implicit in the two examples noted above. First, if a respondent was promoted within a firm to a service class position, then the turning point was his entry into that firm.[18] Second, if a respondent took up a service class job immediately after his return to school or college, then the spell of resumed education will be taken as his turning point. Of course, if a respondent previously of non-service class status took up a service class job under a new employer, then this new job will be the turning point of his worklife.

I have inspected all 37 careers in the follow-up study that contain at least a spell of service class job (i.e. the cases examined in Chapter 4), and their turning points are determined according to the above rules. The 37 turning points fall into three groups: 26 (70%) of them were events of wage employment, 5 (14%) were events of entrepreneurial venture, and 6 (16%) were events of resumed schooling. Of the 26 wage jobs, 14 (54%) were service class jobs, 6 were class III jobs, and 6 were manual (V+VI, VIIa) jobs. I have already discussed the 14 service class jobs and their contacts in the previous section, but here all 26 jobs are considered together and

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[18]There are exceptions where I have not chosen the entry of a person into a firm as his career turning point (see cases 10 and 26 below). There is certainly an arbitrary element in these cases. But after considering the case materials, I judge that the turning points chosen would best capture the career dynamic of each case.

the same set of questions discussed earlier -- whether personal contact was involved in the job search process, and if so, how the respondent was related to the contact -- are applied to them. The answers to these questions are listed in the last column of Tables 5.1 and 5.3 to 5.7.

To sum up: two thirds of the key jobs were obtained through personal contacts (Table 5.1). This is almost identical to the level of use of personal contacts to get service class and routine non-manual jobs. Table 5.3 shows that 64% of the key contacts can be classified as work contacts, 14% were relatives, and 7% were former schoolmates. Evidently, this distribution is much closer to that of the service-class-contacts than to other job contacts. Also, 73% of the key contacts did not know the respondent's family, 80% of them did not know the respondent's close friends (Table 5.6). The corresponding figures for the service-class-contacts are 77% and 67% respectively. A broad similarity between the two types of contacts is again manifest.

Differences between them can, of course, be found. For example, only 39% of the key contacts, but 68% of the service-class-contacts were members of the service class. Also, relative to the service-class-contacts, there were fewer small employers, but more routine non-manual and manual workers among the key contacts. In other words, the key contacts were more evenly distributed in terms of their own class position. Turning to Table 5.5, readers can see that relatively more key contacts were strongly tied to the respondents. (This is true in terms of both measures of tie strength.) However, weak ties were used just as often as strong ones to get "key jobs", and the level of use of weak ties to get "key jobs" was still considerably higher than that for getting routine non-manual or manual jobs. On the whole, the strength of weak ties was less impressive with respect to the key contacts, but it can still be seen. Finally, compared to the service-class-contacts, there were more recent

acquaintances among the key contacts (Table 5.7).

On the whole, the general profile of the key contacts is similar to that of the service-class-contacts. In any case, they were much more similar to each other than either of them is to other job contacts. As a further test, I have split the key contacts into two sub-groups: those that led to the service class jobs directly (i.e. those which were studied in the last section) and the rest. With respect to all variables discussed earlier (strong vs weak ties, work vs family-social contact, etc.), chi-square tests do not reveal any significant difference between them. Given these results, I would maintain that the observations made in the last section are robust. Indeed, if we examine the case materials related to the key contacts, many of these observations can be further confirmed. For example, the following two cases show how job news was passed between old acquaintances who have kept minimal contact with each other.

Case 13: Mr H left school after form 2. Then he worked as a craftsman (class VI) in two furniture workshops for four and a half years. Afterwards, he changed to an interior decorator firm. There was less manual-artisan work in this third job, and Mr H had hoped that it would eventually lead him into interior design or sales work (IIIa). However, he had to quit the job two years later because of respiratory problem. For the next three years, he worked in two restaurants as a waiter (VIIa). Then he joined a hotel, also as a waiter (VIIa). At that point, Mr H was thinking of settling in waiting jobs, so he began to take English and Japanese classes so that he could communicate with his customers more easily. His effort soon paid off. Within three years, he was promoted to become a "captain" (V), but he also began to feel unhappy about his career prospect. At about this time, he kept running into an old workmate from one the restaurants he used to work on his

way home from the hotel. This person had left waiting jobs altogether, and was then a sales manager of a company that sold office equipment and supplies. Mr H thought that this might be a good career change, and he asked this friend to introduce him to work in his firm. He did very well in this new job -- within 10 months, he was promoted from salesman (IIIa) to sales supervisor (IIIa); after another 8 months, he was promoted to his present job as a sales manager (II).

Case 24: Mr I left school as a form 5 graduate. Then he worked as an office assistant (class VIIa) in a company which installed theft and fire prevention equipments. Eighteen months later, he took up a technical traineeship (VI) in the same company, and began to attend a 3-year certificate course in mechanical engineering in a technical institute. Mr I did not finish the course. In fact, he left the company 18 months later to work as an assistant attendant (VIIa) in a property development company. Three years later, he ran into an old schoolmate in a restaurant. They had played football together in school, but they had not kept contact since graduation. This person was then manager of a geotechnics and engineering company. When he learned that Mr I was looking for a new job, he offered Mr I the job of trainee laboratory technician (VI) in his company. Mr I was eventually promoted to become a senior laboratory technician (II). At the time of the follow-up study, he was a site agent (V) of the company.

Similarly, the following case illustrates how a respondent who was employed at the interface between firms benefitted from his daily work contacts.

Case 20: After finishing form 6, Mr Y worked as a clerk (class IIIa) in a

small container-repairing company. His duty in this job was restricted to simple paperwork. Eighteen months later, he was "promoted" to become an estimator (VIIa). This was a semi-manual job which involved outdoor work: Mr Y would inspect damaged containers, estimate the cost for repair work, and liaise with relevant parties over matters such as responsibility and expenses. Consequently, Mr Y had to deal with many people in related trades such as shipping and warehousing. About two years later, one of his daily work contacts from a shipping company told him about a clerical (IIIa) vacancy in another shipping company. Mr Y applied for the job and was hired. Within a year, he was promoted to the position of clerical supervisor (II) in the container-repairing department of the company. Eventually, he was further promoted to become a controller (II) and a department manager (II).

In general, the mechanisms of job referral reported in the last section also apply to the key contacts. However, the following two cases do suggest a different mechanism.

Case 26: Mr A left school after form 4. He first worked as a factory labourer (class VIIa) for 6 months. Then through his elder brother he took up an apprenticeship in glazing (VIIa). Within 2 years, Mr A became a subcontractor (IVa). However, the construction industry went into a slump three or four years later, and he was forced to give up glazing work altogether. Mr A's elder brother was then working as a self-employed truck driver, and he brought Mr A into the trade. He worked as a self-employed truck driver (IVb) for three years until a downturn of business pushed him out of his job again. At this point, his elder brother was working as a chauffeur in a garment factory. This garment factory was related to an electronics

factory through a common partner. When he heard about a vacancy for chauffeur in the electronics factory, he introduced Mr A to the job. In this job, Mr A worked for the factory's managing director. He got along with his boss very well. The latter gradually felt that Mr A should not waste his talent working as a chauffeur, so he promoted him to the position of computer operator (IIIa) in the same company. The company also sponsored Mr A to attend a part-time evening course in computer programming. When he finished the course 18 months later, he was promoted to become a programming trainee (II), and subsequently a programmer (II).

Case 10: Mr W had only had primary education. At the age of 12, he took up an apprenticeship (class VI) in a metal workshop. Two years later, he changed to work as an ironer (VIIa) in a garment factory. After three years, he changed again to a third factory and worked as a machine operative (VIIa). Mr W's father was a gardener in a public hospital. Through his colleagues, he heard that a new hospital was going to be opened within a few years and there would be many vacancies for porters, cleaners, etc. Thinking that these jobs would offer far more job security than unskilled factory jobs, he put in an application on Mr W's behalf. Two years later, Mr W was hired as a cleaner (VIIa) in the new hospital. He was assigned to work in the hospital's milk room. According to Mr W, all casual workers in the hospital knew that the X-ray department sometimes "promoted" its cleaners to the post of dark-room technicians. Recruitment for dark-room technicians was open and there would be an aptitude test. However, because the cleaners in the X-ray department would have informally picked up some relevant skills, they usually stood a better chance in the test. Since becoming a dark-room technician was one of the few promotion chances hospital cleaners could realistically hope

for, most of them wanted to get a transfer to the X-ray department. Naturally this meant a long queue. Also, the head of the original department would have to agree to release the cleaner before he/she could get the transfer, so relationship with one's superior was very important. Mr W got on very well with his supervisor, and, perhaps because he was the youngest cleaner in the milk room, Mr W's supervisor thought that he should not spend his life in such a menial position. Eventually, through her husband, who was a radiographer in the hospital, the supervisor heard that there was a vacancy for a cleaner in the X-ray department. She encouraged Mr W to apply and supported his application. Mr W moved to the X-ray department at the age of 27. Two years later, he passed the test and became a technician trainee. After six months of training, he became a dark-room technician (II).

I have reported three ways in which work contacts facilitate the job search process (having work contacts scattered in different firms, taking part-time jobs, and running a small business), and I have suggested that the crux of these mechanisms is non-redundant information. Set against this background, the two cases cited above are interesting because they point to a fourth mechanism. The mobility experience of these two respondents cannot be explained by the information benefit of their previous jobs. In fact, their jobs as chauffeur and cleaner were both very restrictive in terms of the range of people they met at work. However, in both cases, a superior acted directly to transfer the respondent to a position with better promotion prospects; and from these positions, the two respondents subsequently moved on to service class posts. Such direct intervention by a superior was not observed among the service-class-contacts. This should not be surprising given that it is much more difficult for a superior to intervene directly in the context of inter-firm mobility.

Chapter summary

The evidences we saw in this chapter are consistent with Granovetter's SWT thesis. I have found that our respondents relied heavily on personal contacts in job search, irrespective of what type of jobs (e.g. service class, manual) they were looking for. However, "service-class-contacts" (i.e. contacts that led to service class jobs) were different from other job contacts: they were more likely to be work contacts; the majority of them were members of the service class; many had known our respondents for a long time; but they probably had not kept close contact with our respondents over the years. On the whole, it must be said that our respondents were only weakly tied to their service-class-contacts.

These findings allow us to answer the questions raised in the first paragraph of this chapter: yes, there is a particular type of people who are more helpful than others insofar as getting service class jobs is concerned (i.e. the "service-class-contacts" described above). Moreover, since a person does not need to put in a lot of effort to maintain his/her relationship with service-class-contacts, he/she can accumulate these contacts without over-stretching his/her resources, such as time. How does one get to know more service-class-contacts in the first place? Of course, there are idiosyncratic factors (e.g. how "sociable" a person is) which affect the number and type of people that one knows. But for our present purpose, I would emphasis the importance of career history. Consider the three mechanisms of work contact effects noted above: (a) having old colleagues scattered in many different firms, (b) taking up part-time jobs, and (c) running a small business. These three mechanisms are all about worklife history. Because work contacts known from a long time ago can still function effectively as service-class-contacts, people who had held jobs which put them into contact with the right type of people would enjoy better mobility chance subsequently. This suggests some sort of path dependence, which is consistent with

the idea of "typical mobility paths" explored in Chapter 4.

Table 5.1 Source of job news by class of job entered into (column percentage)

source of job news	class of job entered into I+II	III	V+VI	VIIa	overall	key[a] contact
personal contact	64	63	82	80	76	67
newspaper or posted job ad.	28	29	17	18	20	29
others[b]	8	9	1	3	4	5
N	36	35	88	120	279	21

[a]Contacts at key event of respondent's career. See section on "Contacts at the turning points of careers" for explanation.

[b]Including public and private employment agencies, and school job placement service.

Table 5.2 Source of job news by labour market experience (column percentage)

source of job news	order of job: 1st	2nd & 3th	4th & 5th	6th & 7th	8th & beyond	overall
Panel A		all jobs				
personal contact	81	73	72	85	82	76
newspaper or posted job ad.	12	27	23	15	12	20
others[a]	7	1	5	0	6	4
N	68	101	60	33	17	279
Panel B		class I+II jobs only				
personal contact	50	46	57	86	100	64
newspaper or posted job ad.	25	46	29	14	0	28
others	25	8	14	0	0	8
N	4	13	7	7	5	36
Panel C		class III jobs only				
personal contact	54	67	50	100	100	63
newspaper or posted job ad.	23	33	50	0	0	29
others	23	0	0	0	0	9
N	13	12	6	2	2	35

[a]Including public and private employment agencies, and school job placement service.

Table 5.2 continued

	1st	2nd & 3th	4th & 5th	6th & 7th	8th & beyond	overall
source of job news						
Panel D		class V+VI & VIIa jobs				
personal contact	90	78	77	83	70	81
newspaper or posted job ad.	8	22	19	17	20	17
others	2	0	4	0	10	2
N	51	76	47	24	10	208

Table 5.3 Type of relationship with job contact by class of job entered into (column percentage)

	class of job entered into					
contact type	I+II	III	V+VI	VIIa	overall	key contact
relatives	9	41	24	30	27	14
schoolmates	9	14	14	6	10	7
former or present colleagues or work contacts	30	23	32	21	26	43
former superiors at work	17	9	8	5	8	21
neighbours	0	5	10	20	13	0
others[a]	35	9	13	18	17	14
N	23	22	72	96	213	14

[a]Including people who grew up in the same neighbourhood with respondent, acquaintance known through respondent's family members, unspecified sources.

Table 5.4 Class position of contact by class of job entered into (column percentage)

Panel A

contact's class	class of job entered into I+II	III	V+VI	VIIa	overall	key contact
I+II	68	21	5	5	14	39
III	5	32	4	5	8	23
IVab	21	37	37	17	27	15
V+VI	5	5	40	11	19	15
VIIa	0	5	14	61	32	8
N	19	19	57	75	170	13

Panel B

Model (N=170)		G^2	df	rG^2	p
1	independence (column IVab blocked)	102.2	12	-	0
2	quasi-independence (column IVab blocked)	8.6	11	92%	> .30

Table 5.5 Frequency of contact with, and subjective assessment of closeness to, job contact by class of job entered into (column percentage)

	class of job entered into					
	I+II	III	V+VI	VIIa	overall	key contact
Panel A		frequency of contact				
at least once a week	13	68	42	62	52	39
less than once a week, but more than once a year	38	21	43	23	31	23
once a year or less	50	11	15	15	18	39
N	16	19	53	79	167	13
Panel B		subjective assessment of closeness				
very close	6	60	51	47	46	23
intermediate	63	35	43	45	45	54
not close at all	31	5	6	8	9	23
N	16	20	53	78	167	13

Table 5.6 Whether contact knew respondent's family and close friends by class of job entered into (column percentage)

	class of job entered into					key
	I+II	III	V+VI	VIIa	overall	contact
Panel A	contact knew respondent's family					
Yes	23	80	59	72	65	27
No	77	20	42	28	35	73
N	13	20	53	79	165	11
Panel B	contact knew respondent's family (non-relative only)					
Yes	9	67	42	56	48	11
No	91	33	58	44	52	89
N	11	12	36	50	109	9
Panel C	contact knew respondent's close friends					
Yes	33	29	54	39	43	20
No	67	71	46	61	57	80
N	12	14	48	64	138	10

Table 5.7 Duration of relationship with job contact by class of job entered into (column percentage)

	class of job entered into					
duration of relationship	I+II	III	V+VI	VIIa	overall	key contact
1 year or less	12	20	17	23	20	18
between 1 and 5 years	0	0	0	0	0	0
between 6 and 10 years	41	15	32	19	25	55
between 11 and 20 years	0	40	19	28	24	0
between 21 and 30 years	12	10	0	7	6	9
31 years or more	35	15	32	23	26	18
N	17	20	53	74	164	11

Chapter 6

Career Beginning and Mobility Outcome

I have been studying worklife dynamics in the last two chapters. In this chapter, I return to the question of intergenerational transmission of class (dis)advantages by closely examining a particular stage of the worklife, namely its beginning. I am, in particular, concerned with how much parental assistance our respondents received during this period. To address this question, both subjective (respondents' assessment of the availability of parental support) and behavioural data (actual incidents of parental help in job shifts) from the follow-up study will be examined. My general argument will be that because our respondents came from relatively disadvantaged (class IVab or VIIa) background, their parents have relatively little resources, material or otherwise, to invest in their long term mobility prospects while they were making the crucial transition from school to the world of work.[1] The paucity of parental support, in turn, adversely affected their subsequent mobility performance. This, I submit, is one mechanism through which worklife process is related to the persistence of inequality across generations.

Why study the transition from school to work?

Given our interest in the process of intergenerational class mobility, there are two

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[1]Readers may think that this argument does not apply to petty bourgeois parents because they should have more resources than unskilled manual workers. Indeed, while class VIIa is at the bottom of the threefold hierarchical division of the CASMIN schema, class IVab is placed at the middle level (cf. Chapter 3). This is true in a general sense, but I would stress that many members of Hong Kong's petty bourgeoisie are really own-account workers (e.g. hawkers) who do not enjoy much economic security. Conversely put, not many of them run small but substantial business. For instance, 35 respondents of the follow-up study were of class IVab origin. Among these 35 cases, 16 came from IVb rather than IVa. Readers will also see from the case materials presented below that many class IVa parents, being owner of grocery store or labour contractor, were not particularly well off.

reasons for paying close attention to career beginning. First, those respondents who achieved worklife mobility into the service class did so rather quickly. The average length of the typical mobility paths identified in Chapter 4 ranges from 7 to 14 years. If all mobile respondents are pooled and considered together, they took, on average, 10 years (standard deviation being 6.5 years) to reach the service class. Since members of the service class tend to stay there until they retire, it must be said that much of the intergenerational class mobility that we wish to understand takes place in early worklife.

Second, it is likely that parental influence on mobility outcome, say, through personal referral to jobs, was stronger when a person was still at school or in his/her first few years at work than it would be subsequently. Conversely put, as a person's labour market experience grows, it is likely that worklife factors (such as work contacts accumulated from previous jobs) will increasingly become more important in determining labour market outcome. As Rossi and Rossi (1990:408) argue,

> Providing information about job prospects or client/customers contacts relevant to an occupation is the type of help that declines over the life course of both parents and adult children. It is when adult children are getting started in life that job prospects and contacts matter most, something middle-aged parents, at their prime of engagement in the world of work, are best able to provide. Once the parents have retired, they have lost such connections and their adult children are well established on their own and need less help on job-related matters.

My data support this argument. Table 6.1 crosstabulates, for jobs obtained through personal referral, type of job contact by respondent's labour market experience. It is obvious that the importance of relatives as job contacts declines monotonically and sharply: 53% of all contacts that led to first jobs, but only 22% of those that led to second or third jobs, were relatives of our respondents. Indeed, by the time when the respondent was looking for his 8th job, relatives were of no help at all. To

generalized from this finding, I would argue that career beginning is the interface between intergenerational and worklife processes, and so it offers the best window to observe the transmission of class (dis)advantages across generations.

Parental strategies to improve respondents' mobility prospects

To take up the issues sketched above, I will turn to the follow-up study. Readers will find that the data I use are far from ideal. This chapter was not planned at the stage of fieldwork, and so questions about career beginning were not systematically put to every respondent. As a result, apart from the usual caveat of small N, there is another one of incomplete data. Nonetheless, it seems to me that several broad patterns can still be discerned in the data, and provided I am careful enough in my interpretation of these patterns, some general arguments can be made out of them.

One final note before I proceed to the data: in the following analysis, I assume that parents are primarily interested in promoting their child's mobility prospect (into the service class).[2] This assumption will be qualified later on, but it provides a vantage point from which the argument of this chapter will be structured. Thus, I would like to know what parents can do to improve their child's mobility chance; what are the constraints that limit their action, and how do these constraints change as their child grows up? In short, my question is: what strategies can parents pursue to promote intergenerational mobility into the service class at different stages of their child's life course?

Given the importance of formal credentials in occupational selection, and more

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[2]There are no respondents of service class origin in the follow-up study. If there were, a parallel assumption would be that service class parents are interested in preventing their children from skidding down the class structure.

specifically, the association between higher education and membership of the service class,[3] one obvious thing for parents to do is to encourage their child to obtain some higher education before he/she enters the labour market. By definition, this strategy can only be pursued when the child was still at school. So I take this as the first strategy for parents to follow. However, this strategy may fail for several reasons: the child may not want to stay in school, he/she may fail in the competition for a place in the university, adverse financial conditions in the family may force him/her to drop out, and so on. Indeed, in choosing respondents for the follow-up study, I have deliberately screened out those who obtained higher qualification without any interruption in education. So for all respondents discussed below, the first strategy had failed. What then can parents do if it became clear that their child was not going to have any higher education? To answer this question, I now turn to the data.

Timing of transitions

I will start with the timing of several events during late adolescence and young adulthood. Events such as leaving school for the first time, getting first full-time job, getting married, leaving parental home, having first child, etc. are crucial markers of the transition from adolescence to adulthood. The timing of these events and the order of their occurrence is governed by cultural norms, legal rules and various institutional structures of a society (Hogan 1981, Featherman and Sorensen 1983, Sorensen, Weinert and Sherrod 1986, Kerckhoff 1990, 1993). This issue of age grading is not my principal concern here, but it is interesting to see if the timing of these events differs between the mobile and the immobile respondents.[4]

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[3]See Mitchell (1972), Pong and Post (1991), Tang (1992), Tsang (1993), Wong and Lui (1992b) for discussion of the relationship between family background, education and occupational attainment in Hong Kong.

[4]The mobile respondents are the 37 people whose work history I studied in Chapter 4. The immobile respondents are the rest of the sample minus 5 cases.

Figure 6.1 shows the quartiles of the distribution of age of four events. It can be seen from Panel A that the median respondent of the mobile group left school some three years later than his counterpart in the immobile group. The interquartile range of the mobile group is also wider than that of the immobile group by 1.5 years. If we think of leaving school (and other events) as a population-level process, and that the first and third quartiles as marking the beginning and the end of the population transition respectively, then we can say that the mobile group was just beginning to leave school when the immobile group has already finished doing so. Roughly the same pattern can be observed for the age of first full-time job (Panel B).

The median mobile respondent also got married somewhat later than the median immobile respondent (Panel C). However, the difference here is only one year, and there is a considerable overlap between the two interquartile ranges. So in terms of age of marriage, the two groups of respondents are much more similar to each other. Conversely put, it is the school-leaving age and that of first full-time job that distinguish the mobile respondents from the immobile respondents.

The finding that the mobile respondents left school and entered the labour market some three years later than those who are immobile is related to the fact that the former are generally better qualified than the latter. This can be seen from the first two columns of Panel A of Table 6.2: only 8% of the immobile group, but more than 70% of the mobile group, held upper secondary or better qualifications when they first left school. Here I would note that some upper secondary qualifications is required for most routine non-manual jobs in Hong Kong. I cannot provide full and

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These five cases are excluded because they represent instances of downward mobility (cases 58, 65, 71, 72) or direct entry into the service class (case 69).

direct evidence for this claim here.[5] But if readers can accept this claim for the time being, then it can be argued that the difference in qualifications evident in Table 6.2 is consistent with the general argument of Chapter 4. There we show that most of the mobile respondents started their worklife from routine non-manual rather than manual jobs. But to get into routine non-manual first jobs, they will need some upper secondary qualifications, and, of course, to obtain such qualifications, they will have to stay in school longer. Hence the difference in the ages of school-leaving and first job.

Further evidence for this argument can be found in the third and fourth columns of Panel A. Here I differentiate the mobile respondents according to the class of their first job. It can be seen that all of those who had routine non-manual first jobs held upper secondary or better qualifications when they left school. In contrast, only half of those who had manual first jobs were similarly qualified (which is, of course, still much higher than the 8% level of the immobile group).

It should be noted that people who leave school with upper secondary qualifications are not in the most advantaged position -- unlike those who have higher education, it is very unlikely for them to get a service class job right away. However, compared with those with even less qualifications, they enjoy a much better chance of worklife mobility into the service class.[6] This brings us back to the question raised at the end

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[5]Panel B of Table 6.2 offers some preliminary evidence for this claim. Here I consider only the mobile respondents. From an outflow perspective, no one with lower secondary or primary qualification had a class III first jobs.

[6]For some preliminary evidence from the follow-up study, consider the second and fourth rows of Panel C of Table 6.2. The odds ratio of the four cells equals 10.7. In other words, relative to people who left school with lower secondary qualifications, upper secondary school graduates were almost eleven times as likely to enter the service class through worklife mobility.

of the last section -- what should parents do to promote their child's mobility prospects if it seems unlikely that he/she will get any higher education before leaving school (i.e. the first strategy fails)? The data we just examined suggest that the second strategy for parents to pursue is to make sure that he/she obtains some upper secondary qualifications.

Parental attitude towards respondent's education

If this is what parents should do, how far, as judged by our respondents, had they done so? Did parents recognise the importance of upper secondary qualifications for worklife mobility, and did they encourage our respondents to obtain such qualifications? In the follow-up study, I asked most respondents how much education their parents expected them to have, or whether their parents encouraged them to stay in school when they were about to leave. Their responses are tabulated in Panel A of Table 6.3. Note that we cannot determine the parental attitude for almost a quarter (24%) of the cases. Such a high level of "don't know" response should make us wary of the distribution of the valid cases. But bearing this admonition in mind, I believe several features of Panel A are still notable.[7]

First, for both the mobile and the immobile groups, there were at least as many indifferent parents (i.e. parents who were indifferent to whether the respondent should stay in school or not) as there were supportive ones (i.e. parents who encouraged the respondent to stay in school). The percentage of indifferent parents is higher among the immobile group, but there is really little evidence to argue that, relative to

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[7]The very high level of "don't know" response among the mobile respondents (30%) is due to the fact that this issue was not discussed with the first ten respondents, and that these respondents had all achieved worklife mobility into the service class. If it is true that mobile respondents were likely to have received some parental support, Table 6.3 should have underestimated the degree of positive support received by the mobile respondents.

respondents who are immobile, those who are mobile received more parental support in schooling.[8] Second, again for both groups, there were very few parents who actually discouraged the respondent to stay in school. If anything, there were proportionately more unsupportive parents among the mobile group, but given the weakness of our data, the 8% difference between the two groups does not support any strong inference.

However, Panel A does suggest quite unmistakably that a large minority, if not the majority, of our respondents did not receive positive parental support for their education. This is inconsistent with what I expect of the parents. Why so? Am I wrong in assuming that parents are interested in promoting their children's mobility chance? Or is it because parents did not recognize the "mobility dividend" of formal credentials?

I believe part of the difficulty here is related to the inadequacy of my measure of parental attitude. Obviously, in terms of the amount of resources already committed, those parents who stop supporting a child's education after upper secondary school are quite different from those who withheld support when the child was still in primary school. Also, popular expectation of how much education a child from disadvantaged background should and can have may well change over time (probably in the upward direction). So without proper control for qualifications already attained by the respondent and historical timing (as indexed by, say, the respondent's year of birth), the comparison of parental attitude in Panel A is quite hazardous.[9] While

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[8]One may interpret this finding as suggesting that parental support is inconsequential for mobility outcome. I will come back to this issue later.

[9]Surely, problems such as adaptive preference that Elster (1983) refers to are also relevant here.

putting in proper control for these variables will require a larger data set (a partial attempt with the present data set will be made later), let us turn to the case materials for a better appreciation of what these parental attitudes mean.

Let me start with the unsupportive parents. Ironically, four of the five respondents (cases 4, 22, 30, 56, 64) who had unsupportive parents achieved worklife mobility into the service class. It is of some interest to see how they did that, but for the moment, I will simply note that these five cases can be classified into two subgroups. In the first subgroup, which contains two cases, the parents did question the value of investing in their children's education beyond primary school. Their views were indeed inconsistent with my inference from Table 6.2.

Case 4*[10]: Mr M's father was a taxi driver (class VIIa) who, according to Mr M, held the view that if he had the means, he would rather spend it on buying a fish pond than sending his children to secondary school. As a result, Mr M and all his siblings had only got primary education when they left school.

Case 64: Mr F was the fifth of nine children in a fishing family (class IVb). He began schooling at the age of nine, and by the time he finished primary school, he was already 18. According to Mr F, his father thought that there was no point for his children to have more than primary education because he reckoned that better qualifications would not mean higher income. In any case, the family could not afford to send kids to secondary school. So Mr F and all his siblings were asked to drop out after they had finished primary school. They all worked on their father's fishing boat.

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[10]Hereafter, the case number of mobile respondents will be asterisked.

In contrast to these two cases, parents of the second subgroup recognised the "mobility dividend" of secondary qualifications. The withdrawal of their support for the respondent's education was really a response to various types of contingency. Consider the following example:

> Case 30*: Mr A's father ran a small herbal drink shop (class IVb). At the time when Mr A finished primary school, the financial situation of the family was so bad that his parents decided that they could not support all their children to go to school. So they asked Mr A to drop out so that his younger brother could continue (who eventually finished secondary school).

Note that the parents in case 30* did not dispute the importance of secondary qualifications for social mobility. They were only forced to make a trade off between the desirability of investing in Mr A's long term career success, and the need to respond to immediate financial pressure. Also note that they had selectively invested in one child's mobility chance, rather than given up all hopes of intergenerational mobility. For the other two cases of the second subgroup, the respondents were asked to leave school after they had received some secondary education.

> Case 22*: When he was an adolescent, Mr N was supported by his uncle who was the owner of a small business (class IVa). The latter was upset by Mr N's pro-communist inclination, and since he attributed the source of Mr N's political views to the school he attended, he refused to support Mr N to go to upper secondary school. (With the help of other relatives, Mr N was able to finish upper secondary school in mainland China.)

> Case 56*: Mr K finished his secondary school in Vietnam. His father was

a grocer (class IVb), and he had expected Mr K to work in the family shop, and eventually to take over the business. Thus, although Mr K was admitted to a university in China, he did not support him to take up the chance.

To sum up the above cases, I would argue that, on close inspection, only two of the five "unsupportive" parents actually disputed the second strategy I infer from Table 6.2. In this sense, the apparent inconsistency between Tables 6.2 and 6.3 is less real than what a cursory reading may suggest. What about the indifferent parents? Why is it that they did not care much about how much education their son was going to have? Of the 28 respondents who say that their parents were indifferent to their education attainment, 11 entered the service class eventually. In elaboration of their parents' attitude, many respondents have given accounts similar to the following ones.

Case 21*: Mr L's parents ran a small rattan goods workshop (class IVa). According to Mr L, they were always so busy trying to make a living for the family (of six children) that they could not pay much attention to his education. Indeed, the family was under so much financial pressure that, for his last two years at school, Mr L was supported by a cousin who worked as a kitchen hand (class VIIa). Mr L also noted that since his parents did not have much education themselves, they could not give him much advice on school or work anyway. Thus, although they would primarily like him to have as much education as possible, they had not been particularly supportive. In effect, it was entirely up to Mr L to decide for himself when he was going to leave school (cf. Chapter 5).

Case 52*: Mr K also reports that his father, a self-employed truck driver (class IVb), was so occupied with the need to "feed the family" that he could

not pay much attention to the education of his ten children (of which Mr K is the seventh). In fact, his parents had only hoped that their children would stay away from "troubles" (that they would not "go astray"). Beyond that, they did not worry much about their educational attainment or career choices.

Themes found in the above accounts, such as adverse financial condition (also present in, for example, cases 45 and 47), parents bogged down by the need to "feed the family" (cases 38, 45), siblings crowding out individual attention (case 27*), etc. were often mentioned by other respondents in various combinations. Sometimes the effect of these factors, as we saw in case 52*, is that the parents lowered their expectation of the respondent -- that he would simply stay away from troubles. But it is not easy to make strong inferences from this observation because, as we saw in case 30*, the fact that a respondent did not receive full parental support in education may only mean that the parents were selectively investing resources in other children. While I cannot provide direct evidence to support this interpretation,[11] it is consistent with a parental attitude often reported by our respondents (e.g. cases 33*, 40*, 44, 47), namely that "my parents were willing to support me to stay in school for as long as I wanted, provided that I performed well academically".

Case 45: Mr T was the fourth of seven children. His father, a self-employed plumber and electrician (class IVb), did not have a steady income. Although Mr T's parents encouraged all their children to have more education, financial strain and uncertainty meant that they could only support those children who

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[11]If this is true, other things being equal, people with more siblings are less likely to have received parental support in education. Readers should also note that selective investment in children's education has been reported by other researchers. Salaff (1981), for example, observes a gender dimension in her study of 28 young women workers in Hong Kong -- that young women often give up their schooling so that their brothers can stay in school.

had demonstrated some academic aptitude. Mr T was not doing well in primary school and, perhaps partly because of that, he was not keen on staying in school himself. Consequently, when he decided to drop out after finishing primary school, his parents made no objection. In contrast, two of Mr T's siblings did better at school, and they were supported by the family (with the partial help of a scholarship) until they had finished secondary school.

However, performance in schoolwork is not a simple reflection of academic aptitude. It is also affected by various socioeconomic and motivational factors. This is recognised by some respondents.

Case 47: Like the previous respondent, Mr C was also the fourth of seven children. His parents were self-employed hawkers (class IVb). They did not have any paid employee, but all family members had to help out in the stall. Mr C recalls that since he could not catch up with the schoolwork, he did not want to stay in school himself. As a result, he chose to drop out after finishing primary education. Although the family was under some financial pressure at the time, Mr C reckons that his parents would have supported him to go on if he was doing better at school. On the ground that most of those who performed well in his class were from better-off families, he also thinks that he would be able to do better in school, and hence obtain better qualifications, if there was less financial pressure at home.

Taken together, the case materials we just reviewed confirm that our initial assumption needs to be qualified. A sizable minority, if not the majority, of our respondents did not receive positive parental support in schooling: outright

discouragement was rare, but lukewarm support was very common. Children who did well at school were often encouraged to stay on, but the rest were allowed to drop out. This means that potential late bloomers would have suffered.

Since I do not have respondents of service class origin in the follow-up study, I can only speculate how far school children from more advantaged background face the same problem. My hunch is that they do not. I would argue that because service class parents are more resourceful, they can give more support to their children's education, in the form of private tutorials, after-school classes, and a realistic chance to repeat a grade if academic performance was unsatisfactory, etc. Indeed, the growth of cram schools in Hong Kong and several other East Asian countries is so phenomenal that "shadow education" has become a big business. Certainly, my hypotheses that service class school children tend to respond to academic failure by repeating a grade whereas others would drop out altogether; that the former participate more heavily in shadow education, etc. remain to be tested (but see Mitchell [1972:36-37] for some dated evidence for Hong Kong, and Stevenson and Baker [1992] for recent evidence from Japan). However, to the extent that they are true, it can be argued that the failure of perhaps up to half of all working class or petty bourgeois parents to provide the same level of support to their children's education as service class parents do is a source of the persistence of class inequality over generations.

Having made the above qualification, it also has to be stressed that my initial assumption is not entirely wrongheaded. To see this, compare my findings with Willis' (1977) ethnographic account of a group of English working class schoolboys. In his explanation of why working class kids get working class jobs, Willis argues that "the lads" had, from an early age, internalized many working class shopfloor

values, such as the ideas that "all jobs are the same" or "practice is more important than theory". These values, reinforced by their parents and the larger working class community, led "the lads" to dispute the value of schooling and formal qualifications. Hence they left school as soon as they could. This means that they had minimum or no qualifications, and quite naturally would end up in working class jobs.

My data pertain to respondent's perception of parental attitude. So they are not strictly comparable with those of Willis, but it seems to me that there is no evidence to argue that, in Hong Kong, there is the kind of working class culture that underpins the values held by Willis' English schoolboys.[12] This is so because, in all but two cases, the indifference and discouragement shown by the Hong Kong parents was very much more a pragmatic response to economic pressure than a principled rejection of "middle class value of mobility". Indeed, under financial pressure, most working class parents still invested selectively in one or two children who had shown greater promise of success. So perhaps my assumption should be qualified as follows: parents are primary interested in improving their children's mobility prospects, and they will act accordingly if resources are available to them. To see how the lack of resources can force a person to drop out despite parental support in education, consider the following examples:

> Case 26*: Mr A was a competent student, but when he was at form 4, his father, who used to work as a subcontractor of goods porters (IVa), lost his job. This threw the family into sudden economic difficulties, and Mr A had to drop out. For the next 10 years, he worked in various manual jobs, such

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[12]The representativeness of Willis' findings remains questionable (Bulmer 1989:409-410). Readers should also note that at least a third of our Hong Kong respondents received positive parental support in schooling.

as glazing, truck-driving and chauffeur. Eventually, he proved his academic ability by obtaining a diploma in computer programming through part-time studies and became a computer programmer (cf. Chapter 5 and discussion below).

Case 44: Mr W's father was a partner of a grocery store (IVa). According to Mr W, he was a liberal-minded person and had wanted all his children (sons and daughters) to have as much education as possible. However, he died unexpectedly at the age of 40. Mr W was only 16 years old, and had just finished form 1. He was not prepared to start working. Indeed, he had, until then, never considered the possibility of leaving school. But since he is the eldest son, he was obliged to leave school and took over his father's business.

Parental advice on occupational choice

Apart from parental attitude towards schooling, I have also asked most of my respondents whether they had discussed their career plan with their parents while they were at school, and if so, what was their parents' advice. As expected, responses to this question were often complex and rich in detail, but again it would be useful to classify them by even a simple dichotomy. This is done in Table 6.4. What is striking about this table is that more than half (55%) of the respondents had not discussed their career plan with, and thus received no advice from, their parents. The percentage of people with no parental advice is higher for the immobile group (66%) than it is for the mobile group (43%). However, for both groups, people who had not received parental advice greatly outnumber those who had.[13]

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[13]The caveat of footnote 7 applies here as well.

When respondents with no parental career advice were asked to elaborate their answer, they often gave a combination of the following responses. First, that he simply cannot recall any discussion of career plan with his parents. Second, that he was not on good terms with his family, or that he was not living with his parents (reflecting the immigrant background of many respondents). Hence, he made many important decisions himself (cases 20*, 23*, 33*, 51, 54*, 66, 75). Third, because his parents were uneducated manual workers, they could not offer many useful advice anyway (cases 14*, 16*, 21*, 24*, 38, 50). Fourth, his parents were so busy making a living for the family that they could not pay much attention to his career plan. Indeed, given the financial situation of the family, they would be very happy if he can get a job (cases 14*, 16*, 35, 38, 45, 52*, 55, 74).

For our present purpose, the last two responses are of greater interest because they are systematic, rather than idiosyncratic reasons, of why people from class IVab or VIIa origin may receive less parental career advice. Readers will recall that these two factors were often mentioned in relation to the lack of parental support in education. Thus, much of the discussion of the last section applies here as well. Anyway, the key point of Table 6.4 is that about half of our respondents had not benefitted from parental advice in choosing their first jobs. But for those who had, what advice was they given? Consider the following example.

> Case 18*: Mr N was the youngest of six children of a grocer (class IVb). He was doing quite well at school. But because of a personal row with a teacher, he dropped out at the age of 17 without completing lower secondary school. With the help of family members, Mr N soon got two job offers at about the same time: a job of "office-boy" (VIIa) in a construction company, and a mechanic traineeship (VIIa) in a franchised bus company. Mr N was

> inclined to take the second job because it paid $300 more a month than the first. However, his parents insisted that he should go for the first job because, in their opinion, white collar jobs are of higher status than blue collar ones even if they pay less. Mr N gave in after some arguments with his parents. This turned out to be a wise decision. He did very well in the construction company: he was quickly promoted to become an architectural assistant (IIIa), and the company had twice sponsored him to attend part-time courses in work-related subjects. Although Mr N experienced some career set back when the company went bankrupted, he was later offered his first service class job by a superior whom he knew from this company (cf. Chapter 5).

In this example, parental advice had directed Mr N to a first job (i.e. a class VIIa job in a white collar milieu) which, from what we know about typical mobility paths, is more promising than the mechanic traineeship that Mr N would have chosen for himself. Intergenerational effect in furthering mobility is borne out in this case. Five other respondents (cases 17*, 27*, 28*, 36, 37) were also encouraged by their parents to take up routine non-manual first jobs as clerks or salesmen. Some of these suggestions were very specific (e.g. Mr Y of case 17* and Mr M of case 28* were advised to apply for clerical jobs in the civil service), others were fairly general (e.g. Mr K of case 36 was encouraged to "make a living with a pen"). In any case, among these five respondents, those (cases 17*, 27*, 28*) who heeded such advice had eventually become mobile, while those (cases 36, 37) who, because of choice or circumstances, did not take the advice had remained immobile.

However, parental advice is not always shrewd and judicious. In the following cases, the respondent's worklife mobility can be attributed partly to their disregard of parental career advice.

Case 42*: Mr A had just finished upper secondary school when he joined his father's (class IVa) trading firm as a clerk (IIIa). The firm was founded by his grandfather, and Mr A was expected to take over the business eventually. After a year in this job, Mr A came to realise that the trade in which they were dealing was in decline, and that the company had no future. So he decided to start a second career from scratch. He returned to a post-secondary college to read English. Four years later, he graduated with a diploma and joined another trading company as a technical clerk (IIIa). After another three years, he switched to a third company to take up his first service class job as a surveyor/liaison clerk (I) (cf. Chapter 5).

Case 54*: Mr K was 17 and was in lower secondary school when his father, a sailor (class VIIa), died in an accident. Economic hardship in the family soon forced him to drop out from school. His mother suggested him to take up a craft apprenticeship. But through the introduction of a neighbour, he became an "office assistant" (VIIa) in a freight company. He did very well in this job, and was gradually promoted to become a clerk (IIIa) and then a senior clerk (IIIa). After six years with his first employer, he was invited to join another freight company to take up his first service class job as a clerical supervisor (II) (cf. Chapter 5).

These two examples are interesting because they illustrate the two most common types of parental advice given to our respondents, apart from that of "getting a clerical job". Of the 17 respondents (mobile or not) who received parental advice, five (cases 42*, 56*, 64, 67, 73) were encouraged to join their father's business, six (cases 32, 47, 53, 54*, 62, 70) were advised to get a craft apprenticeship. But since our respondents came from class IVab or VIIa background, following in their father's

footsteps often meant going into a not-so-hopeful business.[14] Also, given the difficulty of moving from skilled manual jobs to the service class (cf. Chapter 4), taking a craft apprenticeship is not a promising career start either. Indeed, those who took this advice (cases 64, 67, 73, 47, 53, 62) had remained immobile.

Of course, respondents who did not take parental advice were not necessarily better off as they could have chosen jobs with even worse prospects. Mr B of case 32, for example, became a packaging worker (class VIIa) in a garment factory when he left school. He then moved between several unskilled manual jobs such as errand-boy for a cooked food stall (VIIa), labourer in a wig factory (VIIa), etc. before he settled down as a taxi-driver (IVb). As for Mr C of case 70, he was too young (aged 12) to take up any apprenticeship when he left school. So he first worked at home as an out-worker (VIIa) for three years. Subsequently, he became a casual labourer, and then a skilled cutter (V+VI) in garment factories. Since then he had also worked as a lorry attendant (VIIa), and was a mini-bus driver for a social service centre (VIIa) at the time of the interview.

As noted earlier, under persistent financial pressure, and perhaps given other limitations (e.g. lack of knowledge about schools and career possibilities [Jackson and Marsden 1962:85-99]), parents often lower their expectation of (perhaps some of) their children. When mobility into the service class is not seen as an attainable goal, going into family business or craft apprenticeship are quite sensible advices. After all, they usually offer greater job security and, in the long run, somewhat higher income than do most unskilled manual jobs. However, for our present purpose, it is

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[14]In two instances (cases 64, 73), the respondents came from fishing families. For the rest, the respondent's father was owner-manager of trading company (case 42), grocery store (case 56), and motor garage (case 67) respectively.

important to note that about half of our respondents did not receive career advice from their parents, and for those who did, the advice they got often reduced rather than enhanced their chance of mobility into the service class.

Job stability in early worklife

So far we have been examining data of a subjective nature, namely respondents' assessment of the availability of parental support and advice during their transition from school to work. Let us now turn to a more behavioural aspect of early worklife -- job stability. Operationally, I will use two indicators of job stability and two time frames for early worklife. My question can be put as follows: how many employers[15] had our respondents worked for, and how many major career changes had they made, during the first five and ten years of their worklife? By major career change, I mean job shift which are so drastic that experience and skills learned from previous jobs are largely irrelevant to the new one.[16] In addressing this question, my primary concern is, as above, in how far parental resources were mobilized to bring about employer and career changes.

Panel A of Table 6.5 shows that, compared with the immobile respondents, the mobile respondents were slightly less inclined to change employer. During their first

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[15]In other words, different jobs with the same employer is not counted as a change.

[16]There is unavoidably some arbitrary elements in deciding whether a particular job shift is or is not a major career change. But as illustrations, I have taken the following move as major changes: from primary school teacher to clerk (both class IIIa jobs); lorry-driver to chauffeur (both VIIa); labourer in wig factory to labourer in shoe factory. The following, in contrast, are not taken as major career changes: from container clerk (IIIa) or container estimator (VIIa) to shipping clerk (IIIa); van salesman (VIIa) to credit salesman (IIIa); employee hawker (VIIa) to self-employed hawker (IVb); test engineer in electronics factory to quality assurance engineer in toy factory (both I+II). Also, the move from full-time education (after entry into the labour market) to work is not considered as a major change if the subject of study was related to the job that follows it.

five years at work, 41% of those who are mobile and 29% of those who remain immobile had worked for only one employer. This is a moderate difference of 12%. If we take two employers as the cutting line for job stability, the difference drops further to 5% (71% vs 66%). Turning to the third and fourth columns, where I differentiate the mobile respondents according to the class of their first job, it can be seen that those who started from class III were less likely to change employer than those who started from manual classes: 80% of the former worked for only one or two employers during the first five years, while the latter changed employer almost as frequently as the immobile respondents did.

Roughly the same pattern can be observed in Panel B: 65% of the mobile respondents, compared to 50% of the immobile respondents, had worked for 1 to 3 employers during their first ten years at work. Again, there is internal differentiation within the mobile group: 80% of those who started from class III had worked for 1 to 3 employers, while those who started from manual positions showed just as much of job (in)stability as the immobile respondents did.

Turning to Table 6.6, it can be seen that the mobile respondents were also less inclined to make major career change than were the immobile respondents, but the difference between the two groups is, again, only moderate. After five years at work, 51% of the former, but 37% of the latter, were staying in the same field of work. Ten years into their worklife, there were still a third (32%) of the mobile group staying in their original field of work. The corresponding figure for the immobile group is 21%. Broadly speaking, the distribution of career changes follows the same pattern as that of employer changes. Readers should, however, note that no internal differentiation within the mobile group can be found with respect to career change. In other words, mobile respondents who started their worklife from manual

jobs were just as reluctant to make major career change as those who started from class III jobs.

How should we make sense of these findings? One can argue that because mobility is associated with greater job stability, it follows that job-hopping does not improve one's mobility prospects. In other words, a respondent has to preserve in his job so as to learn the skill, accumulate relevant experience, or simply to wait patiently for his opportunity to come in order to become mobile. While this may be true to some extent, I prefer to view the findings from another angle. I would see a change of employer[17] or career as effort on the part of the respondent to improve his mobility chance. In other words, the occurrence of such an event indicates that the respondent was unhappy with the mobility prospects (perhaps along with other things) of his previous job. To the extent that this is true, the patterns described above are quite consistent with what we know about typical mobility paths: since people who started their worklife in class III enjoyed better mobility prospects, they should be less inclined to make employer or career changes. Hence the relatively high level of job stability evident in the third column of Tables 6.5 and 6.6.[18]

Two sets of questions follow from this observation. The first set concerns respondents who started their worklife from class III. If they had tended to stay put because they had enjoyed good mobility prospects right from the very beginning, how

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[17]Strictly speaking, this applies only to voluntary changes. Unfortunately, I do not know who had taken the initiative in some of the employer-changes experienced by our respondents. So all employer-changes, irrespective of whether they were voluntary or not, will be considered in the following discussion.

[18]The fact that mobile respondents who started their worklife from manual jobs were just as reluctant to make major career changes as those who started from class III jobs (cf. third and fourth columns of Table 6.5) is an anomaly. But since there are only 37 cases in these two columns, I will disregard this problem here.

did they get into these promising jobs in the first place? In particular, did their parents channel them to these superior starting points? For those who started from the unpromising manual jobs, one may ask the second set of questions: if they became mobile after a series of employer or career changes, how did they change to the more promising employer/career? More specifically, how much parental assistance was involved in bringing about these changes? Since we have, to some extent, covered the first set of questions in earlier discussion of parental career advice, I will focus on the second set of questions below.

Of the 22 mobile respondents who started their worklife from manual classes, there are 6 (cases 10*, 12*, 14*, 16*, 18*, 26*) who had made at least three major career changes during their first ten years at work. Of these six people, it can be shown that parental assistance played no part in the career changes of two cases (14*, 16*). For the remaining four cases, parental (or familial) assistance did help to bring about career change at some points, but there was invariably a long lapse (from 3 to 27 years) between parental intervention and the respondent's entry into the service class. Thus, the casual linkage between the two is rather loose and indirect. Moreover, it seems that at the time when the parents introduced the respondents to their new job/career, they were not so much thinking of its mobility potential as job security or simply getting the respondent out of unemployment. Consider the following examples:

> Case 10*: Mr W had just finished primary school when he dropped out at the age of 12. For the next 7 years, he moved between 3 unskilled factory jobs (class VIIa). His father, a gardener (VIIa) of a hospital, thought that hospital workers, even those in menial ranks such as cleaners, enjoy greater job security than factory workers, so he introduced Mr W to work as a hospital

cleaner (VIIa). Ten years later, Mr W passed a test and got a chance to receive training in the Health Department's X-ray section. After finishing the course, he took up his first service class job as a dark-room technician (II) (cf. Chapter 5).

Case 26*: When Mr A left school at the age of 18, his elder brother introduced him to take up an apprenticeship in glazing (class VIIa). Five years later, the glazing industry went into a slump. Mr A responded by following in his brother's footsteps to become a self-employed truck driver (IVb). He stayed in truck-driving for three years until a downturn of the construction industry forced him out of his job again. At this point, Mr A's elder brother had already changed to work as a chauffeur in a factory. While in this job, he heard about another chauffeur job in a second factory, and he introduced Mr A to that job. As a chauffeur (VIIa), Mr A got to know his boss very well. The latter subsequently promoted Mr A to become a computer operator (IIIa). Mr A was also sponsored by the factory to attend a part-time course in computer programming. Three years after his entry into the factory, Mr A got his first service class job as a programmer (II) (cf. Chapter 5 and discussion above).

Note that in case 26*, Mr A had for a long time followed his elder brother's lead in his worklife movement, and it was his elder brother who introduced him to join the company where he made his career breakthrough. But it was Mr A's boss rather than his brother who was directly responsible for his eventual mobility into the service class. In this sense, I would argue that familial assistance was only of secondary importance in Mr A's worklife mobility. The same argument also applies to cases 10*, 12* and 18*. On the whole, it seems that parental (familial) assistance played

little or no direct part in enhancing the mobility chance of frequent career-changers. Indeed, of the 22 respondents under consideration here, there are only three (cases 11*, 19*, 22*) in which parental (familial) assistance played a central role in bringing about worklife mobility, and these three respondents had made only one or two career changes during their first ten years at work.

> Case 11*: Mr T was born and educated in mainland China. He left school with primary qualification when he was 11. Then he had worked as a farm worker (class VIIb) for 3 years before he came to Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, he first worked as a shop assistant (IIIb) for a year. Then he took up a full-time course in electronics in a private technical college which lasted 18 months. Afterwards, he worked as a repairman (VI) in electronics factories for 6 years. While in this job, Mr T had tried to set up his own subcontracting electronics factory with three friends. Unfortunately, since they could not secure business orders, the plan never got off the ground. Despite the set back, Mr T decided that he would seek career advancement through entrepreneurial venture. So he left his technician career and joined his elder brothers' garment factory as a partner (IVa). The partnership was dissolved 4 years later. Mr T had, by then, established himself in the trade. So he carried on as a sole proprietor of his own garment factory. A year later, he relocated the factory to mainland China. He expanded the factory's operation in this move, and, at the same time, achieved service class status for himself.

Mr T's experience illustrates how familial resources can be mobilized to bring about a crucial career turn, which then led to worklife mobility. However, it must be stressed that this was the exception rather than the norm. On the whole, my data

suggest that parental (familial) assistance played only a limited and indirect part in the career changes of our respondents. This is consistent with what we saw in previous sections. To recapitulate, I have shown that the majority of our respondents did not enjoy positive parental support for their education, and that about half of them did not receive any career advice from their parents. Moreover, for those who did receive parental advice, the suggestion they got were often unsound in the sense that they would not improve their mobility chances. If these findings explain why many people of class IVab or VIIa origin got into the "wrong" starting points in their worklife, the materials we examined in this section further suggest that those who are stranded in the "wrong" careers usually cannot rely on their parents to help them change to better jobs. So both the subjective and the behavioural data we studied point to the same conclusion -- that very little parental support was given to our respondents as they made the crucial transition from school to work. This, I would argue, adversely affected their eventual mobility performance. Put differently, across the board, people of class IVab or VIIa origin are disadvantaged (or, at least, they received no special advantage from their family) right from the beginning of their worklife.

Explaining variation in mobility outcome

Having said this, I would also stress that some of our respondents did overcome their disadvantages and achieved worklife mobility into the service class. Why are they more successful than others? So far, by focusing on the common barriers facing all of our respondents, I have not considered variation in mobility outcome. Had Tables 6.3 and 6.4 shown that the mobile respondents received significantly more parental support and advice than the immobile respondents, I may be able to explain the difference in mobility outcome by this contrast. In other words, my overall argument will be this: as people of service class origin enjoy relatively more parental support and advice, they are more likely than others to be found in the service class. Hence

the difference in relative mobility rates between social classes. As for people coming from the same disadvantaged background (e.g. class VIIa), there are variation in how much parental support and advice they received. While the variation of parental support is itself an explanandum, as an explanans, it may account for some variation in mobility outcome. Unfortunately, since Tables 6.3 and 6.4 show the same (low) level of parental support among the mobile and the immobile respondents, the above argument will not work. Does it mean that parental support and advice are inconsequential as far as eventual mobility outcome is concerned?

To answer this question, let us go back to Panel B of Table 6.3, which is a three-way table of mobility outcome by respondent's qualifications controlling for parental attitude towards schooling.[19] It can be seen, from the first two columns, that for respondents who had indifferent parents, 73% of those who later became mobile held upper secondary qualifications when they left school, and only 6% of the immobile respondents were similarly qualified. Roughly the same pattern holds for respondents with supportive parents.

To make sense of this distribution, I have fitted several loglinear models to this three-way table. Results are shown in Panel C. Model 1 is the baseline independence model which, as expected, does not fit the data well. Model 2 postulates that mobility outcome varies with qualifications, and that the remaining two-way associations are insignificant. It achieves a very good fit with the data: at the cost of 2 degrees of freedom, it accounts for 96% of the total association of the table. More importantly, it can be seen from models 3 and 4 that further inclusion of terms

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[19]Since there are only six cases in which the parents were unsupportive, the subtable showing qualification by mobility outcome for respondents with unsupportive parents is not considered here.

which suggest association between parental attitude and qualifications (PQ) or parental attitude and mobility outcome (PM) does not improve goodness of fit. In other words, models 3 and 4 do not tell us anything more than what has already been said in model 2. Moreover, when we, in model 5, drop the MQ term, G^2 shoots up back to model 1's level. Given these results, it must be said that parental support is irrelevant to mobility outcome. What matters is whether the respondent left school with upper secondary qualifications or not, and that, as judged by this admittedly small study, is not contingent on parental attitude. This is one way to interpret the three-way table.

Alternatively, if one is prepared to consider not just the technical results of model fitting, then a second interpretation is possible. This interpretation blames the data (which I collected myself), and it runs like this: although it may not be transparent to the respondents themselves, upper secondary school graduates really had enjoyed more parental support than those with less qualifications. That is to say, parents who did not object to the respondent dropping out after upper secondary school may not have been indifferent if the latter had chosen to leave school earlier. What I am really saying here is that the quality of my measure of parental support is so poor that the result presented in the last paragraph is misleading.[20] This is possible. But since better measures (e.g. interviews with parents in a prospective study of educational and occupational attainment) are not available, I cannot assess how far this is true. For this reason, let us go back to the first interpretation.

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[20]In a different way, our measure of parental career advice is also problematic. Notice that Table 6.4 shows that 66% of the immobile respondents, but only 43% of the mobile respondents, received no career advice from their parents. At the same time, however, the percentage of respondents with parental career advice is smaller for the mobile respondents. Surely, this is due to the many "don't know" responses to this question.

To recapitulate, my loglinear modelling suggests that parental attitude is unrelated (and thus irrelevant) to educational attainment, and so indirectly, it is irrelevant to mobility outcome as well. Suppose this is true, what more can we say about intergenerational factors on worklife dynamics and the eventual mobility outcome? I would suggest the following: a respondent's educational attainment depends on many factors not considered above, and from the sociologist's point of view, many of these unconsidered factors are random in nature (e.g. whether there was a teacher who "spoke to" the respondent, and thus opened up the horizon of his intellectual curiosity). So, for quite "random" reason, one working class school child could finish upper secondary school, while another could not, but anyhow the first school child would have enjoyed better mobility chance than the second.

My point is this: instances (as opposed to rate) of upward mobility are pretty random, in the sense that they are not readily explainable in terms of the familiar sociological idea of resources. In contrast, prevention of downward mobility from the service class is much more interpretable in such terms. As argued above, service class parents can actively draw on their resources to support and advice their children during their transition from school to work; and if their children failed decidedly in formal education, then inheritance of physical assets, or preferential placement in "better" jobs through social connections, etc. can come into play. Again, I must admit that I do not have empirical data to support this argument. But to the extent that this is true, one can argue that the prevention of downward mobility from the service class involves a lot of effort on the part of the parents. In contrast, upward mobility from disadvantaged background into the service class depends mostly on the effort of the young person without much parental assistance. This is why our respondents' mobility performance is quite unrelated to the availability of parental support and advice. This asymmetry between movement up and down the class

hierarchy accounts for the persistence of inequality across generations.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have shown that our respondents received little parental support and advice during the crucial transition from school to work. This is why many of them started badly in their career: leaving school without upper secondary qualifications, taking up manual rather than routine non-manual jobs. Using case materials from the follow-up study, I was able to show that the lack of parental support reflects not so a much a rejection of "middle class value of mobility" on the part of the parents, as the paucity of familial resources. There is also evidence to suggest that parental assistance was not particularly useful insofar as subsequent career change is concerned. In other words, the negative consequences of a bad career start are not easily reversible, and those who started their worklife in the wrong jobs were often stranded there. It should be apparent that the above findings point to one possible linkage between class inequality and worklife dynamics, and I would argue that it is linkages such as this which contribute to intergenerational transmission of class disadvantages. It is unfortunate that I do not have respondents of service class origin with poor formal credentials in the follow-up study, because if such cases were available, it would be possible to see how parental resources were employed to prevent downward mobility. This should provide a better test for the parental support argument advanced in this chapter.

Figure 6.1 Quartiles of the distributions of age of leaving school for the first time (panel A), first job (panel B), and first marriage (panel C) for mobile and immobile respondents, and of age of entering the service class (panel D) for mobile respondents. The first and third quartiles are designated by square brackets, [ ], whereas the median is designated by an X. Not to scale.

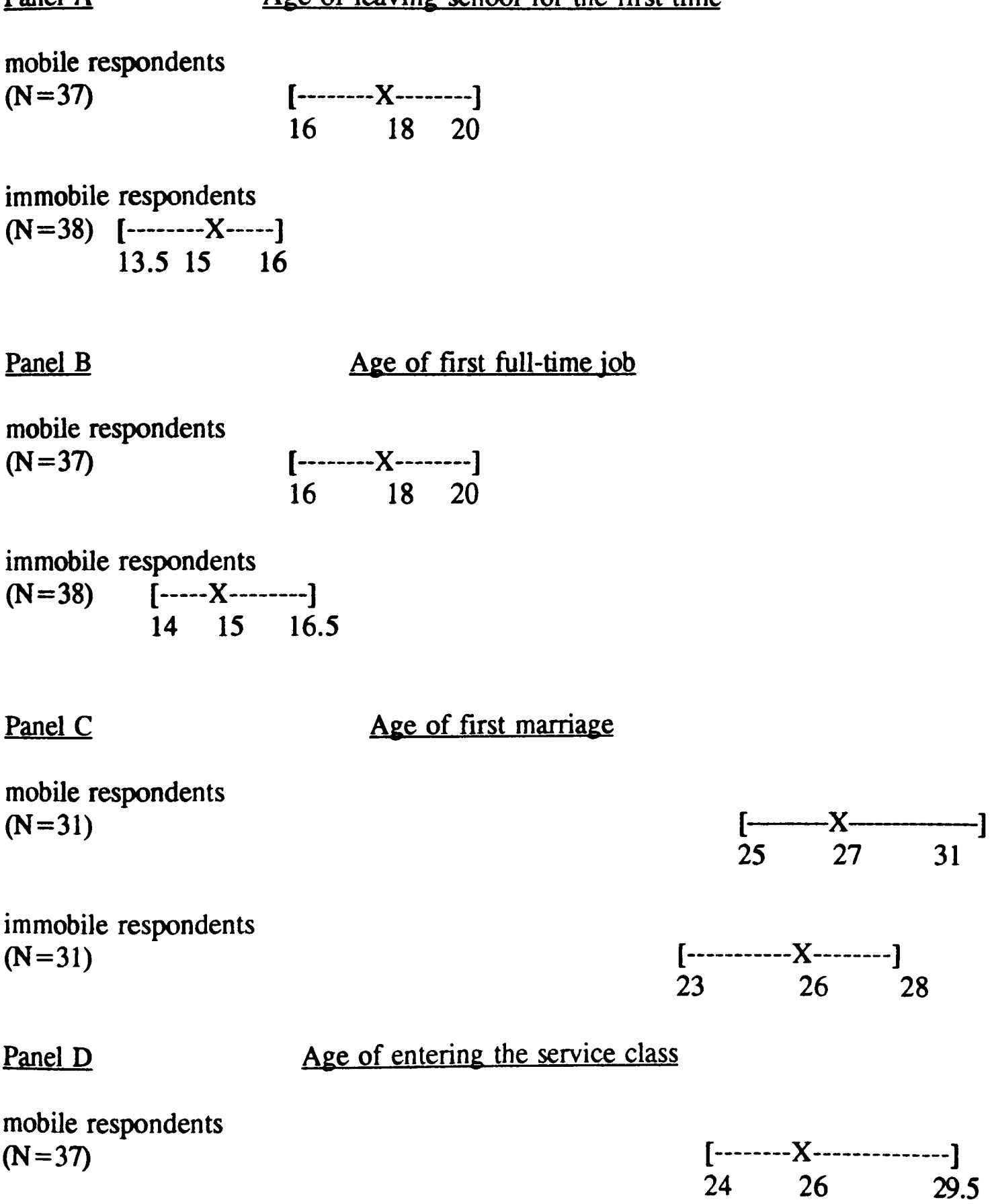


Table 6.1 Type of relationship with job contact by labour market experience of respondents (column percentage)

	number of job					
	1st	2nd & 3th	4th & 5th	6th & 7th	8th & beyond	overall
contact type						
relatives	53	22	19	14	0	27
schoolmates	16	7	9	7	7	10
former or present colleagues or work contacts	0	30	37	29	64	26
former superiors at work	0	6	14	21	7	8
neighbours	18	19	5	4	0	13
others	13	16	16	25	21	17
N	55	73	43	28	14	213

Table 6.2 Qualification of respondents when first left school by mobility outcome

Panel A — Qualification when first left school (inflow rates/column percentage)

	immobile	mobile	mobile with first job in class III	mobile with first job in other classes	overall
primary school or less	68	14	0	23	41
lower secondary school	21	16	0	27	19
vocational school	3	0	0	0	1
upper secondary school	8	68	93	50	37
degree or diploma	0	3	7	0	1
N	37	38	15	22	75

Panel B — Qualification when first left school by class of first job (mobile respondents only, outflow rates/row percentage)

	class III	other classes	N
primary school	0	100	5
lower secondary school	0	100	6
upper secondary school	56	44	25
degree or diploma	100	0	1

Panel C Qualification when first left school (outflow rates/row percentage)

	mobile	immobile	N
primary school	16	84	31
lower secondary school	43	57	14
vocational school	0	100	1
upper secondary school	89	11	28
degree or diploma	100	0	1

Table 6.3 Parental attitude towards respondent's education by mobility outcome

Panel A Parental attitude by mobility outcome (column percentage)

	immobile	mobile	mobility with first job in class III	mobility with first job in other classes	overall
supportive	34	30	27	32	32
indifferent	45	30	33	27	37
not supportive	3	11	7	14	7
don't know	18	30	33	27	24
N	38	37	15	22	75

Panel B Qualification. by mobility outcome by parental attitude (column percentage)

	indifferent parents		supportive parents	
	mobile	immobile	mobile	immobile
primary school or less	9	71	9	77
lower secondary school	18	18	18	23
vocational school	0	6	0	0
upper secondary school	73	6	73	0
N	11	17	11	13

Panel C Explaining mobility outcome by parental attitude & qualification.

Model (N=52)	G^2	df	rG^2 from M1	p
1 [P][M][Q]*	36.5	7	-	0
2 [P][MQ]	1.4	5	96%	>.90
3 [PQ][MQ]	1.4	3	96%	>.70
4 [PM][MQ]	1.2	4	97%	>.80
5 [PQ][PM]	36.2	4	1%	0

*There are two levels of parental attitude (P), supportive or indifference, two levels of mobility outcome (M), mobile or immobile, and three levels of qualifications (Q), primary school or less, lower secondary plus vocational school, or upper secondary school.

Table 6.4 Whether respondents had discussed career plan with, and/or received career advice from, parents by mobility outcome (column percentage)

	immobile	mobile	mobile with first job in class III	mobile with first job in other classes	overall
no advice/ discussion	66	43	33	50	55
some advice/ discussion	27	19	33	9	23
don't know	8	38	33	41	23
N	38	37	15	22	75

Table 6.5 Number of employer by mobility outcome (column percentage)

Panel A	During first 5 years at work				
number of employer	immobile	mobile	mobile with first job in class III	mobile with first job in other classes	overall
1	29	41	40	41	35
2	37	30	40	23	33
3	18	16	13	18	17
4 or more	16	14	7	18	15
Panel B	**During first 10 years at work**				
1	16	14	20	9	15
2	18	24	33	18	21
3	16	27	33	23	21
4	21	11	0	18	16
5	16	14	13	14	15
6 or more	13	11	0	18	12
N	38	37	15	22	75

Table 6.6 Number of major career change by mobility outcome (column percentage)

Panel A	During first 5 years at work				
number of career change	immobile	mobile	mobile with first job in class III	mobile with first job in other classes	overall
0	37	51	53	50	44
1	34	30	27	32	32
2	24	14	20	9	19
3 or more	5	5	0	9	5
Panel B	**During first 10 years at work**				
0	21	32	33	32	27
1	24	22	27	18	23
2	24	27	33	23	25
3	16	11	7	14	13
4 or more	16	8	0	14	12
N	38	37	15	22	75

Chapter 7

Summary and Discussion

I began this thesis by noting that researchers in comparative social mobility cannot satisfactorily account for one of their most important empirical findings, namely the invariance of relative mobility rates across industrial nations (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992a:389-397). I then suggested that to explain this invariance, we need to know more about the micro-process of social mobility. The fact is that we do not know much of how class (dis)advantages are transmitted from one generation to the next. It is true that status attainment research and its variants (e.g. the new structuralism in labour market studies) can tell us how much mobility can be explained by variables such as social origin, educational attainment, gender or labour market segment. However, these studies cannot explain how these variables come to have their explanatory power (Sorensen 1986), and they certainly do not relate the mobility process to the social action of individuals. There is a need to build a better link between macro- and micro-research in mobility. This is the theoretical issue, put at the most general level, that I set out to address in this study.

I also indicated in Chapter 1 that I have a more local and substantive concern, namely: in what ways is Hong Kong more (or less) open than other industrial countries; and how is class inequality perpetuated in this society? Let me first summarize my substantive findings about Hong Kong. Then I will go back to the theoretical issue of the macro-micro link in mobility research.

Social Mobility in Hong Kong

Broadly speaking, there are two opposing views on the question of social mobility in

Hong Kong. People who subscribe to the first view think that Hong Kong is a relatively open, meritocratic society. This is the dominant, though largely untested, position among Hong Kong's social scientists (e.g. Lau 1982, Lee 1982, Scott 1989) and the general public. In Chapter 2, I suggested several reasons why it may, to some extent, be true. They are; (a) the fact that Hong Kong people are generally optimistic about their personal chance of social and economic advancement, (b) massive immigration may heighten mobility rates, (c) economic dynamism may regularly provide new opportunities to people from disadvantaged background, and (d) the prevalence of small firms may imply the existence of an alternative mobility channel for those who cannot achieve mobility by virtue of formal credentials.

There are, of course, dissents to this optimistic orthodoxy (e.g. Tsang 1992, Wong and Lui 1992b), but the evidences and arguments of the sceptics are rather unsatisfactory. Thus, it remains unclear as to what Hong Kong's mobility regime is like, and how open this society is.

In Chapter 3, I put these two opposing views to a direct test by extending the CASMIN analysis to Hong Kong. It turns out that the CASMIN core model fits the Hong Kong table very well; in fact, better than it does for most countries in the CASMIN sample. This means that the pattern of unequal mobility chance described by the core model is found in Hong Kong too. My analyses also reveal that Hong Kong exhibits a relatively high degree of openness, which can be attributed to the absence of sector barriers, and the weakness, by European standard, of inheritance effects in Hong Kong. However, it does not follow that Hong Kong is a classless society, because apart from the weak inheritance effects, I also found strong hierarchical effects, especially those against long-range mobility. In other words, while it is relatively easy for the people of Hong Kong to leave their class of origin,

those who are mobile in this minimal sense are unlikely to travel very far up or down the class hierarchy. This, I submit, is a very important and rather puzzling feature of Hong Kong's fluidity pattern.

I do not have a full account of the fluidity pattern described above, but as afterthoughts, I would underline two points. First, the weakness of the inheritance effects may be related to a key feature of Hong Kong's industrial structure, namely the prevalence of small firms. Second, the strength of the hierarchical barriers is a very important characteristic of Hong Kong's stratification order, through which, one may argue, class inequality is manifested most clearly and reproduced most effectively. Subsequent analyses also confirm this point.

To digress briefly from my summary of substantive findings on Hong Kong, I should add that Chapter 3 also bears on comparative mobility research in general. Specifically, as Hong Kong and Japan deviate from the core model in quite different ways; and, indeed, as Hong Kong's fluidity pattern is more similar to the Swedish pattern than the Japanese one, there is no evidence to suggest any East Asian exceptionalism in social fluidity. My findings, in line with the work of Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a), support a weak version of the FJH hypothesis.

Having examined Hong Kong's fluidity pattern in a conventional macro-comparative manner, I began my exploration of the micro-mobility process in Chapter 4. I first tried to identify the bridging occupations of Hong Kong. By tracing mobility flow between three principal time points (i.e. class of origin, class of first job and class of destination), I showed that almost all instances of worklife mobility into Hong Kong's service class started from a first job in class III. Thus, compared to manual occupations, routine non-manual first jobs are the bridging occupations of Hong

Kong. In line with earlier findings of Chapter 3, this points to some kind of hierarchical gap (white vs blue collar). Thus, one can argue that there are, in Hong Kong, strong hierarchical barriers which obstruct not only intergenerational but also worklife mobility.

In Chapter 4, I also tested a new technique which compares and classifies complete career sequences. By applying this technique, Optimal Matching Analysis, to the career history of those respondents of the follow-up study who had reached the service class, I was able to identify four typical mobility paths, namely "returning to full-time education", "class IIIa path", "class IVa path", and "class VI and VIIa path". The second of these four career types (i.e. "class IIIa path") was the largest cluster. This is consistent with the finding, cited in the last paragraph, that routine non-manual jobs provide better chance of worklife mobility than manual jobs do.

Respondents who were on the "class IIIa path" took, on average, about 7 years to reach the service class, while those who followed the next most commonly used mobility path, "class VI and VIIa path", took twice as long to do so. There is some evidence to suggest that internal promotion to the service class was less common among the former than the latter. One interpretation of this finding is that people on the "class VI and VIIa path" were more dependent on internal job ladder for worklife mobility. Given that (a) most small firms do not have internal job ladder, and (b) manufacturing workers employed in small factories make up a large part of Hong Kong's manual classes, the relative dependence of manual workers on internal job ladder gives some insight into why they are less mobile.

There is also evidence to suggest that the various mobility paths are selectively open to different people. Specifically, "class IIIa path" was relatively more open to people

who were born in Hong Kong, held intermediate qualifications, and came from class IVab rather than class VIIa origin. Finally, the finding that relatively few respondents reached the service class through "class IVa path" is quite unexpected. Despite the prevalence of small firms in Hong Kong, and the often celebrated entrepreneurship of the Hong Kong people, my analyses suggest that running a small business is not a particularly promising way to get to the service class.

In Chapter 5, I examined the effects of social networks on the mobility process. Since most respondents stayed in wage employment as they entered the service class, I focused on the question of how social networks facilitate the job search process. As expected, I found that personal contacts were used extensively in job search, and that work contacts played a prominent role in helping our respondents to get service class jobs. In line with Granovetter's "Strength of Weak Ties" thesis, I also found that most of the personal contacts that led to service class jobs were "weak ties". Using case materials from the follow-up study, I was able to show that the observed weak ties effect was indeed a result of having non-redundant information. This is further confirmation of Granovetter's social network argument at the level of social action. Because acquaintances, particularly work contacts, known from a long time ago are crucial for future job changes (even if people had not kept close contact), the entirety of a person's worklife affects his/her future mobility performance. This suggests some sort of "path dependence", and is consistent with the idea of typical mobility paths explored in Chapter 4.

Given the evidence for path dependence, I turned to study the early worklife of our respondents in Chapter 6. I had expected that this will suggest some insight into why some people achieved mobility while others did not. The findings were mixed, but interesting. To start with, I found that most of our respondents received little

parental support as they made the crucial transition from school to work: up to half of them did not receive positive parental support for their education; about the same proportion did not discuss their career plan with their parents. Partly because of this, many respondents had landed in jobs which, from what we know about typical mobility paths, carry little prospect of worklife mobility into the service class. I also found that parental assistance was not very useful in facilitating subsequent career changes. This means that people who started badly in their worklife were often stranded in the "wrong" jobs for a long time. In other words, the negative consequences of a bad career start are not easily reversible. This is, again, consistent with earlier findings of path dependence.

Using case materials, I was able to show that the lack of parental support reflects not so much a rejection of "middle class values of mobility" on the part of the parents as the paucity of familial resources. This, I submit, is a crucial link between intergenerational class inequality and worklife dynamics. Since working class and, to a lesser extent, petty bourgeois parents are under severe resources constraint, they can offer only very limited support to their children. As a result, people from these origins are more liable to start badly in their career -- leaving school without upper secondary qualification, and going into manual rather than routine non-manual jobs. As noted above, a bad start often means being stranded in the wrong job, and following from that, a diminished chance of getting to know the right type of (work) contacts for service class jobs. This is an example of how class inequality may affect worklife dynamic which, in turn, reproduces the pattern of unequal mobility chance.

However, there is one finding which does not square well with the above parental support argument: I have found that the mobile respondents received just as little parental support as those who were immobile. Thus, level of parental support cannot

be used to explain variation in mobility outcome among people from the same disadvantaged origin. Indeed, by comparing a few simple loglinear models, I showed that mobility outcome does not depend on parental attitude towards education, once the association between respondent's qualification and mobility outcome has been taken into account. In other words, as far as worklife mobility into the service class is concerned, it does not matter whether there was parental support; what matters is whether a person left school with at least upper secondary qualification. To the extent that a person's qualification is affected by, not only the level of parental support, but also factors which are (from the sociologist's point of view) quite random, one can argue that instances (as distinct from the rate) of upward mobility into the service class is essentially unpredictable. On the other hand, one may also think that this above anomaly is, in part, an artefact attributable to the poor quality of my data -- small N, missing cases, crude measures of parental support. This remains to be verified.

It should be apparent from the above summary that the distinguishing feature of Hong Kong's mobility regime is its hierarchical gaps. With regard to worklife mobility into the service class, the gap between routine non-manual and manual classes is most notable. People are streamed into either side of this gap at the beginning of their worklife according to whether they have finished upper secondary school, and from that point onwards, their chance of worklife mobility are, to a large extent, determined.

Why should this be the case? I must admit that I have no good answer to this question, but if readers would allow me to speculate, I think the following is relevant: Hong Kong is a Chinese society; over 95% of its population are Chinese, and members of this majority group speak Cantonese as their mother tongue. However,

Hong Kong is also a British colony, in which most business in the government above the street level was conducted, until recently, almost exclusively in English. Hong Kong also has an outward-looking economy. From its early days as an entrepot, through its subsequent role as an exporter of manufactured goods, to its more recent role as a regional financier and trading centre, there has always been a strong presence of foreign firms and firms that deal primarily with Western markets. Most of these firms are found in banking, trading, insurance, and various business and financial service, rather than manufacturing. These firms form the "core" of the economy, and their employees, who are mostly in white collar occupations, enjoy higher wages, more job security and better promotion prospects than manufacturing workers. However, to get a clerical position in the "core" firms or the civil service, one needs to have some basic competence in English, which is normally certified by a upper secondary school certificate.[1]

This is why the completion of upper secondary school, and early entry into routine non-manual jobs make such a big difference for worklife mobility into the service class. It is true that, in almost all industrial nations, formal credentials are taken as signs of functional skills, and so the better qualified generally get more rewards than those who are not-so-well qualified. However, this difference is, in the case of Hong Kong, buttressed by a linguistic gap, which is rooted in the larger political and economical setting of this society. Those who can operate effectively in the largely English-speaking, white collar world of commerce and civil service enjoy better mobility chance than those who work in the Cantonese-speaking world of

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[1]To be more accurate, the secondary schools of Hong Kong fall into two types according to the principal medium of instruction, English or Chinese, in classroom. The type of secondary school that a student went to is shown on his/her O level results slip. Many employers consider only those applicants who have attended "English" schools.

manufacturing and menial personal service. This makes the manual/non-manual gap of Hong Kong wider than it would otherwise be. Hence, the particularly strong hierarchical effects of Hong Kong.

Macro-micro link in mobility research

Having summarised my substantive findings on Hong Kong, let us return to the theoretical issue of the macro-micro linkage in mobility studies. In Chapter 1, I suggest that my objective, in undertaking the present study, is to relate findings of macro-comparative research, in particular, the invariance of relative mobility rates, to the social actions of individuals. I also note in the same chapter that it is not clear what questions we should be asking in a micro-mobility study. As an exploratory attempt, I have considered three issues: the typical paths for worklife mobility; the effects of social networks on the job search process; and how career beginning is related to eventual mobility outcome. Now that my study has ended, we are in a position to consider: (a) whether I have asked the right questions, (b) how far have I been successful in relating macro-mobility findings to the social actions of individuals, and (c) do we have a better understanding of the invariance of relative rates than before?

Readers will certainly have their own opinions on this study, but let me also put forward my views. To do this, perhaps I should briefly reconstruct the reasoning that underlies my inquiry. As intergenerational mobility is realised through worklife events (i.e. the job shifts, internal promotion, business ventures, resumed education, etc. that a person experiences or fails to experience), it is clear that any micro-mobility study has to be grounded on a close examination of the worklife dynamics. This concern for the worklife process, and a hunch that there are "bridging occupations" in the class structure, led me to look for the typical mobility paths in

Hong Kong (Chapter 4). Among other things, I find that (a) most people stayed in wage employment as they entered the service class, and (b) those who achieved mobility did so rather quickly. Given these findings, I decided to focus my subsequent inquiry on the job search process and the career beginning of our respondents.

I think these are reasonable decisions, and I hope readers will agree that my analyses do point to some non-trivial results. Having said that, the following needs to be brought out more clearly: by focusing almost exclusively on wage employment, I have overlooked other worklife events which involve quite different mobility mechanisms. I have, for example, reported (but not explored) the two mobility paths of "returning to full-time education" and "class IVa path" in Chapter 4. Similarly, while considering wage employment in Chapter 5, I reported that weak ties effect (non-redundant information) is quite irrelevant to mobility through internal promotion, but no serious effort was made to investigate the social mechanism of internal promotion. It should be apparent that the social forces that govern these "overlooked" mobility types are different from those that regulate job shifts between firms. They deserve careful treatment. However, the limitation of a doctoral thesis and the small number of relevant cases in the follow-up study make it impractical for me to go into these mechanisms. So I will not make any special apology for my selective attention. But it has to be stressed that class mobility is a multifarious phenomenon, and specialized effort should be made to investigate these "overlooked" processes in the future.

Let us also consider the social actions that I refer to in this study. One major theme of Chapter 5 is that news of job vacancies was often passed on to our respondents during chance meetings. Indeed, many of them obtained jobs which they had not

actively looked for. In other words, getting a job is often a by-product of other social processes. This insight is, of course, first suggested by Granovetter, and I make no claim of originality here. But given this, there is a need to rethink what we mean by social actions. Obviously, they should not be restricted to acts that are intended to bring about immediate occupational movement, such as asking a former teacher to write a job reference. Perhaps things that people do for fun, or to be sociable, such as the occasional phone call or the drink after work, are forms of social actions which are equally important for class mobility. However, I believe it is not simple friendliness that is at issue here. This may sound cynical, but it strikes me that friendliness does not correlated terribly strongly with occupational success. So the content of the type of sociability that would facilitate class mobility remains to be specified. This leads to the questions of what type of people are more capable of maintaining the "right" kind of sociability, and whether this provides an alternative basis for formulating a theory of cultural capital.

Having argued for a board conception of social actions, I should add that, in Chapter 6, I have explicitly subscribed to a narrow one. I assume that the parents of our respondents were primarily interested in promoting intergenerational upward mobility, and that, subject to the availability of resources, they would act consciously and deliberately to improve their children's long term life chances. As argued above, I think this is not a bad assumption. The problem is, however, that I do not have any data collected directly from the parents to test it. As a result, I have to take on trust their children's account of what they had done (or failed to do). What makes it even more unsatisfactory is that, because of my interest in the process of upward mobility, I decided to sample respondents of disadvantaged background only. Consequently, I have been arguing mostly about the inaction of working class and petty bourgeois parents (because of their lack of resources to act). Conversely put, I think it is

reasonable to assume that parents generally want to improve their children's mobility prospects. But to test this assumption, a study of what service class parents (who have the resources to act) have done to prevent intergenerational downward mobility would be preferable to one that examines what working class parents have failed to do to promote upward mobility -- it is easier to theorise what had happened than what had not happened. Furthermore, it would be very nice if data collected directly from the parents are available, though I am not sure whether this is a practical fieldwork suggestion.

Finally, a humble note on whether we have a better understanding of the invariance of relative mobility rates than before. I think in the last couple of pages I have managed to convey a sense of the complexity of the micro-mobility process. I would happily admit that much work still needs to be done before we can say that we know how people become (im)mobile in Hong Kong, or how class inequality is reproduced in that society, not to mention the invariance of relative rates across industrial nations. Of course, different mobility processes (or a mixture of these processes) could produce the same overall pattern of class inequality. This calls for comparative micro-mobility research. I guess as complete worklife data are being collected in more and more countries, we are on course to undertake such research soon.

Appendix A: The 1989 Survey and the Follow-Up Study

The 1989 Hong Kong Social Mobility Survey

The survey was directed by Thomas Wong, Robert Chung (University of Hong Kong) and Tai Lok Lui (Chinese University of Hong Kong). Data collection, which took the form of face-to-face interview, was carried out by university students who were trained by the researchers. Fieldwork took place between March and August of 1989.

Respondents were all male household heads, aged between 20 and 64. They were selected from an address list provided by the Census and Statistics Department of the Hong Kong Government. The list contained the address of 2,800 randomly selected living quarters. A supplementary list of 29 batches of "segment addresses" was also used. Segment addresses were clusters of 10 to 30 cottages found in urban squatter area (8 batches) or remote rural area (21 batches). Generally speaking, they represented the "thinly" populated parts of Hong Kong. Many of the cottages turned out to be non-residential; some were not occupied; more importantly, they were physically rather inaccessible. This led to a lot of difficulties of making contacts during fieldwork. In the end, 11 segments were visited (including all eight of the urban segments), but this produced only 12 successfully completed cases. Since the farming population of Hong Kong are probably to be found in the segment addresses, the low response rate from these addresses partly explains why there were no farmers or farm workers in the sample.

Altogether, 2,159 households were visited. This led to 1,000 successfully completed interviews. Many of the unsuccessful cases were instances where the address turned out to be non-residential, or that the male household head was outside of the 20-64 age range. There were 363 cases of refusals and 317 cases where the male household

heads cannot be contacted. Taking these last two types as "real" failure cases, the overall response rate was 60%. Seventy percent of the successful cases were checked by telephone within two weeks of the visit. Particular attention was paid to the occupational data collected during telephone checking.

The 1991-92 follow-up study

In the follow-up study, which took place between November 1991 and June 1992, I have revisited 80 respondents of the 1989 survey. These 80 people were selected on the basis of their mobility experience. To elaborate, since my primary concern was the process of upward mobility into the service class, my primary target group were people of class IVab or VIIa origin who were found in class I+II in 1989. (I decided to have people from two disadvantaged class origins rather than just one because this should provide some possibility of comparison.) Also, since I was interested in the process of worklife mobility, I have screened out those who could probably enter the service class directly, i.e. those went straight to higher education from secondary school. To provide some comparison groups, I have also interviewed respondents with the following types of mobility experience (as of 1989): IVab-IVab, IVab-VIIa, VIIa-IVab, VIIa-VIIa. I list below, for each of the mobility types considered, the number of cases in the 1989 survey and in the 1991-92 follow-up study.

Origin	Destination (1989)	N(1989)	N(1991-92)	contact rate
IVab	I+II	52	19	0.37
VIIa	I+II	19	14	0.74
IVab	IVab	34	18	0.53
VIIa	IVab	17	9	0.53
IVab	VIIa	37	12	0.32
VIIa	VIIa	43	8	0.19

The last column of contact rate is simply the ratio between the two Ns. There were, altogether, 65 unsuccessful attempts in the follow-up study; 34 of which were caused by failure to trace the respondent who had moved since 1989. All but two respondents were interviewed in face-to-face situations. The two exceptional cases were interviewed by telephone on request of the respondents. Interviews were based on the schedule provided in Appendix C. This common schedule ensures that a basic inventory of information were obtained from all cases. However, I have also encouraged the respondents to talk generally about his career history, job search experience, the attitude of his parents toward his schooling, and so on. Thus, the interviews were not standardised. The longest interviews took just under 3 hours, the shortest lasted about 30 minutes, while the average interview took 72 minutes to complete.

Appendix B: Design matrices for the core model of social fluidity and for the Hong Kong variant.[1]

CORE	HONG KONG
HI1(a(i,j))	
1 2 2 2 2 2	as core
2 1 1 1 1 2 2	
2 1 1 1 1 2 2	
2 2 2 2 2 1 1	
2 1 1 1 1 2 2	
2 2 2 2 2 1 1	
2 2 2 2 2 1 1	
HI2(b(i,j))	
1 1 1 1 1 2 2	as core
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
2 1 1 1 1 1 1	
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
2 1 1 1 1 1 1	
2 1 1 1 1 1 1	
IN1(c(i,j))	
2 1 1 1 1 1 1	as core
1 2 1 1 1 1 1	
1 1 2 1 1 1 1	
1 1 1 2 1 1 1	
1 1 1 1 2 1 1	
1 1 1 1 1 2 1	
1 1 1 1 1 1 2	
IN2(d(i,j))	
2 1 1 1 1 1 1	not significant,
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	therefore omitted
1 1 2 1 1 1 1	
1 1 1 2 1 1 1	
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
IN3(e(i,j))	
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	not applicable,
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	therefore omitted
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
1 1 1 2 1 1 1	
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
1 1 1 1 1 1 1	

[1]See Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992a:121-140) for further details.

SE(f(i,j))

1 1 1 2 1 1 2
1 1 1 2 1 1 2
1 1 1 2 1 1 2
2 2 2 1 2 2 1
1 1 1 2 1 1 2
1 1 1 2 1 1 2
2 2 2 1 2 2 1

not applicable,
therefore omitted

AF1(g(i,j))

1 1 1 1 1 1 2
1 1 1 1 1 1 1
1 1 1 1 1 1 1
1 1 1 1 1 1 1
1 1 1 1 1 1 1
1 1 1 1 1 1 1
2 1 1 1 1 1 1

1 1 1 1 1 1 2
1 1 1 1 1 1 1
1 1 1 1 1 1 1
2 1 1 1 1 1 1
1 1 1 1 1 1 1
1 1 1 1 1 1 1
2 1 1 1 1 1 1

AF2(h(i,j))

1 2 2 1 1 1 1
2 1 1 1 1 1 1
2 1 1 2 1 1 1
1 1 2 1 1 2 1
1 1 1 1 1 2 1
1 1 1 1 2 1 1
1 1 1 1 1 2 1

as core

Appendix C: Interview schedule, follow-up study

Please note that this is not a verbatim translation of the Chinese interview schedule.

Section 1 Background Information

1 Name
2 Age
3 Marital Status
4 Place of Birth
5 Place of Origin
6 What was your Father's occupation when you were 14 years old?
7 What is your highest qualifications?
  7.1 Have you experienced any interruption in your education?
  7.2 If yes, what stage of education were you in?
  7.3 What caused the interruption?
8 What is your current job? (occupational title)
  8.1 What do you actually do in this job?
  8.2 Are you an employer or an employee?
  8.3 How many people are there in your workplace?
  8.4 How long have you been in this job?
  8.5 Which industry does you job belong to?
9 What was your first job? (occupational title)
  9.1 What did you actually do in this job?
  9.2 Were you an employer or an employee?
  9.3 How many people were there in your workplace?
  9.4 How long did you stayed in that job?
  9.5 Which industry did that job belong to?
10 How old were you when you took up your first job?

Section 2 Work History

11 Can you tell me what other jobs you have held after your first job?

	occupation/employment status	
2nd	_____	_____yrs
3rd	_____	_____yrs
4th	_____	_____yrs
5th	_____	_____yrs
6th	_____	_____yrs

(if respondents cannot recall all the jobs he has held), Can you tell me the 2 or 3 jobs which you held for the longest period of time?

11.1 Have you ever had a second job? What job was it? When was that?

Ask where appropriate,

Questions on business venture

(if respondents have been an employer or a self-employed person)

12 Why do you want to be an employer/self-employed person?

13 Under what conditions did you become an employer/self-employed person?

14 What were you doing before you started your business?
14.1 Were you working full-time?
14.2 If yes, were you thinking of getting a new job?

15 How old were you at that point?

16 What do you think are the most important quality for a businessman?

17 (If answer to Q.16 was 'having enough capital')
17.1 Can you tell me how did you put together your start-up capital?
a from my own savings
b bank loan
c loan from friends or relatives

17.2 (if answer to Q.17.1 was 'c') Can you tell me who give you the loan? I'd like to know more about how you are related to this person. (GO TO QUESTIONS ON CONTACT CHARACTERISTICS)

18 (If answer to Q.16 was 'know the trade well')
Did anyone introduce you to the various things or people in the trade, or help you generally as you started your business? If so, can you tell me more about him/her? (GO TO QUESTIONS ON CONTACT CHARACTERISTICS)

19 When you started your business, did you have any partners? Who were they? Can you tell me more about them? (GO TO QUESTIONS ON CONTACT CHARACTERISTICS)

(After questions on contact characteristics, ask the following questions about business partners.)
19.1 Was it you or was it one of your partners who initiated the partnership?

19.2 Why did you ask those people to become your partners? (or why do you think you partners ask you to join them?)

19.3 How did you know that this is a profitable business?

19.4 Did you consider going into other businesses?

19.5 Was there any special reason for going into business at that particular time?

19.6 What was the division of labour between you and your partners?

19.7 Were you equally close to every partners?

19.8 Was every partner close to everyone else?

20 (if respondent's business subsequently failed)
20.1 Can you tell me what problems your business ran into?

20.2 Could you turn to your business partners or other people for help?

21 (if respondent had never been an employer or self-employed) Have you ever considered running your own business?

21.1 if yes, did you make any concrete plan for that?

21.2 why didn't the plan materialise?

21.3 if not, why not?

Questions on resumed education

22 (if respondent had experienced any interruption in education)
You obtained you degree/diploma after you had started working. Did you go back to school/college after you took up your first job?
22.1 if yes, was that a full-time or a part-time course?

22.2 which college you went to?

22.3 if not, how did you get your degree/diploma?

23 Why did you go back to school/college?
a to help me get a promotion or a new job
b to help my daily work
c personal interest
d just to kill time
e to know friends
f I went with friends

24 When did you decide to return to school?

25 When did you decide to take that particular course?
25.1 Have you considered other courses?

25.2 What explained the timing of your resumed schooling?

26 When you were considering which course to take, did anyone give you advice? I'd like to know more about this person. (GO TO QUESTIONS ON CONTACT CHARACTERISTICS)

(after questions on contact characteristics, ask the following questions)
27 When you were considering returning to school, were you working? Was it full-time or part-time work?

28 While you were taking that course, did you work at the same time? Was it full-time or part-time work?
28.1 if not, how did you manage financially?

29 How useful do you think your qualifications are for your career development?

30 (if respondent had never returned to school after entry into the labour market)
A lot of people went back to school after they started to work in order to obtain better qualifications. Have you thought of doing so?
30.1 if yes, why didn't you go back to school?

30.2 if not, why not?

Questions on getting wage job

(according to work history reported earlier, ask for each wage job) Can you tell me how did you get this job? Did someone tell you about the job vacancy, or did you read about it in the newspaper, etc.?

(if through personal contact)
I'd like to know more about that person. GO TO QUESTIONS ON CONTACT CHARACTERISTICS

(QUESTIONS ON CONTACT CHARACTERISTICS)

I How did you first come to know this person (job contact, business partner, lender of start-up capital)?
- a we are relatives
- b we were old schoolmates
- c we were colleagues
- d he/she was my former superior at work
- e we grew up in the same neighbourhood
- f we belonged to the same organization (follow-up: what organization was that?)
- g we were neighbours
- h cannot remember
- i knew him/her through a family member (follow-up: which family member?)
- j others

II How long had you known each other at the time?

III How often did you meet each other?
- a more than once a week
- b about once a week
- c two or three times a month
- d about once a month
- e a few times a year
- f about once a year
- g less than once a year

IV Would you say you were very close to each other, close to each other, just ordinary friends, or not close to each other at all?
- a very close to each other
- b close to each other
- c just ordinary friends
- d not close to each other at all

V How did you get in touch with each other?
- a we visited each other
- b only through telephone
- c in organization we both belonged to
- d chance meeting in the street, etc.
- e in workplace
- f others

VI What were he/she doing for a living (occupation)?

VII Did he/she know members of your family? (which one?)

VIII Did he/she know your other good friends?

Section 3 Social network (based on Fischer's [1982] scheme)
Now I would like to ask you a few questions about your daily interaction with friends, colleagues or relatives. I'd appreciate if you can tell me the name of people that you have interaction with (their first names will do)

31 If you have to be away from Hong Kong for a short while, and need someone to take care of your place. Who would you ask to do so?

_____(up to 8 names)

32 Did anyone help you in domestic chores in the last 3 months?

_____(up to 8 names)

33 Did you have any of the following social activities in the last 3 months?
- a someone coming to your place for visit
- b you visit someone in their place
- c go out with someone for a meal, film, etc.
- d others (what were they?)

33.1 Can you tell me who did you visit (etc.)?

_____(up to 8 names)

34 Do you meet people to talk about your hobbies, interest? If so, who do you meet to do so?

_____(up to 8 names)

35 If you need to talk to someone about your worries, problems (or the problems of people you care about), who would you go to?

_____(up to 8 names)

36 Many people ask for their friends' opinions if they need to make a big decision. Will you do so? Who would you go to?

_____(up to 8 names)

37 If you need to borrow a large sum of money, would you go to a bank or someone you know?

37.1 (if from personal source), who would you go to?

37.2 (if from a bank), suppose there is an emergency, is there someone you can ask for perhaps part of the loan?

_____(up to 8 names)

38 Did you discuss problems you met in work with your colleagues or supervisors?

Who can you talk to about problems in work?

_____ (up to 8 names)

39 Can you tell me the names of all adults (aged 18 or above) living in this household?

_____

40 Perhaps there are other people who have helped you a lot in your career. But for some reasons, you have not been keeping close contacts. If so, can you give me their names?

_____

40.1 How did they help you?

41 Is there any other people who are important to you, but is not listed above?

_____

(For the first five people named in Qs.31, 33, 34, 35, 36 and 37, ask the following questions)

I How did you first come to know this person?
- a we are relatives
- b we were old schoolmates
- c we were colleagues
- d he/she was former superior at work
- e we grew up in the same neighbourhood
- f we belonged to the same organization (what organization was that?)
- g we were neighbours
- h knew him/her through a family member (which family member?)
- j others

II How often did you meet each other?
- a more than once a week
- b about once a week
- c two or three times a month
- d about once a month
- e a few times a year
- f about once a year
- g less than once a year

III Approximately how old is this person?
- a less than 20
- b 20-29
- c 30-39
- d 40-49
- e 50-59
- f 60 or above

IV His/her job is?
Is he/she an employer/self-employed/employee?

V His/her marital status is
- a married
- b single
- c divorced/separated/widowed
- d don't know

Do these five people know each other?

	P2	P3	P4	P5
P1	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
P2		Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
P3			Y/N	Y/N
P4				Y/N

For everyone named from Qs.31-41, ask, on a separate form, about their sex, their relationship with the respondent, how long he/she had known the respondent, whether he/she is particularly close to the respondent, and whether he/she has the same occupation, hobby, place of origin, religious belief with the respondent.

Section 4 Supplementary information

42 Can you tell me your grandfather's job?
- father's father
- mother's father

43 Where (in which district) did you grow up?

44 How many brothers and sisters do you have? And what are the age differences between you?

45 Can you tell me their job?
- 45.1 What do they actually do in this job?
- 45.2 Are they their own boss or they working for other people?
- 45.3 Which industry are they working in?

46 Do you have any particular plan for the next 5 years?

Case no. _____

Date of visit _____

Time of visit _____

第一部份　　背景資料

1 姓名

2 年齡

3 婚姻狀況

4 出生地點

5 籍貫

6 被訪者本人十四歲時父親的職業

7 被訪者最高學歷

7．1　在求學期間，曾否中途綴學出來工作，到後來再繼續學業？

7．2　若曾，是在那一個階段？

7．3　是什麼原因導致綴學？

被訪者現時職業：職位名稱

8．1　實際的工作內容？

8．2　你是老闆還是替人打工？

8．3　在你工作的地方共有多少僱員？

8．4　目前的工作做了多久？

8．5　屬於那一個行業？

被訪者第一份工作：職位名稱

9．1　實際的工作內容？

9．2　當時是老闆還是替人打工？

9．3　在你工作的地方共有多少僱員？

9．4　那份工作你做了多久？

9．5　屬於那一個行業？

10　初出來做第一份全職工作的時候，你幾多歲？

第二部份　　工作歷史

11　可否告訴我在你的第一份工作以後，你還做過什麼工作呢？

	職位／僱傭地位	時間
2nd	_____	_____ 年
3rd	_____	_____ 年
4th	_____	_____ 年
5th	_____	_____ 年
6th	_____	_____ 年

若被訪者不能記起全部做過的工作，則問：）

可否告訴我兩、三份時間做得最久的工作？

職位／僱傭地位	時間	次序
_____	_____年	___
_____	_____年	___
_____	_____年	___

11.1　你有冇做兼職？是什麼工作？在那時？

按照11題的答案，找出被訪者事業的轉捩點．如成為老闆或自僱者、重新返校繼學業等．

（為老闆（若被訪者現在或曾經是僱主或自僱者）

2　為什麼你會成為老闆？
（1）一直都希望當老闆
（2）可賺更多錢
（3）老闆社會地位較高

13 你是在什麼情況下成為老闆？
（1）當時失業
（2）繼承生意
（3）與家人合伙

14 在你出來搵生意之前，你在做什麼工作？

14．1 那是否全職的工作呢？

14．2 若是，當時你是否在考慮轉工之類？

15 當時你幾多歲？

16 你認為一個人若要自己出來搵生意，最重要是要有那些條件？
（追問：還有什麼？）
（1）有個好的拍檔
（2）熟悉該行情況
（3）有做生意的經驗
（4）有足夠資本

按照16題的答案再作續問．如

17 若答案是有足夠資本，則問

17．1 可否告訴我最初你是怎樣籌集資本的？
（1）自己積蓄
（2）銀行或其它機構貸款
（3）親友貸款

按17．1題的答題追問．

17．2 如親友借貸，是哪一位借款給你？
（我想了解多些你們是怎樣認識他／她的？）

17．2．1 你最初是怎樣認識他／她的？
（1）親戚
（2）曾是同學
（3）曾是同事
（4）曾是他／她的下屬
（5）在同一社區長大
（6）曾同屬某社團（什麼社團？＿＿＿＿＿）
（7）鄰居
（8）忘記怎樣認識
（9）透過家庭成員認識（哪一位？＿＿＿＿＿）
（10）其他

17.2.2 當時你們已認了多久？

17.2.3 當時你們見面有多頻密？
(1) 每星期一次以上
(2) 每星期一次
(3) 每月兩、三次
(4) 每月一次
(5) 一年數次
(6) 每年一次
(7) 少過每年一次

17.2.4 當時你們是非常熟悉、相當熟悉、只是普通朋友，還是完全不熟悉呢？
(1) 非常熟悉
(2) 相當熟悉
(3) 普通朋友
(4) 完全不熟悉

17.2.5 當時你們是怎樣接觸對方？
(1) 互相探訪
(2) 透過電話
(3) 在同屬的社團
(4) 只在街上踫見
(5) 在工作地方
(6)

17.2.6 當時他／她是做什麼工作？ ————————————

17.2.7 當時他／她是你家中其他成員的朋友嗎？
(哪一位？)
————————————

17.2.8 當時他／她是你其它好朋友的朋友嗎？

————————————————————

17.3 如向銀行或其它財務機構借款，則問：有沒有什麼人幫助你取得銀行貸款，例如替你作出抵押之類？他是誰？
(我想了解多些你們是怎樣認識的) ———————

17．3．1 你最初是怎樣認識他／她的？
（1）親戚
（2）曾是同學
（3）曾是同事
（4）曾是他／她的下屬
（5）在同一社區長大
（6）曾同屬某社團（什麼社團？＿＿＿＿＿＿）
（7）鄰居
（8）忘記怎樣認識
（9）透過家庭成員認識（哪一位？＿＿＿＿＿＿）
（10）其他

17．3．2 當時你們已認識了多久？ ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

17．3．3 當時你們見面有多頻密？
（1）每星期一次以上
（2）每星期一次
（3）每月兩、三次
（4）每月一次
（5）一年數次
（6）每年一次
（7）少過每年一次

17．3．4 當時你們是非常熟悉、相當熟悉、只是普通朋友，還是完全不熟悉呢？
（1）非常熟悉
（2）相當熟悉
（3）普通朋友
（4）完全不熟悉

17．3．5 當時你們是怎樣接觸對方？
（1）互相探訪
（2）透過電話
（3）在同屬的社團
（4）只在街上踫見
（5）在工作地方
（6）

17．3．6 當時他／她是做什麼工作？ ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

17．3．7 當時他／她是你家中其他成員的朋友嗎？
（哪一位？）
＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

17.3.8 當時他／她是你其它好朋友的朋友嗎？ 251

_____

18 若16題的答案是熟悉該行的情況，則問：有沒有誰在當時幫助你了解該行的情況，例如介紹行內的供應商、買家給你之類？他是該？
(我想了解多些你們是怎樣認識的) _____

18.1 你最初是怎樣認識他／她的？
(1) 親戚
(2) 曾是同學
(3) 曾是同事
(4) 曾是他／她的下屬
(5) 在同一社區長大
(6) 曾同屬某社團 (什麼社團？_____)
(7) 鄰居
(8) 忘記怎樣認識
(9) 透過家庭成員認識 (哪一位？_____)
(10) 其他

18.2 當時你們已認識了多久？ _____

18.3 當時你們見面有多頻密？
(1) 每星期一次以上
(2) 每星期一次
(3) 每月兩、三次
(4) 每月一次
(5) 一年數次
(6) 每年一次
(7) 少過每年一次

18.4 當時你們是非常熟悉、相當熟悉、只是普通朋友，還是完全不熟悉呢？
(1) 非常熟悉
(2) 相當熟悉
(3) 普通朋友
(4) 完全不熟悉

18.5 當時你們是怎樣接觸對方？
(1) 互相探訪
(2) 透過電話
(3) 在同屬的社團
(4) 只在街上碰見
(5) 在工作地方
(6)

18.6 當時他／她是做什麼工作？ ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

18.7 當時他／她是你家中其他成員的朋友嗎？
(哪一位？)
＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

18.8 當時他／她是你其它好朋友的朋友嗎？

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

9 在開始的時候，你是否與一位或幾位拍擋一起搵生意？若是，他（們）是誰？

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

(我想了解多些你們是怎樣認識的)

19.1 你最初是怎樣認識他／她的？
(1) 親戚
(2) 曾是同學
(3) 曾是同事
(4) 曾是他／她的下屬
(5) 在同一社區長大
(6) 曾同屬某社團 (什麼社團？＿＿＿＿＿＿)
(7) 鄰居
(8) 忘記怎樣認識
(9) 透過家庭成員認識 (哪一位？＿＿＿＿＿＿)
(10) 其他

19.2 當時你們已認識了多久？ ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

19.3 當時你們見面有多頻密？
(1) 每星期一次以上
(2) 每星期一次
(3) 每月兩、三次
(4) 每月一次
(5) 一年數次
(6) 每年一次
(7) 少過每年一次

19.4 當時你們是非常熟悉、相當熟悉、只是普通朋友，還是完全不熟悉呢？
(1) 非常熟悉
(2) 相當熟悉
(3) 普通朋友
(4) 完全不熟悉

19.5 當時你們是怎樣接觸對方？
(1) 互相探訪
(2) 透過電話
(3) 在同屬的社團
(4) 只在街上踫見
(5) 在工作地方
(6)

19.6 當時他／她是做什麼工作？ _____

19.7 當時他／她是你家中其他成員的朋友嗎？
(哪一位？)
_____

19.8 當時他／她是你其它好朋友的朋友嗎？
_____

19.9 最初是你還是你的拍擋提出一起攪生意？即是誰作主動呢？
_____

19.10 為什麼你會邀請你的拍擋加入？（或你的拍擋會邀請你加入？）
_____
_____

19.11 當時你們怎樣知道可以嘗試做這門生意？
_____
_____

19．12　當時你們有沒有考慮做其他生意？

19．13　為什麼會在那時攪，而非早些或遲些？

19．14　你與你的拍擋之間是怎樣分工的？是否每人負責一種工作？

(如有多個人位拍擋，重覆19．1至19．8，再問：)

19．15　當時你是否與每一位拍擋都是一樣熟絡？

19．16　當時其它拍擋之間是否都是一樣的熟絡？

(如被訪者的生意後來失敗)

20．1　可否告訴我你的生意後來怎樣？是否遇到什麼困難？

20．2　當時你的拍擋或朋友能夠幫你嗎？

(如被訪者從未做過僱主或自僱者)

21　你有沒有想過自己出來攪生意？

21．1　若有，你有否嘗試過或做過什麼計劃？

21．2　後來又為什麼不能實現這計劃？是遇到什麼困難嗎？

21．3　若沒有，為什麼呢？

得學歷（若被訪者曾中途輟學，後再取得學歷）

2 你是在出來做事之後，才取得文憑／學位。可否告訴我你是否再返到某個院校去讀書而取得該學歷？

21．1 若是，那是全日制還是個兼讀的課程？＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

22．2 是那所院校？＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

22．3 若否，那你是怎樣考取該文憑／學位？

＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

3 為什麼你會再返去讀書？（或讀某遙距課程？）
（1）需要該學歷去幫助升職或轉工
（2）課程內容對日常工作有幫助
（3）個人興趣
（4）打發空閒時間
（5）去結識朋友
（6）朋友拉著一起去

4 你是在什麼時候決定要再讀書？

5 你是在什麼時候決定讀該課程？

25．1 當時有否考慮讀其他課程？

25．2 為什麼在那時進修，而非早些或遲些？

6 你怎樣決定定讀那一個課程呢？有誰在這方面給你意見？

＿＿

（我想了解多些你與這些朋友是怎樣認識的）

２６．１　你最初是怎樣認識他／她的？
（１）親戚
（２）曾是同學
（３）曾是同事
（４）曾是他／她的下屬
（５）在同一社區長大
（６）曾同屬某社團（什麼社團？＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿）
（７）鄰居
（８）忘記怎樣認識
（９）透過家庭成員認識（那一位？＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿）
（１０）其他

２６．２　當時你們已認識了多久？＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

２６．３　當時你們見面有多頻密？
（１）每星期一次以上
（２）每星期一次
（３）每月兩、三次
（４）每月一次
（５）一年數次
（６）每年一次
（７）少過每年一次

２６．４　當時你們是非常熟悉、相當熟悉、只是普通朋友，還是完全不熟悉呢？
（１）非常熟悉
（２）相當熟悉
（３）普通朋友
（４）完全不熟悉

２６．５　當時你們是怎樣接觸對方？
（１）互相探訪
（２）電話交談
（３）在同屬的社團見面
（４）在街上碰見
（５）在工作地方見面

２６．６　當時他／她是做什麼工作？＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

２６．７　當時他／她是你家中其他成員的朋友嗎？（那一位？）＿＿＿＿＿＿

26.8 當時他／她是你其他好朋友的朋友嗎？

_____

27 在你考慮再返去讀書時，你有否工作？是全職或兼職？_____

28 在你再返去讀書的時候，你有否工作？是全職或兼職？_____

28.1 若沒有，你怎樣解決經濟的問題？

_____

29 你覺得你的學歷對你的事業發展有多大的幫助？

(若被訪者重未試過再返去學校讀書或以其他方法去爭取更高學歷，問)

30 很多人都會在他們出來做事一段時間之後再返去讀書或用其他方法去提高學歷，你有否想過這樣做呢？

30.1 若有，為什麼你沒有這樣做呢？

30.2 若沒有，為什麼呢？

第三部份 社會網絡

現在我想問你在日常生活與親友、同事接觸的情況。我會請你講出這些與你有接觸的人士的名字，但這只是為了方便我們訪問的進行，所以你不用講出他們的全名，好似阿強，Jenny之類的稱呼就可以了。
(只須記下31至38題的首八人的名字)

31* 如果有需要短暫離港外出，有些人就會請些親友來幫忙照顧屋企，譬如留意有冇文件、淋盆栽，或者只係間中上去屋企睇下。如果你要離港一段時間，你會否請親友幫忙？

_____

31．1　若會，是誰呢？（若提到同住人士的名字，則問：若你們全都要外出，你會請誰幫忙？）

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

32　在過去的三個月內，有冇親友幫你做過家務，例如是油糌、搬傢俬、煮飯、清潔，或者是大小維修之類呢？

32．1　他們是誰？

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

33＊　請問在過去的三個月內，你有冇參與下面所列的社交活動？（出示答案咭）
（1）親友到你家探訪
（2）你到親友家探訪
（3）約親友外出吃飯、看電影之類
（4）其他社交活動　（是什麼？　　）

33．1　可否告訴我你是與那些親友一起外出、互相探訪？

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

34＊　有些人會與志趣相投的朋友見面，討論他們共有的嗜好、興趣。你有冇咁做？

34．1　若有，你會同那些人咁做？

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

－－－－－－－－－－－　　－－－－－－－－－－－

35* 當你有個人煩惱，譬如為一個熟悉的人或為一件重要的事擔心的時候，你會否找朋友傾訴？是經常、間中，還是從不這樣做呢？ 14

35.1 當你要找人傾訴個人煩惱時，你會找誰？還有其他人嗎？

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

36* 很多人在做一些重大決定時（特別是這些決定會影響到家庭或個人生活），他們都會一些請親友給他們意見。如你要作一個重要決定，你會認真考慮誰的意見呢？還有誰呢？

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

37* 如你要籌一大筆錢，你會問親友借，還是問銀行或財務公司借，還是兩樣都會嘗試呢？

37.1 如問親友借，你會問誰？

37.2 如問銀行借，假如是一種緊急情況，有沒有什麼人你可以向他借部份或全部你所需的錢？

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

8 有些人從不與同事或其他人談及他們的工作的問題和情況，有些人卻會與人討論他們工作上遇到的問題、或者要作的決定、或怎樣做工作做得更好之類的東西。你會否與人討論有關工作的事情呢？

38.1 如會，你會與誰討論？

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

———————— ————————

39 可否告訴我這住戶裏所有成年人（18歲或以上）的名字？

————————	————————
————————	————————
————————	————————
————————	————————

40 可能有些人對你的事業發展有很大的幫助，但後來因種種原因與你接觸少了。你有沒有這樣的朋友呢？他們是誰？

————————	————————
————————	————————
————————	————————
————————	————————

40.1 他們是怎樣幫助你呢？

（請被訪者完成自行填寫問卷，將31至40題的名字列在附表，留意重覆的人名，然後問）

41 還有什麼對你來說是重要的人，不在這名單上嗎？可以告訴我是誰嗎？

————————	————————
————————	————————
————————	————————
————————	————————

（加上新的人名，用附表詢問各人的資料）

		與被訪者關係														
名字	性別	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	認識時間	熟悉	社交	職業	師1鄉	嗜好	宗1教
1															
2															
3															
4															
5															
6															
7															
8															
9															
10															
11															
12															
13															
14															
15															
16															
17															
18															
19															
20															
21															
22															
23															
24															
25															
26															
27															
28															
29															
30															

以上面特别問到的你的五位朋友，我想知道他們彼此間的關係，譬如他們是否彼此認識：

彼此認識	P 2	P 3	P 4	P 5
P 1 _____	Y／N	Y／N	Y／N	Y／N
P 2 _____		Y／N	Y／N	Y／N
P 3 _____			Y／N	Y／N
P 4 _____				Y／N

另外，他們之間，那些是彼此熟悉的朋友。

彼此熟悉	P 2	P 3	P 4	P 5
P 1 _____	Y／N	Y／N	Y／N	Y／N
P 2 _____		Y／N	Y／N	Y／N
P 3 _____			Y／N	Y／N
P 4 _____				Y／N

第四部份　　補充資料

42　請問你的祖父的職業是？

父親的父親＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

母親的父親＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

43　你是在那一區長大的？

44　請問你有多少兄弟姊妹？（年齡差距）

45　他們的職業是？

45．1　實際的工作內容？

45．2　是老闆還是替人打工？

45．3　屬於那一行？

46　對於未來五年的工作或事業發展，你有什麼計劃嗎？

請回答下面有關＿＿＿＿＿的幾個簡單問題，除第一題外，每題請只選一個答案：謝謝。

1　你最初是怎樣認識他／她的？　（可✓多項）

（1）親戚　（請註明＿＿＿＿＿）

（2）曾是同學

（3）曾是同事

（4）曾是他／她的下屬

（5）在同一社區長大

（6）曾同屬某社團　（請註明？＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿　）

（7）鄰居

（8）透過家庭成員認識　（請註明？＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿　）

（9）其他　（請註明＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿）

2　你與他見面、接觸有多頻密？

（1）每星期一次以上
（2）每星期一次
（3）每月兩、三次
（4）每月一次
（5）一年數次
（6）每年一次
（7）少過每年一次

3　他的年紀約為

（1）少於２０歲
（2）２０－２９歲
（3）３０－３９歲
（4）４０－４９歲
（5）５０－５９歲
（6）６０歲或以上

4　他的職業是＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG 香港大學
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY 社會學系
POKFULAM ROAD, HONG KONG 香港薄扶林道 TEL電話: 8592299, 8592050 TELEX電訊: 71919 CEREB HX FAX圖文傳真: 852-5598044

Appendix D: Letters sent to respondents, follow-up study

敬啓者，員行者接查中受的心訪研曾敬問究進啓

令之一：該一項在調。名一查為九得閣下八以順利完成，我們謹向閣下致謝。

九年的夏天，香港大學社會科學研究香港社會流動」的調查，本人是該調查中曾陳概賜予，合作發冗。

寫的年本研調人成究查擬論我有的就文們莫部該。現大份調但正的被查為對幫訪進了該助者行進調。。一一查所得的資料進行分析，部份結果亦已步了解香港市民的職業，升遷的情況，已進研究，並希望能再度訪問八九，肯定對我們的合作，再獲閣下能跟

在，，本英國牛津大學研究生的一篇博士論文，所得資料將會協助本人完成府上，而，所有個人資料絕對保密拜訪，敬希閣下能賜予合作

此致

貴戶主台鑒

牛津大學社會系博士生 陳德榮

一九九一年十一月一日

謹啓

閣下如有任何查詢或（電話：8174978）倫教授及本人的導師牛津大學納菲爾德學院院士高霍先生的介紹信，敬請查閱。

近安！

（夜）另附上香港大學社會學系主任（電話：8592056）

當此奉達，敬祝

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG 香港大學
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY 社會學系
POKFULAM ROAD, HONG KONG 香港薄扶林道 TEL電話: 8592299, 8592050 TELEX電訊: 71919 CEREB HX FAX圖文傳真: 852-5598044

敬啓者：

正在香港大學社會學系修讀博士課程的畢業生陳德棻先生是本港的市民，目前他進行現階段的研究工作，以了解香港的升流動跟進情況，查探本港人士對社會流動的看法，。

陳先生合作助，。

貴戶主台鑒

此致

香港大學社會學系主任 黃紀蒨 謹啓

一九九一年十一月一日

NUFFIELD COLLEGE
OXFORD
OX1 1NF

From: John H. Goldthorpe, Fil Dr, FBA, Official Fellow

July 15, 1991

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that Mr. Chan Tak Wing is a graduate Student of Nuffield College, University of Oxford, working for his D.Phil. degree under my supervision.

I would be most grateful if you would give him your full cooperation. I can testify to his discretion and competence.

signtaure removed

Tel: direct: 0865-278559 secretary: 0865-278516 Fax: 0865-278621

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