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Title of the paper: When Kairos meets Chronos: Exploring career stories through two time perspectives

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Most career research draws on surveys and interviews and focuses therefore on how people retrospectively make sense of what happened in the past. As a result, most career research focuses on the ordered career, on the career that has been made sense of. By focusing on ordered careers and thus on what became stabilized, we risk missing all the subterranean, microscopic processes that may never acquire the status of such careers but are no less important. Whereas people experience careers as unfolding processes, a flow of possibilities, as a conjunction of events and open-ended interactions occurring in time, when asked about their careers, people explain them as coherent stories. If we want to understand how careers unfold and are accomplished, we need to approach them from within, not as an abstract concept but as a performance enacted in time (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). Therefore, we need methods that give access to career making in real-time.

Ethnographies offer a "close study of careers as constructed and construed by particular people, in particular places, at particular times, doing particular things" (Van Maanen, 2015:47). The paper draws on an ethnographic case study in which I shadowed a visual artist for six months in order to understand career making practices. Shadowing an artist foregrounded an unusual time perspective in career research. I was in the midst of career action. The ethnography and more specifically the shadowing made it possible to be and share the moments of the present before the story was constructed and told (Atkinson & Silverman, 1997; Silverman, 2017).

This experience resonates with Czarniawska (2004, 2007, 2008) who explored contemporary organizing with two time perspectives: a chronological time perspective named after Chronos, the god of time, and a kairotic time perspective named after the Greek god Kairos, the god of the right time or proper time. Annals and chronicles in which people describe minutely what happened give access to a chronological time perspective. Interviews and reports in which people make sense of the past based on the present give access to a kairotic time perspective.

Organisation studies paid attention to a variety of time perspectives (Ancona et al., 2001; Bailyn, 2004; Bartunek & Necochea, 2000; Hassard, 1991, 1997; Holt & Johnsen, 2019; Orlikowski & Yates, 2002; Shipp & Jansen, 2021). This paper explores the benefits of using two time perspectives in career research and argues that it provides a fuller picture of career processes. I will analyse and discusse the field notes and pictures of the ethnography as representatives of a chronological perspective, the interviews and documents as representatives of a kairotic perspective, and show how combining both perspectives provide us with new insights on the making of career +stories.

The paper extends the knowledge on time in careers by introducing a forgotten or difficult to grasp time perspective in order to understand the establishment and accomplishment of career processes. It adds to story-based career research (Cohen et al., 2004; Cohen & Mallon, 2001) by paying attention to the process of story-making.

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