HEC MONTRÉAL
École affiliée à l'Université de Montréal

L'analyse institutionnelle d'une organisation pluraliste : trois essais sur la construction de la norme ISO26000

par

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L'analyse institutionnelle d'une organisation pluraliste : trois essais sur la construction de la norme ISO26000

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Résumé

De 2002 à 2010, ISO a cherché à créer un consensus à l'échelle internationale autour d'une norme de responsabilité sociétale des organisations (RSO): ISO 26000. Pour ce faire, ISO a mis en place une organisation au sein de laquelle une multitude d'acteurs puissants, diverses, et souvent antagonistes, devaient parvenir à un consensus sur des sujets aussi controversés que le travail des enfants, la pollution ou encore la corruption. Bien entendu, la capacité d'une telle organisation à fonctionner n'a pas manqué de laisser dubitatifs les chercheurs qui se sont intéressés à ce phénomène. Pourtant et contre toute attente, ISO est parvenue à dégager un consensus mondial sur la RSO qui se concrétise dans la publication d'ISO 26000 le premier novembre 2010. *Comment expliquer le succès d'ISO dans cette entreprise?* Cette thèse s'intéresse aux facteurs organisationnels qui ont permis l'atteinte d'un tel consensus. L'organisation mise en place par ISO constitue en effet un exemple frappant d'« organisation pluraliste ». C'est-à-dire d'organisation où coexistent des acteurs aux logiques différentes, où le pouvoir est diffus, et où les objectifs sont divergents.

Notre premier article est une revue de littérature sur les organisations pluralistes en management. De nombreux concepts de structures favorisant la collaboration dans des environnements pluralistes ont été développés en gestion depuis 30 ans, mais l'étude des organisations pluralistes est restée fragmentée alors même que, selon plusieurs auteurs, ce phénomène se généralise. En ce sens, la contribution de cet article est unique : il précise les contours de ce concept, synthétise et met en relation trente ans de recherche en silo sur les organisations pluralistes, et définit des enjeux et des pistes de recherche dans l'espoir de stimuler le dialogue scientifique autour de cet objet d'étude.

En particulier ce premier article révèle qu'un consensus marqué existe autour de l'idée que la participation des acteurs dans les organisations pluralistes constitue à la fois un problème de gestion, et une énigme théorique. Face à ce constat, le deuxième article, publié au *Journal for Business, Economics and Ethics,* propose d'hybrider néoinstitutionnalisme et théories politiques pour comprendre et analyser la manière dont ISO s'est assuré de la participation des acteurs clefs du champ de la gouvernance

internationale de la RSE sur la base de données qualitatives. Cet article illustre l'importance de maintenir une certaine ambiguïté dans le design des organisations pluralistes pour s'assurer de la participation des acteurs. Il contribue à la théorie néoinstitutionnaliste en montrant que différentes configurations d'organisations pluralistes se succèdent dans la construction de nouvelles institutions. Il contribue également aux théories politiques en mettant en lumière l'émergence de nouveaux lieux de pouvoir, où sont définies les règles de la gouvernance internationale, qui reproduisent, hybrident et transforment les lieux de pouvoirs et processus que l'on connaissait au niveau national.

Poursuivant ce travail d'analyse, le troisième article ouvre la « boite noire » de l'organisation mise en place par ISO pour construire ISO26000 à travers une étude qualitative, processuelle et longitudinale de la participation des acteurs dans la construction d'ISO26000 de 2002 à 2010. Il propose un modèle théorique de la participation des acteurs dans les organisations pluralistes. Ce modèle, une fois appliqué au cas d'ISO26000, va révéler que la construction et la gestion des statuts formels a été un élément central dans l'atteinte d'un consensus, et il va nous permettre de tirer des propositions théorique sur les stratégies pouvant être déployées dans les organisations pluralistes. Ces résultats répondent aux préoccupations des praticiens qui font face à la nécessité de coordonner des acteurs dans des organisations pluralistes. Sur un plan scientifique, ils contribuent aux discussions concernant le pouvoir et les statuts formels dans les organisations pluralistes; le paradoxe de l'agence encastrée, le changement institutionnel pour les néoinstitutionnalistes; et la prise en compte du champ institutionnel et des mécanismes organisationnels qui favorise la collaboration entre des mondes sociaux pour l'étude sociale des sciences.

Mots clefs : *organisations pluralistes, participations des acteurs, normalisations, pouvoir, ISO26000, responsabilité sociale des entreprises, changement institutionnel, gouvernance internationale*

Abstract

From 2002 to 2010, ISO sought to achieve consensus at an international scale on a standard for the social responsibility of organizations (SRO): ISO 26000. To do so, ISO set up an organization within which a multitude of powerful, diverse, and often antagonistic actors had to arrive at a consensus on subjects as controversial as child labour, pollution, and corruption. Naturally, the ability of such an organization to function did not fail to leave the researchers who took an interest in it skeptical. Nevertheless, against all expectations, ISO reached a global consensus on SRO, concretized in the publication of ISO 26000 on November 1st, 2010. *How can we explain the success of ISO in this initiative?* In this thesis, we are interested in the organizational factors that enabled such a consensus to be reached. The organization set up by ISO indeed constitutes a striking example of a "pluralistic organization," that is to say, of an organization in which actors with different values coexist, power is diffuse, and objectives are divergent.

Our first article is a literature review of pluralistic organizations in management. Many concepts describing structures that promote collaboration in pluralistic environments have been developed in management over the past 30 years. Yet the study of pluralistic organizations has remained fragmented, even though, according to several authors, this phenomenon is spreading. In this sense, this article's contribution is unique: it specifies the contours of this concept, connects and synthesizes thirty years of "silo" research on pluralistic organizations, and describes challenges and new avenues of research in the hopes of stimulating scientific dialogue on this subject of study.

In particular, this first article reveals a marked consensus on the idea that actors' participation in pluralistic organizations constitutes at once a management problem and a theoretical enigma. Faced with this observation, the second article, published in the Journal for Business, Economics and Ethics, hybridizes new institutionalism and political theories to understand and analyze on the basis of qualitative data the manner in which ISO secured the participation of key actors in the field of international governance of SRO. This article underscores the importance of maintaining a level of ambiguity in the design of pluralistic organizations to secure the participation of actors. It contributes to

new institutionalist theory in showing that different configurations of pluralistic organizations follow one after the other in the construction of new institutions. It contributes to political theory by highlighting the emergence of new sites of power where the rules of international governance are defined, where the sites of power and the processes that were known at the national level are reproduced, hybridized and transformed.

Furthering this analysis, the third article opens the “black box” of the organization set up by ISO to construct ISO 26000 through a qualitative, procedural, and longitudinal study of actors’ participation in its construction from 2002 to 2010. It puts forward a theoretical model of actors’ participation in pluralistic organizations. This model, when applied to the case of ISO 26000, reveals that the construction and management of formal statutes constitutes a central element in attaining consensus. It leads to propositions on strategies that can be deployed in pluralistic organizations. These results respond to the concerns of practitioners who face the need to coordinate actors in pluralistic organizations. On a scientific level, they contribute to discussions concerning power and formal statutes in pluralistic organizations, the paradox of embedded agency, and institutional change for new institutionalists; they contribute to the taking into account of the institutional field and of the organizational mechanisms that promote collaboration between social worlds, for the social studies of science.

Keywords: *membership in pluralistic organizations, standardization, power, ISO26000, Corporate social responsibility, institutional change, international governance*

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Acronymes et abréviations

AGEF	Association des gestionnaires et formateurs
AICC	African Institute of Corporate Citizenship
ASA	American Standards Association
AENOR	Spanish Standards Organization
AESC	American Engineering Standards Committee
AOSM	Arab Organization for Standardization
BASD	Business Action for Sustainable Development
BIAC	Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD
BCSD	Business Council on Sustainable Development
BESA	British Engineering Standard Association
BIPM	Bureau International des Poids et Mesures
BNQ	Bureau de normalisation du Québec
BSCI	Business Social Compliance Initiative
CAG	Chair Avisory Group
GAO	Grupo de Articulação das ONGs Brasileiras para ISO 26000
CASCO	Conformity Assesment
CD	Committee Draft
CEN	European Committee for Standardization
CENELEC	European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization
CFDT	Confédération francaise démocratique du travail
CGPM	Conférence générale des poids et mesures
CI	Consumer International
CIPM	Comité international des poids et mesures
CIPS	The Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply
CIRIDD	Centre International de Ressource et d'Innovation pour le Développement Durable
COPANT	Pan American Standard Commission
COPOLCO	Committee on Consumer Policy
CRT	Caux Round Table
DEVCO	Committee on Developing country matters
DEVPRO	ISO program for developing countries
DIS	Draft International Standard
ECOSOC	Conseil économic et social de l'ONU

EDF	Électricité de France
EOA	Ethics Officer Association (part of the ANSI)
ETI	Ethical Trading Initiative
EURAS	European Academy for Standardization
FDIS	FDIS : Final Draft International Standard
FLA	Fair Labour Association
FLO	Fair Trade Label Organization
FoMCA	Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GAO	Group for Articulation of Brazilian NGOs in ISO 26000
GC	Global Compact
GRI G1	first guidelines of GRI
IABC	International Association of Business Communicators
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce
ICCR	Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility
ICTFU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ICSR	Israel Center for Social Responsibility
IEC	International Electrotechnical commission
IEE	Institution of Electrical Engineers
IIED	International Institute for Environement and Development
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements
ILO-OSH 2001	Norme santé et sécurité au travail publiée par l'ILO en 2001
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IEPF	Institut de l'Énergie et de l'Environnement de la Francophonie
IFAN	International Federation of Standards Users
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
IOE	International Organization of Employers
ISA	International Federation of National Standardization Associations
ISEAL	The International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ISO AG SR	ISO Advisory Group on Social Responsibility
ISO MSS	ISO Management System Standard
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
NCO	National Consumer Organization
NEO	National Employers organization
NSB	National Standard Body

OEA	Organiation of American States
OIT	Organisation internationnale du travail
ORSE	Observatoire sur la Responsabilité Sociétale des Entreprises
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
PC	PC : project committee
SAG	SAG : Strategic advisory group
SAGE	SAGE : Strategic advisory group on the environment (jointly created with IEC in 1991)
SAI	Social Accounting International (SAI 8000)
SGM Forum	The Forum on Standards Actions in the Global Market
SII	Standard Institution of Israel
SONAMI	Sociedad Nacional de Minería
Sinf	Swedish Industry Association
SR	SR : Social Responsibility
TAG	TAG : Technical Advisory Group
TC	TC : technical committee
TG	TG : Task Group
TMB	TMB : technical management board
UNCTC	United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations
UNSCC	UNSCC : United Nations Standards Coordinating committee
GTSR	Groupe de travail sur la responsabilité sociale (autrement dit WG SR)
PRI	Principles for Responsible Investment
RENGO	Japanese Trade Union Confederation
UN-SG	United-Nations Secretary General
UN MDG	UN Millenium Development Goals
ARSO	African Organization for Standardization
PASC	Pacific Area Standards Congress
UNI	United Network International (Unions for white collars)
UNIFEM	United Nation Development Fund for Women
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WEF	World Economic Forum
WG	WG : working group
WICE	World Industry Council on the Environment
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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embarqués dans une multitude d’autres aventures comme j’ai la conviction que nous le serons encore dans 30, 50 ou 100 ans.

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Introduction générale

Cette thèse est composée de trois articles qui ont pour objectif de comprendre les dimensions organisationnelles qui ont rendu possible l'atteinte d'un consensus dans la construction de la norme ISO26000. Dans cette introduction générale, nous commencerons par donner au lecteur un aperçu du contexte dans lequel apparait cette norme pour expliciter l'enjeu et l'intérêt de cet objet d'étude. Dans un deuxième temps, nous présenterons les articles. Comme chacun d'entre eux a déjà sa propre introduction qui les situe en terme de contribution, l'objectif sera de montrer comment ils forment un tout cohérent et reflètent le cheminement intellectuel propre au doctorat.

1 Présentation empirique du contexte d'apparition de la norme ISO 26000

Il y a encore 20 ans, l'idée de développer des normes internationales de Responsabilité sociétale (RSO ci-après) applicables à toutes les entreprises voire à toutes les organisations aurait sans doute paru saugrenue. Aujourd'hui, les attentes sociétales vis-à-vis des entreprises ne cessent de s'accroître. L'idée qu'il est nécessaire de mettre en place des contre-pouvoirs face aux grandes entreprises toujours plus puissantes n'est pas neuve et se développe dans le champ du management au moins depuis les années 1960 (Gilbert, Rasche, & Waddock, 2011; Waddock, 2008). Mais il est vrai que dans le processus de mondialisation, les États nationaux se sont trouvés de plus en plus démunis face aux grandes multinationales, laissant un espace vacant dans l'organisation et la définition du social ainsi, des ONG (organisations non gouvernementales) et des institutions internationales s'affirment progressivement comme des contre-pouvoirs, et tissent au niveau international un ensemble de nouvelles attentes et de règles pour les organisations (Beck, 2008; Habermas, 2001). Elles les «ré-encastrent» dans un tissu social, et cherchent à mettre en place des normes internationales du contrôle social (Logsdon & Wood, 2002). Ce contexte de

gouvernance internationale est caractérisé par des sources de pouvoir diffuses et une co-construction des règles par des acteurs aussi bien publics que privés. On peut le qualifier d'ordre « post-westphalien » (Scherer, Palazzo, & Matten, 2009).

Parallèlement dans le monde de la normalisation, jusque dans les années 1980, les normes internationales qui s'adressent aux entreprises restent très techniques et concernent surtout des produits, des matériaux ou des processus particuliers. Elles sont essentiellement développées par des experts venant des grandes entreprises industrielles (Brunsson & Jacobsson, 2005: 40). En fait, il y a même une volonté d'ISO d'éviter les domaines « politiques » (Helms, Oliver, & Webb, 2012; Higgins & Hallström, 2007). Dans cette mouvance, l'organisation genevoise fait figure de leader incontesté et cumule des milliers de certifications pour ses normes les plus populaires. Par exemple, ISO 9001 compte en 2010[1] 1,1 millions de certifications principalement en Chine (Secrétariat Général de l'ISO, 2010). C'est dans les années 1980 et surtout 1990, qu'un important changement va intervenir de manière graduelle. Les besoins ou les attentes en matière de normes des entreprises évoluent, et ISO va élargir le domaine de la normalisation à des champs d'une autre nature : des champs sociaux et politiques. ISO commence par proposer des normes de gestion avec la qualité dans les années 1980, puis des normes autour de la protection de l'environnement à la fin des années 1990, et finalement dès le début des années 2000 c'est la RSO qui devient objet de normalisation (Wood, 2009). Les enjeux de la normalisation pour les entreprises deviennent alors des enjeux sociétaux et non plus simplement techniques (Higgins & Hallström, 2007).

[1] Chiffres les plus récents au 20 novembre 2012

En dépit de sa longue expérience en matière d'élaboration de normes techniques, on peut se demander comment l'ISO, qui était encore largement étrangère au domaine de la RSO à la fin des années 1990, a pu rapidement parvenir à s'imposer comme une plateforme de négociation incontournable sur la question. En effet, depuis une dizaine d'années, les initiatives visant à définir la responsabilité sociale des entreprises (RSE) semblent se multiplier tous azimuts. En 2005, on comptait ainsi plus de 300 initiatives ayant pour ambition de définir la RSE pour les entreprises (Ligteringer & Zadek, 2005). Waddock (2008) parle comme d'une véritable « prolifération » et prévoie un resserrement autour d'un petit nombre de ces initiatives (Gilbert et al., 2011; Waddock, 2008) . À tel point qu'on peut parler d'une marché des standards de RSO à « forte intensité » concurrentiel (Kirton & Trebilcock, 2004; Reinecke, Manning, & Von Hagen, 2012). Cette compétition est d'autant plus rude pour ISO que de très grosse organisations, a priori plus légitimes, se sont également lancées dans la production de normes de RSO comme l'ONU, l'OIT ou encore la CCI (Ward, 2010). Il n'est donc pas étonnant que la capacité d'ISO à développer une telle norme ait laissé les chercheurs qui se sont intéresser au phénomène dubitatifs (Castka & Balzarova, 2007; Tamm Hallström, 2004). Pourtant, et contre toute attente ISO est parvenu à publier cette norme le 10 novembre 2010.

Pour commencer à expliquer ce phénomène en des termes généraux, nous revenons rapidement sur le phénomène de la normalisation et sur l'essor d'ISO. Un trait particulièrement intéressant de cet essor est de s'être fait dans l'ombre, à l'abri des médias grâce à une séparation bien marquée du politique et du scientifique. Bien qu'on sache aujourd'hui l'aspect sans doute très artificielle de cette dichotomie (Latour,

1987, 1999), il n'en reste pas moins qu'il est devenu presque impossible de trouver un aspect de la vie moderne qui ne soit pas normalisé par ISO d'une manière ou d'une autre (Mattli & Buthe, 2004), et l'on ne peut s'empêcher de penser à la célèbre phrase de Descarte : *larvatus prodeo*[2]

1.1 ISO : de l'idéal scientiste au développement des normes de RSO

Origines et fondements historiques de la normalisation

La normalisation moderne: "the process of articulating and implementing technical knowledge. Standards can emerge as the consequence of consensus, the imposition of authority, or a combination of both" (Russell, 2005: 1) apparaît au XIXème sous l'impulsion de deux tendances : d'un côté le besoin toujours plus grand de normes et standards liés à l'essor du capitalisme industriel. La création et la diffusion de normes à travers les différents systèmes de production va permettre d'uniformiser les produits, et de rendre l'information plus transparente, facilitant ainsi le commerce et l'industrialisation (Murphy & Yates, 2009). D'un autre côté, à la suite, une idéologie scientiste et positiviste selon laquelle il serait possible d'ordonner la pratique sociale de manière rationnelle. La normalisation apparaissant comme un vecteur logique dans ce processus (Haas, 2011; Higgins & Hallström, 2007) .

L'émergence d'organisations indépendantes ayant pour vocation la normalisation à la fin du XIXe (Latimer, 1997; Murphy & Yates, 2009; Russell, 2008; Russell, 2005)

Dans un contexte d'industrialisation galopante à la fin du XIXe, une certaine homogénéisation des techniques de production devient nécessaire. Bien situés pour

[2] J'avance masqué

comprendre les problèmes que pose le manque d'uniformisation, ce sont d'abord des scientifiques et des ingénieurs qui s'intéressent à la normalisation. La *British Society for Advancement of Science* est fondée en 1831, et elle établit son premier comité technique en charge des questions de normalisation en 1871. La British Engineering Standard Association (BESA) créée en 1871, constitue la première organisation indépendante, i.e. hors contrôle étatique, entrant volontairement dans une démarche de normalisation. Des organisations similaires apparaissent en France, dans l'empire austro-hongrois, aux États-Unis, en Allemagne, et en Italie à la fin du XIXème. Cependant au XIXème, les projets de normalisation internationaux sont encore orchestrés principalement par les États. Ces derniers se sont concentrés sur des questions à la fois très spécifiques et très symboliques. Par exemple en 1875, la convention du mètre est signée par 17 d'entre eux à Paris. L'ambition de cette convention est d'unifier le système métrique à travers le monde.

Au début du XXème siècle, la normalisation apparaît de plus en plus comme garantie et condition de l'émergence de marchés internationaux prometteurs tels que l'électricité ou l'industrie du cinéma. Conscient de cette évolution, le monde des affaires va intégrer les organisations de normalisation. La composition des comités de direction de ces organisations change de manière révélatrice. Par exemple, la première assemblée de l'International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), en 1906, est présidée par Alexandre Siemens, le neveu du célèbre Werner Von Siemens le fondateur de Siemens[3]. Assemblée à laquelle participe également Ichisuke Fujioka, le futur

[3] Le nom « siemens » sera d'ailleurs adopté comme unité du système international pour la conductance électrique…

fondateur de Toshiba. Bien que le champ de compétence de l'IEC se limite encore aux standards et normes dans l'électricité (à l'époque électricité et électronique ne sont pas vraiment distincts), en raison de sa portée internationale IEC peut être considérée comme le premier organisme de normalisation.

La fin de la Première Guerre mondiale constitue une période favorable à l'essor d'un processus de normalisation international aux ambitions plus vastes. C'est autour de l'idée que le commerce adoucit les mœurs et que la normalisation est nécessaire au commerce que l'International Federation of National Standardization Association (ISA) est créée en 1926 à New York. Cette organisation regroupe les organismes de normalisation nationaux créés dans de nombreux pays après la Première Guerre mondiale. Elle peut être considérée comme l'ancêtre de l'ISO. Dans sa structure l'ISA est finalement très proche de l'IEC, mais produit des normes pour un nombre beaucoup plus important d'activités. La Seconde Guerre mondiale divise les membres de l'ISA, qui ne peuvent se retrouver dans une conférence commune alors même que leurs gouvernements et compatriotes sont en guerre les uns contre les autres. Officiellement dissoute en 1946, l'ISA cesse dans les faits ses activités dès 1941. Pour coordonner l'effort de guerre entre les Alliés, les Britanniques et les États-Unis mettent en place le *United Nations Standards Coordinating Committee* (UNSCC) qui remplace l'ISA le temps de la guerre. À la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, le besoin d'une organisation internationale qui intégrerait à nouveau les anciens ennemis se fait sentir. L'ISO est créée en 1947, et son siège est situé en Suisse.

La naissance et l'essor d'ISO

Au cours des différentes réunions internationales qui ont préparé la création de l'ISO de 1945 à 1947, la philosophie d'ISO a été articulée autour de trois valeurs fondamentales :

1. Être composée uniquement d'organismes de normalisation nationaux
2. Coordonner et non de promouvoir la création de standards
3. De créer des comités techniques en charge des différents standards (Murphy & Yates, 2009: 25)

Depuis sa création ISO a connu une très forte croissance. La petite organisation de cinq employés qui occupait un étage d'une maison privée dans la banlieue de Genève (Latimer, 1997) compte maintenant plus de 151 employés dans son immeuble flambant neuf inauguré en 2007 au cœur de Genève à deux pas de ceux de l'ONU (Secrétariat Général de l'ISO, 2011). Toutefois ces chiffres, bien qu'impressionnants, ne donne qu'une idée approximative de l'importance réelle d'ISO. En fait, ISO se présente comme le secrétariat général des organismes de standardisation nationaux tels que l'AFNOR en France ou le BNQ au Québec. Soit 163 organismes de standardisation nationaux qui emploie eux-mêmes des centaines de personnes. À cela, il faut ajouter les nombreux « bénévoles » qui travaillent sur les différents comités techniques de l'ISO (Secrétariat Général de l'ISO, 2011). Au total des chercheurs estimaient en 1999 que pas moins de 30000 personnes qui participent à l'élaboration de normes (Loya & Boli, 1999). Un réseaux, qui selon Murphy et Yates rivalise tout simplement avec celui de l'ONU (Murphy & Yates, 2009)

La figure ci-dessous permet de visualiser l'augmentation de l'activité d'ISO 26000 en termes de production de standards :

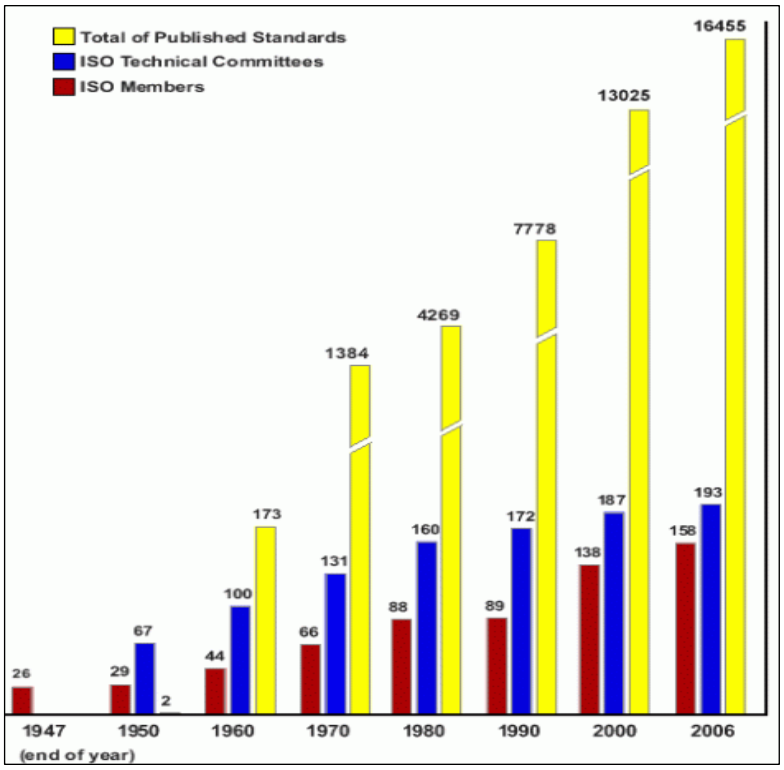

Figure 1.1- Évolution de la production de normes par ISO de 1947 à 2006

Le succès de l'ISO est lié aussi bien à des facteurs externes, qu'à une capacité organisationnelle à évoluer en fonction des grands changements sociétaux au cours des cinquante dernières années. Parmi les différents facteurs externes qui ont favorisé l'essor de la normalisation, le plus important est certainement l'essor du commerce international à la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Ainsi lors de la revue annuelle de l'ISO de 1972, le constat suivant est tiré sur l'accélération de la production de normes par ISO:

The underlying causes of the acceleration of the pace of international standardization included "an explosive growth in international trade" caused by a "revolution in transportation methods" (International Organization for Standardization, 1972).

Par la suite, les vagues de délocalisation des années 1970, la dérégulation des années 1980, et la mondialisation des années 1990 vont venir amplifier cette tendance. Il faut

rappeler les rôle des normes comme ISO668 qui ont rendu possible la conteneurisation et en ce sens la mondialisation des échanges (Murphy & Yates, 2009).

Parallèlement et en interne, ISO s'est développée à un rythme soutenu, et on peut défendre l'idée que ses structures ont été modifiées de manière à refléter les évolutions du monde de l'après-guerre. Dans un contexte de Guerre Froide, ISO est parvenue à se constituer comme une grande organisation internationale neutre. La Russie a toujours maintenu sa présence au sein de l'ISO, contrairement à son attitude vis-à-vis d'autres organisations internationales (le Fonds Monétaire International par exemple). On notera d'ailleurs que le Russe a longtemps constitué avec le Français et l'Anglais l'une des trois langues officielles de l'ISO.

ISO a également su faire une place importante aux pays en voie de développement à travers des aménagements dans ses structures et ses règles d'adhésion. Dans le sillage de la décolonisation des années 1950 et 1960, ISO met en place en 1961 le Comité ISO pour les questions relatives aux pays en développement (DEVCO). Le DEVCO a pour vocation de défendre les intérêts des pays en développement, et il joue un rôle important au sein de l'ISO puisque toute publication nécessite sa validation préalable. En 1968, la création du statut de « Membre correspondant » permet aux pays qui n'ont pas véritablement d'organismes de normalisation nationaux de participer aux activités de l'ISO. Par la suite, un statut de «membre abonné» sera également créé avec des frais limités pour les petits pays. Plusieurs auteurs ont vu dans un ISO une véritable tradition d'ouverture et d'inclusion qui aujourd'hui lui confère une excellente réputation au-delà des pays occidentaux (Murphy & McCormack, Unpublished).

Dans les pays développés aussi, ISO s'est transformé pour tenir compte des grandes évolutions sociétales. En 1968, en plein essor du mouvement du droit des consommateurs, ISO crée un comité ISO en charge des politiques en matière de consommation : le COPOLCO (ISO/COPOLCO). Ce comité a pour vocation de défendre les intérêts des consommateurs, et tout comme le DEVCO, la validation préalable du COPOLCO est nécessaire pour toutes les normes publiées par l'ISO. Au début des années 1970, les questions écologiques deviennent de plus en plus centrales dans les pays développés, et deux comités techniques de l'ISO commencent à travailler sur des projets de normes concernant la qualité de l'air et de l'eau.

L'extension du champ de la normalisation

Enfin ISO a également beaucoup évolué en ce qui concerne le type de normes dont elle a favorisé l'émergence. La Figure X ci-dessous reprend l'analyse de Jacques Igalens pour qui ISO a développé quatre types de normes différentes (Igalens, 2009). Jusque dans les années 1980, l'immense majorité des normes ISO sont des normes de type I et II dans la typologie d'Igalens. Les normes de type I concernent des questions très techniques sur des produits ou des matériaux. Les normes de type II sont également techniques, mais elles s'intéressent plus aux processus de fabrication et d'essais. C'est seulement localement, au niveau des organismes de standardisation nationaux, qu'à partir des années 1970 on commence à observer des normes de qualité. À cette époque les normes de qualités sont essentiellement confinées à des industries de haute technologie comme l'armement ou l'aérospatial.

Cependant, sous l'effet des délocalisations, une demande toujours plus importante pour ces standards de qualité dans d'autres industries conduit l'ISO à publier la très célèbre norme ISO 9000 en 1986. Ensuite dans les années 1990, l'importance grandissante de la question environnementale a conduit ISO à assister au sommet de la terre à RIO en 1992, puis à développer sa norme de gestion environnementale : ISO 14001. En s'intéressant à des dimensions non plus simplement techniques mais également managériales et organisationnelles ISO 14000 et ISO 9000 marquent le passage à des normes de type III dans la typologie d'Igalens. Les normes non techniques sont souvent des normes plus floues développées par de nombreux acteurs qui sont en concurrence pour imposer leurs normes (Brunsson, Rasche, & Seidl, 2012).

Depuis le début du XXIème siècle, ISO a fait preuve d'un intérêt tout particulier pour les questions de RSE. Ainsi son plan stratégique 2005-2010 s'intitule : «Des normes pour un monde durable». Ce plan contient sept objectifs, et bien que cela ne soit pas explicite, chacun de ces sept objectifs semble conduire au développement d'une norme internationale sur la responsabilité sociétale des organisations (RSO) ou en d'autres termes au développement d'ISO 26000. Focus, la revue sur la normalisation publiée par ISO consacre actuellement de très nombreux articles et dossiers sur la RSO. Surtout ISO s'est déjà lancé dans le développement d'autres normes qui consolident sa présence dans la RSO. En juin dernier (2012) l'organisation genevoise a publié ISO20121 sur les évènements responsables, ISO39001 est une norme sur la sécurité routière, ou encore plus étonnant le comité TC268 a été mis en place pour travailler sur une norme de « communauté durable ». À bien des égards, la création d'une norme

dans l'esprit d'ISO 26000 apparait *a posteriori* comme une étape logique dans ce processus.

ISO 26000 marque en effet une rupture avec les normes précédentes. Pour sa dimension politique, et les nombreux acteurs qu'elle mobilise, cette norme peut être qualifiée pour Igalens de norme du quatrième type :

> Il s'agit avec ISO 26000 d'aller encore plus loin en s'attaquant à la place de l'entreprise dans la société. On est ainsi passé du produit à l'entreprise et on passe aujourd'hui de l'entreprise à la société à partir du concept de «responsabilité sociétale de l'entreprise. (Igalens, 2009: 99)

En résumé, on peut retenir l'idée que le processus de normalisation de l'ISO n'a pas cessé de gagner en ampleur. Cette évolution s'est faite dans deux directions, tout d'abord le champ du « normalisable », qui est passé de questions techniques très spécifiques à des vastes problèmes sociétaux comme l'illustre la figure 2 ci-dessous, et ensuite le nombre d'acteurs impliqués dans l'élaboration de ces normes s'est accru continuellement.

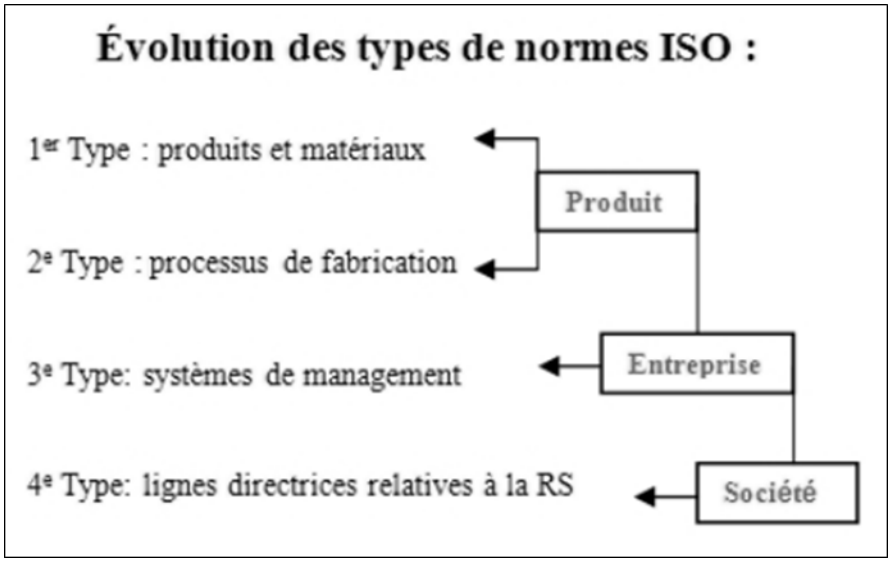

Figure 1.2 - L'évolution des normes ISO au cours du temps (Source : Gillet, 2009)

1.2 Le projet de la norme ISO 26000

Les premières tentatives avortées de normes internationales ISO dans le champ du social

Dès 1996, ISO entame une réflexion pour le développement d'une norme de santé et sécurité au travail (SST). Le projet est finalement abandonné au profit de l'OIT. En effet, à cette époque l'OIT fait valoir sa structure tripartite qui regroupe des gouvernements, des représentants des employeurs et des syndicats, ainsi que son expérience sur les questions relatives au travail, pour se positionner comme le lieu exclusif des négociations de normes associées de près ou de loin à la SST. Quelques années plus tard en 1999, ISO fait une deuxième tentative. Cette fois il s'agit de développer une norme pour un système de management sur la SST. En capitalisant sur le succès de ces normes dans la famille des 9000 et des 14000, ISO met en avant son expérience dans les systèmes de management. En outre, cette proposition bénéficie d'un fort soutien de la part de l'organisme de standardisation national britannique : la British Standard Institution (BSI). En 1999, cet organisme avait développé au niveau national une norme de SST dénommée OHSAS 18001-1999 rapidement adoptée par d'autres pays, et qui aurait pu servir de modèle à une norme internationale ISO. De nouveau, cette tentative fut bloquée par l'OIT comme en témoignent les documents internes de l'ISO :

> [t]his competing initiative by the ISO to on-going ILO work encountered strong international opposition and a campaign to stop the ISO work. This resulted in the failure of the BSI proposal in favor of the ILO. (COPOLCO, 2002: 21)

Les travaux préliminaires en interne à l'ISO en vue de l'élaboration d'une norme de responsabilité sociétale

En 2001, le conseil de l'ISO, organe de direction qui regroupe les dirigeants de tous les organismes de standardisation nationaux, charge le COPOLCO de produire un rapport concernant la désirabilité et la faisabilité d'une norme ISO sur la responsabilité sociale des entreprises. Un groupe de travail est mis en place, le Consumer Protection in the Global Market Working Group (GM WG), qui produit un rapport en mai 2002 dont les conclusions sont très favorables au développement d'une norme de RSE par ISO :

> The position taken in this report is that, based on its work to date and its credibility, ISO as an organization is well positioned to take leadership with respect to the development of voluntary ISO Corporate Responsibility Management Systems Standards (CR MSSs) (COPOLCO, 2002: 73)

La même année, à la fin du mois d'août, au sommet de la terre à Johannesburg les États sont invités par les Nations-Unies à encourager la RSE à travers des initiatives volontaires. Les normes de l'ISO et les lignes directrices de la GRI sont citées en exemple (Hallström, 2005 : 4).

Septembre 2002- juin 2004 : Les premières négociations multipartite à l'intérieur du SAG

À la fin de l'année 2002, le bureau technique de l'ISO (sorte d'organe exécutif) met en place une première organisation pluralistes composée d'acteur du champ : le Strategic Advisory Group on Social Responsability (SAG SR ou ISO AG SR) avec la mission suivante :

To determine whether ISO should proceed with the development of ISO deliverables in the field of corporate social responsibility; if so, to determine the scope of the work and the type of deliverable. (ISO AG SR, 2004 : 1).

Ce groupe est formé de 26 hauts dirigeants et personnalités influentes dans le monde de la RSE. Il est présidé par Daniel Gagnier, Vice-président senior chez Alcan. Le SAG qui avait initialement trois mois pour écrire son rapport, va finalement mettre 18 mois. Ce groupe rend un rapport beaucoup plus nuancé que celui du COPOLCO en avril 2004 qui impose sept conditions à la poursuite du développement d'un document par ISO sur la RSE. Ces conditions visent principalement à limiter les prétentions de l'ISO face aux autres joueurs, l'OIT en tête, et à rendre le processus de développement d'un document ISO autour de la RSE le plus transparent possible.

Ce groupe va considérablement influencer le devenir de la norme notamment en restreignant son champ d'application : « A guidance document, and therefore not a specification document against which conformity can be assessed ». (AG SR recommandation, 2004 : 1). La future norme ISO 26000 ne sera pas une norme certifiable comme les ISO 9000 ou 14000, mais bien de simples lignes directrices. En juin 2004 ISO tient une conférence à Stockholm qui réunit 355 participants issus de 66 pays. Ces participants représentent les différentes parties prenantes que l'on trouvera plus tard dans le processus de l'ISO : les organismes de normalisation nationaux, les représentants des travailleurs, les organisations internationales non gouvernementales, les États, les représentants du monde des affaires, et les consommateurs. À la suite de cette réunion, ISO décide de lancer un nouveau projet de travail (NWIP : New Work Item Proposal). Le NWIP est officiellement approuvé par les membres de l'ISO le 20 janvier 2005.

Janvier 2005- novembre 2007: gestion technique de l'élaboration d'ISO 26000 par les Task Groups

Dans la foulée du meeting de Stockholm, ISO organise une première réunion en mars 2005 à Salvador de Bahia au Brésil. L'objectif de cette réunion est de travailler sur la mise en place de processus, et de structures de travail pour écrire la future norme ISO 26000. La première résolution de la réunion plénière à Salvador de Bahia met en place le Chair Advisory Group (CAG). Bien que le CAG ne soit officiellement pas un organe de décision, on y trouve des représentants affluents des parties prenantes, ce qui lui donne un fort poids politique Ce groupe est formé de représentants de l'ISO, des coordonateurs des différents groupes de travail (ou « TG »), et des représentants des parties prenantes parmi lesquels on retrouve plusieurs membres du SAG dissout après la remise de son rapport. L'Editing Committee (EG) est chargé des questions de rédaction. Les six groupes Task Group (TG) ont pour mission de travailler soit directement au développement de la norme (TG 4 à 6), soit sur des questions logistiques (TG 1 à 3). Dans cette première période ces TG auront un rôle déterminant puisque ce sont eux qui vont proposer les différentes versions du texte, et les processus et structures pour le développement de la norme. Les Language task forces ont pour mission d'assurer la traduction de l'ISO. À Salvador, seule la Language task force espagnole a été créé, par la suite des groupes similaires seront créés pour le Français, l'Arabe, le Russe et l'Allemand.

En septembre 2005, ISO organise une deuxième réunion plénière à Bangkok en Thaïlande. L'objectif de cette réunion concerne le texte. Il s'agit de s'entendre sur un plan de texte pour le futur document sur la responsabilité sociale des entreprises. De

mai 2006 à novembre 2007, trois réunions plénières se succèdent à Lisbonne, Sydney et Vienne. L'enjeu est de produire une première version d'ISO 26000. Dans un premier temps au niveau des TG, les négociations semblent avancer, mais les délais ne sont pas respectés, et à Vienne d'importants désaccords se font jour sur plusieurs sujet importants : la place de la question des parties prenantes dans la norme, le problème de la participation des ONG au développement d'ISO 26000, la mention du droit du travail dans le texte… Plusieurs questions qui semblaient pourtant avoir été réglées au sein des sous-groupes que constituent les TG déclenchent à nouveau de vifs débats lors des séances plénières.

Novembre 2007- Novembre 2010 : la validation politique de la norme à travers l'IDTF

À la réunion plénière de Vienne en 2007, les difficultés sont telles que le secrétariat d'ISO menace alors de cesser complètement le processus. En réponse à ces problèmes l'ISO/TMB/WG SR sous les décide de mettre en place l'IDTF. L'influence de ce groupe est majeure dans l'écriture de l'ISO puisque sa mission est de reprendre et de réviser l'ensemble du texte de la future norme ISO 26000. Il est composé de 39 membres, qui sont pour une bonne part des membres du CAG. L'IDTF donne plus de poids aux représentants des parties prenantes. En effet, bien qu'il reprenne la structure de composition et pour une bonne part les membres du CAG, le nombre des représentants des parties prenantes est quasiment doublé passant de 12 membres sur 32 à 24 membres sur 34 (hors observateurs), et surtout les attributions de l'IDTF concernent désormais la rédaction du texte lui-même, là où le CAG avait officiellement un rôle uniquement consultatif. Si les coordonnateurs des TG avaient été choisis en fonction de leurs compétences techniques, les membres additionnels de l'IDTF sont

choisis plutôt en fonction de leur poids politique parmi les parties prenantes qu'ils représentent. Après trois ans de négociation, ce poids est maintenant visible. À la suite de Vienne, ISO TMB/WG/SR et le CAG décident de faire circuler une version d'ISO 26000 pour commentaire, ce qui dans le langage de l'ISO s'appelle un Working Draft (WD). Les TG 4 à 6 sont démantelés.

En ce qui concerne l'accélération du processus, les remaniements décidés lors de la réunion de Vienne semblent porter leur fruit : la rédaction se poursuit. À la suite de la réunion plénière de Santiago au Chili en septembre 2008, la confiance autour du texte est suffisante pour que la résolution soit prise de tester le consensus sur le WD d'ISO 26000 en le faisant circuler pour commentaires et votes. À ce stade le document devient ce qu'ISO appelle un Committee Draft (CD). Après un certain nombre de révisions substantielles, et à la suite de la réunion plénière à Québec en mai 2009, le CD de l'ISO est soumis en tant que Draft Iternational Standard (DIS), et approuvé de justesse par les organismes de standardisation nationaux à la fin de la période de vote le 14 février 2010. Comme de nombreux commentaires ont été émis, la réunion de Copenhague en mai 2010 sera l'occasion de réviser une nouvelle fois le document avant un vote définitif par les organismes de normalisation nationaux qui aboutit à la publication de la norme

On a vu que les structures de l'ISO ont considérablement évoluée, on propose l'organigramme ci-dessous qui correspond à la troisième période et permet de voir la plus part des groupes qui ont été créé au cours de ce processus.

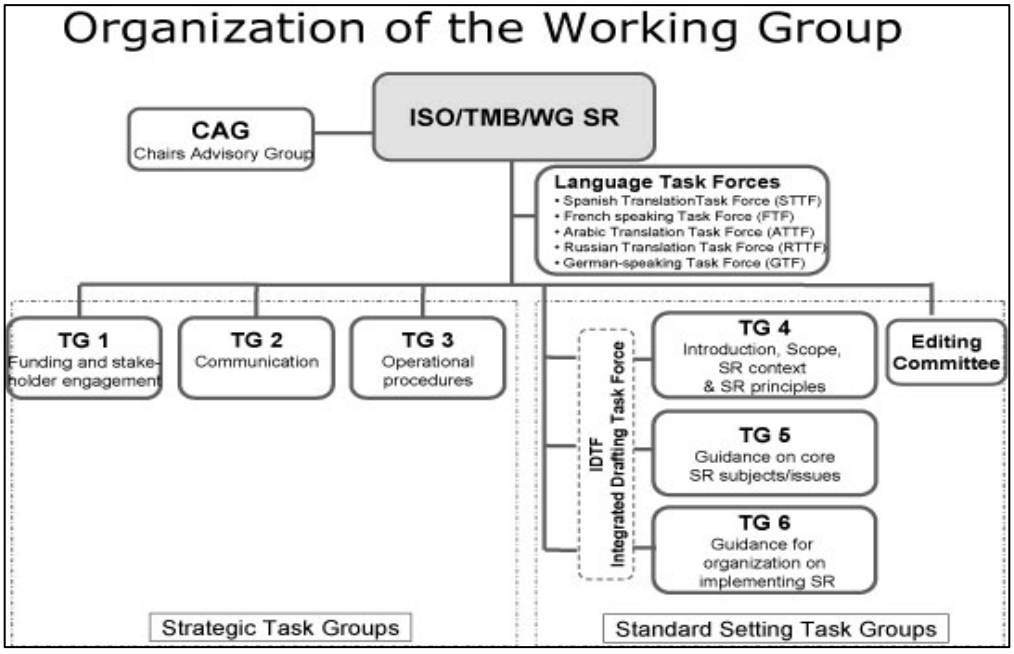

Figure 1.3 - Structure du groupe de travail mis en place pour l'élaboration d'ISO 26000 après 2007

En résumé : cette section a présenté l'évolution de la formation de la norme ISO 2600 entre le rapport préliminaire de mai 2001, et les négociations actuelles pour l'adoption de la norme. Quatre grandes étapes ont été identifiées qui renvoient chacune à des structures de travail, des acteurs clefs et des objectifs différents. Ces différents éléments sont repris dans le tableau de synthèse ci-dessous :

Tableau 1.I - Les quatre grandes périodes dans la construction d'ISO 26000

	Période 1 : l'étude préliminaire du COPOLCO [Mai 2001 - juin 2002]	Période 2 : le rapport du SAG SR [sept.2002 - janvier 2005]	Période 3 : l'élaboration technique de la norme [janvier 2005 - avril 2004]	Période 4 : la validation politique de la norme [nov. 2007 - à ce jour]
Moments clefs	* Recontre du conseil général de l'ISO mai 2001 : le GM WG est chargé de cette première étude préliminaire * juin 2001 le GM WG rend son rapport	* Sept. 2002 ISO TMB crée le SAG et le charge de déterminer si ISO doit se lancer dans une norme de RSE * Avril 2004 le SAG SR rend son rapport * Juin 2004 à la suite de la réunion Stockholm ISO lance un NWIP * Janvier 2004 les membres de l'ISO approuvent le NWIP	* Mars 2005, plénière à Salvador de Bahia et mise en place des structure du WG SR * Septembre 2005, réunion à Bangkok et mise en place du plan du texte * Trois conférences pour se mettre d'accord sur le texte: mai 2006 Lisbonn, fevrier 2007 Sydney, Vienne novembre 2007	* Vienne novembre 2007 : démentèlement des TG, et création de l'IDTF * Septembre 2008 : ISO 26000 passe du stade de WD à celui de CD, il circule pour commentaire et vote. * Mai 2009, ISO 26000 passe du stade de CD à celui de DIS, il circule pour commentaire et vote * Février 2010 le DIS est approuvé par le vote des pays
Structures	* Groupe de travail : GM-WG * Forum en ligne : 400 participants	* Groupe de travail : SAG	Création de la structure du WG-SR : * Groupe de travail : TG 1 à 6, Editing Committee, Langage TAK force et à la suite de Vienne IDTF * Organe de direction : ISO TMB/WG/SR * Organe de consultation : CAG	Comme période 3 mais les TG 4 à 6 sont démantelés, l'IDTF groupe de travail pour reprendre l'édition de l'ensemble de la norme est crée
Acteurs clefs	À compléter	Les 23 membres du SAG (cf. liste dans la méthododologie)	Les 30 membres du CAG et plus particulièrement les facilitateurs des TG ou "TG Covenor" (cf. liste dans la méthodologie)	Les représentants des parties prenantes dont la présence et les attributions sont accrues avec la création de l'IDTF
Objectif officiel ISO	Étude générale sur la désirabilité et la faisabilité d'une norme ISO sur la RSE	Valider/approuver le développement d'une norme de RSE par ISO	1) Établir les structures pour élaborer ISO 26000 2) Écrire le texte d'ISO 26000	Faire approuver le texte de l'ISO
Résultat	Rapport aux conclusions très favorables sur l'intérêt d'une norme ISO de RSE	Donne un accord sous conditions	Écrit une part importante du texte actuel, mais difficultés pour le faire approuver	En février 2010 le DIS a été approuvé de peu, il faudra élargir encore un peu le consensus pour publication

1.3 Le choix d'étudier le cas ISO 26000 :

Justifications théoriques

N.b. : la question théorique fait l'objet d'un traitement spécifique dans chacun des articles.

Justifications pratiques

À certains égards ISO peut être ramené à un processus de négociation multipartite classique. Cependant jamais une organisation semi-privée n'aura mené des négociations d'une telle ampleur au niveau international au sujet de la RSO. Les justifications pratiques concernant l'étude de ce processus sont de deux ordres au niveau macro et micro. À un niveau macro, le cas d'ISO 26000 permet de mieux comprendre l'infrastructure internationale de la nouvelle gouvernance internationale en matière de RSO qui est en train de se mettre en place (Brunsson et al., 2012; Waddock, 2008). Comme nous l'avons déjà mentionné, il nous semble que ce type de négociation multipartite pourrait être amené à se généraliser. L'étude de l'ISO 26000 permet de contribuer à des enseignements de nature prescriptive. À un niveau micro, considérant l'ampleur de la tâche, le simple fait de publier cette norme peut être considéré comme un élément de succès riche en apprentissages généralisables à de futures négociations multipartites. Outre son originalité, il est aussi intéressant de noter qu'ISO s'est inspirée de la GRI dans le développement de son processus de négociation multipartite (Acquier & Aggeri, 2008 78), et participe de ce fait à une démarche d'innovation sociale collective.

Justifications méthodologiques

Plusieurs organisations internationales œuvrant dans le champ de la construction des normes de RSO, notamment l'ILO et la GRI ont invité l'ISO à une grande transparence dans la mise en place de l'ISO 26000 (Ruwet, 2009; Tamm Hallström, 2005), et la plupart des chercheurs qui se sont intéressés à ISO 26000 ont attesté d'un grand niveau de transparence dans le processus de construction de l'ISO 26000 (Castka & Balzarova, 2005; Egyedi & Toffaletti, 2008; Mengweha, 2007), certains en ont même développé une vision naïve et idéalisée (Hahn & Weidtmann, 2010). Il n'en reste pas moins que cette transparence se traduit par la mise en ligne de documents de travail des différents groupes associés à la construction de la norme. En outre, le chercheur travaille dans le domaine de la RSE, a participé à l'un des comités miroir québécois associé à la construction de la norme, et a été impliqué dans la réunion plénière de Québec en 2009, rendu visite à plusieurs organismes de standardisations nationaux, et a effectué un stage au secrétariat générale de l'ISO. Il bénéficie donc de bonnes relations avec un certain nombre d'acteurs impliqués dans la construction d'ISO 26000, ce qui lui permet d'avoir un accès au terrain privilégié et une bonne compréhension générale du phénomène.

2 Intégration des textes

Nous venons de le voir, ces trois articles émanent tous d'une unique question empirique : comment expliquer le succès d'ISO dans la construction d'ISO2600 en s'intéressant aux facteurs organisationnels? Tous trois adoptent l'idée qu'ISO a mis en place une organisation pluraliste. C'est-à-dire une organisation dans laquelle le pouvoir

est diffus, et les objectifs des participants sont divergents (Denis, Lamothe, & Langley, 2001; Denis, Langley, & Sergi, 2012; Glynn, Barr, & Dacin, 2000). Ces organisations se démarquent considérablement des organisations bureaucratiques, plus classiquement étudiées en théorie des organisations, et posent des problèmes de gestion inédits, et de nouvelles questions théoriques, mais elles semblent aussi plus à même de transformer réflexivement leur environnement (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008; Hensmans, 2003; Hoogenboom & Ossewaarde, 2005; Pasquero, 1991).

Sur ce socle commun, les articles peuvent ensuite être positionnés les uns par rapport aux autres suivant un schéma de « tête d'épingle » qui reflète (et stylise!) le parcours doctoral. Comme illustré dans la figure 1 ci-dessous, ce parcours va, de manière aussi organisée que possible du général vers le particulier, du théorique vers le phénomène étudié et le singulier. Pour ainsi ramener le « grand problème » sur lequel s'interroge l'étudiant à une question de recherche opérationnalisée et pertinente pour le champ et les praticiens.

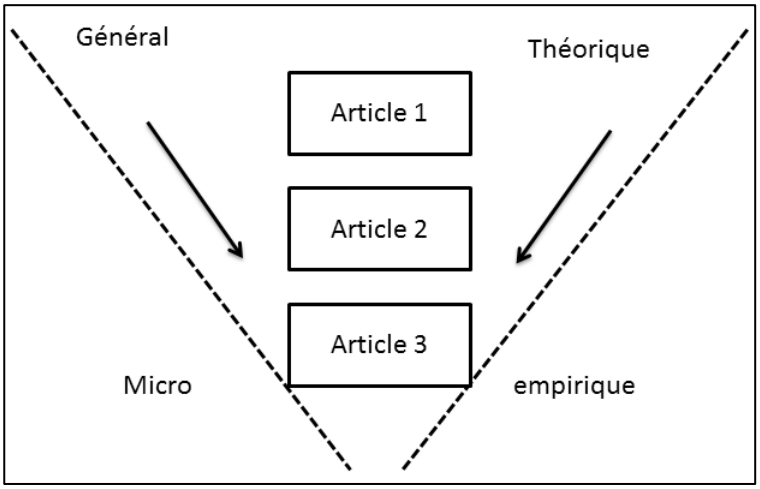

Figure 1.4 - Organisation des articles : figure en « tête d'épingle »

Notre premier article propose donc de s'interroger sur les développements théoriques associés à ce type d'organisation en gestion. Comme ces développements ne constituent pas, à proprement parler, une école ou un courant de recherche en soi, il postule qu'il existe néanmoins une phénoménologie des organisations pluralistes et regroupe des développements théoriques venant de différentes traditions de recherche sous le concept parapluie d'« organisations pluralistes ». Cet article est donc un point de départ qui permet de comprendre les organisations pluralistes, le type de problèmes qu'elles posent, le genre de recherches qu'elles suscitent, et la façon dont on peut contribuer sur le plan de la discussion scientifique. Le deuxième et le troisième article poursuivent cette réflexion.

Le deuxième article précise notre compréhension d'ISO en s'intéressant aux relations d'ISO avec les autres organisations du champ de gouvernance internationale en RSE, en s'interrogeant sur sa capacité à attirer et retenir des acteurs importants. Dans une perspective méso/macro qui renvoie à des questions de champ institutionnel, et de gouvernance, il hybride des théories du changement institutionnel et des théories politiques qui permettent de mieux comprendre ISO26000, le cas vient en retour contribuer à ces traditions de recherche. L'empirie commence à se mêler à la théorie même si elle reste encore plus illustrative. Toutefois, sur les mécanismes internes concrets qui facilitent le fonctionnement des organisations, cet article ne fait qu'ébaucher des réponses.

C'est pourquoi le troisième article prend une perspective organisationnelle, et ouvre la « boite noire » de l'organisation mise en place par ISO. Cette fois l'empirie est le moteur. Soutenu par une méthodologie qualitative, il répond à une question précise et

transversale dans les développements théoriques sur les organisations pluralistes : comment gérer l'engagement des acteurs réputé particulièrement problématique dans ce type d'organisation.

Le tableau ci-dessous reprend et résume la façon dont les trois articles s'agencent les uns par rapport aux autres du point de vue du niveau d'analyse et des outils théoriques proposés ainsi que de l'empirie mobilisée.

Tableau 1.II - Trois articles, trois perspectives

	Niveau d'analyse	Outils théoriques	Empirie
Article 1	Théorique	Théorie des organisations	Non
Article 2	Meso/micro « organisation »	Changement institutionnel Théories politiques	Analyse processuelle longitudinale
Article 3	Macro- « Champ organisationnel »	Changement institutionnel Étude sociale des sciences	Illustration

En somme, nos trois articles examinent et mobilisent différents concepts d'organisations pluralistes issues de différentes traditions de recherche pour expliciter les facteurs organisationnels qui ont permis l'atteinte d'un consensus dans le cas d'ISO26000. En retour l'analyse d'ISO26000 nous permet de mieux d'enrichir notre compréhension des organisations pluralistes.

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Essay 1: Pluralistic Organizations in Management: One Phenomena and Multiple Theoretical Developments in Need for a Literature Review/Walking Stick

LUC BRES AND EMMANUEL RAUFFLET

Formally organized collaborations in pluralistic settings are currently rising and wide-spread phenomena. Over the past three decades, authors from different research traditions in management have proposed various concepts of organizations in pluralistic settings. However, these concepts remain largely unrelated, and they are currently stuck in a "fragmentation trap." Research on pluralistic organizations will not become cumulative unless it receives a "walking stick" that allows a scientific conversation to occur. As a "walking stick," this literature review proposes the "umbrella concept" of *pluralistic organization*. The pluralistic organization is broadly defined as a structure enabling actors with diffuse power and divergent perspectives to cooperate on substantive issues. We review 101 articles published in 12 leading management and organization journals, and bring to light 21 concepts of pluralistic organizations from four schools of thought: inter-organizational collaboration, institutional change, deterministic approaches, and the social study of science. Bridging theoretical developments between and within these research traditions, this paper organizes the scientific conversation on this rising phenomenon. It offers a comprehensive synthesis on pluralistic organizations, future avenues of research, and recommendations on how to pull this topic out of the fragmentation trap.

1 Introduction

In 2005, the International Organization for Standardization, ISO, launched negotiations towards an international standard on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Until this point, ISO was predominantly dedicated to standardizing "nuts and bolts," and dealt with technical issues such as the size of screw threads or containers, in the faith that scientific and technical rationalities would reach world-wide consensuses (Murphy & Yates, 2009). When ISO jumped into the field of CSR, it suddenly had to deal with powerful actors such as the International Trade Union Confederation, international NGOs, and the International Chamber of Commerce.

More importantly, ISO had to facillitate a consensus on international CSR guidelines, that is, to have these actors agree upon contested and substantial issues such as corruption or child labour. These were issues on which they held widely opposing views and which have important implications for international governance (ISO, 2011). Not surprisingly, researchers were skeptical about ISO's capacity and legitimacy to carry out this task (Castka & Balzarova, 2005, 2008; Cyert & March, 1963; Tamm Hallström, 2004; Tamm Hallström, 2005). Nevertheless, ISO did not back out. On the contrary, it moved forward, and set up a special organization named the ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility (ISO WG SR), to facillitate the collaboration of 450 experts from 99 countries and more than 40 international organizations. Within five years, it reached an international consensus on CSR and published ISO 26000 in November 2010. The ISO Working Group on Social Resposibility illustrates what we broadly define as a pluralistic organization: namely, an organization that coordinates a diversity of actors with diffuse power and divergent agendas on substantive issues.

When we turn to organizational theorists to understand this special organization, we are struck by the number of unrelated concepts that could be applied. One could argue that we should use the concept of "meta-organization," often associated with research on ISO (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008; Brunsson & Jacobsson, 2005; Brunsson, Rasche, & Seidl, 2009). But we might be overlooking recent theoretical developments that have portrayed ISO WG SR as an organization setting up new institutional practices (Helms, Oliver, & Webb, 2012). We would perhaps be better off using concepts of organizations that actually help create new institutions such as the "bridging

organization" (Brown, 1991; Lawrence & Hardy, 1999) or the "collective action organization" (Lee, 2009). If we do so, however, are we not losing track of one critical dimension of ISO WG SR? Indeed, ISO WG SR can also be described as an interface between the scientific engineered world of ISO and the political world of CSR, the type of interface described as a "boundary organization," already well documented by the social study of science (Guston, 2001).

These concepts and others such as "referent organizations" (Trist, 1983), "network weaving organizations" (Ingram & Torfason, 2010), or "collective organizations" (Barnett, Mischke, & Ocasio, 2000) (see Table 2.2 for a full list), capture different dimensions of a phenomenon similar to that of the ISO WG SR, that is, an organization contending with a *pluralistic environment*. Management scholars have, in general, defined pluralism in management as a context of coordination that faces a multiplicity of logics (Denis, Langley, & Rouleau, 2007; Denis, Langley, & Sergi, 2012; Glynn, Barr, & Dacin, 2000; Jarzabkowski & Fenton, 2006). Pluralism in organizations is a challenge for collective action because it involves "diffuse power and divergent objectives." Diffuse power means that, in the absence of a central source of power, all constituents can legitimately promote their perspectives. This leads to situations in which "reconciliation by fiat is not an option" (Denis, Lamothe, & Langley, 2001). Therefore, constituents need to find a common ground, which may be difficult due to the "incommensurability" (Kuhn, 1996) of their respective perspectives. Incommensurability occurs when there are no accepted common norms with which to compare, conciliate, or rank the actors' different perspectives (Scherer, 1998). Several authors believe that, in the wake of globalization, the environments of

contemporary organizations are becoming increasingly pluralistic and that, as a consequence, organizational theorists need to better incorporate pluralism into their theories (Glynn et al., 2000; Lewis, 2000) .

At the same time, it is now generally agreed that the traditional form of organization epitomized by the Weberian bureaucracy is not well suited for operating in a pluralistic world (Child & McGrath, 2001; Clegg & Starbuck, 2009; see also the Academy of Management Journal vol. 44 issue 6 on new forms of organizations; Courpasson & Dany, 2003; Davis & Marquis, 2005; Gephart, 1996; Palmer, Benveniste, & Dunford, 2007). The Weberian bureaucracy is characterized by means-end rationality, hierarchical and centralized authority, and formal and exhaustive rules sustained by a specialized and formal division of tasks; this rigidity has led such organizations to be poorly adapted to pluralistic settings (Ashcraft, 2001). The means-end rationality is of little help to address more substantive issues involving conflicting perspectives, such as controversies around social or environmental issues (Hoogenboom & Ossewaarde, 2005). Additionally, organizations in organization studies in general have an inclination toward stability (Kilduff & Dougherty, 2000) and conformism (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). In management, this trend has led several authors to question the traditional boundaries of the firm (Badaracco, 1991; Cappelli, 2005; Starbuck, 2007) and to portray the organization as a "constellation" of actors (Gephart, 1996) instead of as a "black-box." Therefore, several authors have acknowledged the need to revisit our understanding of organizations (Lewis, 2000; Morrison & Milliken, 2000), and they have started to develop new concepts for organizations in pluralistic settings.

Yet these theoretical developments, although significant, have remained unrelated to the point that one might fear they have fallen into a "fragmentation trap" (Knudsen, 2003). This raises important barriers that hinder the study of those organizations. Perhaps the most problematic barrier results from contradicting conclusions which, if not discussed and explained, may leave the reader confused and doubtful. For example, starting from the organizational challenges associated with "metaproblems," defined as societal issues involving a plurality of interdependent actors (Emery & Trist, 1965), Waddock & Post (1995) and Pasquero & Turcotte (2001), develop two different concepts and come to two different conclusions. Waddock & Post insist on the importance of a "catalytic alliance" to develop a "social vision" that "glues" members together (Waddock & Post, 1995), whereas Pasquero & Turcotte believe consensus in a "multistakeholder collaborative roundtable" might only be reached superficially on broad topics (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001b, a). Another barrier emerges out of the lack of integration between these theoretical developments. For example, one year after Ahrne & Brunson published their book on "meta-organizations," Jarzabkowski and Spee coined the concept of "collective organization" (Jarzabkowski & Paul Spee, 2009), defined exactly as the concept of "meta-organizations" (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008), that is, as organizations that have organizations as members instead of individuals. However, in the absence of a dialogue these two identically defined concepts failed to benefit from the academic discussion on the other term.

Nomenclatures and typologies pertaining to pluralistic organizations have been constructed one after the other and have been juxtaposed rather than integrated. Since

they do not mesh together in a cumulative manner, they remain – scientifically speaking – silent. This situation has lasted since the early 1980s, hindering the study of organized collaboration in pluralistic settings. We believe it is time for a scientific conversation about pluralistic organizations, for authors within a school to integrate or alternate lenses on this phenomenon (Garud, Hardy, & Maguire, 2007), and for authors from different schools to combine multi-paradigm approaches (Gioia & Pitre, 1990; Lewis & Grimes, 1999). However, for this conversation to happen there is a need for a "walking stick" (Hafsi & Thomas, 2005), that is to say, a heuristic construct which helps authors to grasp and connect different facets of organized collaboration in pluralistic environments. This literature review proposes to act as that walking stick.

In this paper, we introduce the concept of "pluralistic organization," broadly defined as an organization that inherently operates with a plurality of actors. Although the pluralist organization has been discussed in various traditions of management for the last thirty years, this ubiquitous concept has remained relatively elusive. The methodological challenge is to review one phenomenon that has been given many labels. We therefore need a specific methodology to address this challenge. The remainder of the paper is organized into three sections. In a first part, we shall explain our methodology. Second, we will present our findings and discuss concepts of pluralistic organizations in four research traditions. For each research tradition, we will briefly recap its historical development to provide an overview of the theoretical context out of which the concept of pluralistic organizations emerged. We will pay particular attention to the empirical or theoretical questions that have led authors to develop an interest in pluralistic organizations. We will also examine research

questions, empirical settings, and methods to better understand practical applications associated with these research traditions. For each of them, we will present their findings and their recurrent tensions and difficulties. Third, we will explain the contribution of this literature review, summarize the state of research on pluralistic organizations, and propose new avenues of research within and across these four research traditions.

2 Methodology

2.1 Literature Review Methodology:

Several definitions and concepts of the "pluralistic organization" have been coined from different theoretical material. Therefore, one of the important challenges in this research arises from the impossibility to adopt the "key words" strategy that one can usually find in specialized journals, such as the *International Journal of Management Review* (For example, Söderlund, 2011; Taylor & Spicer, 2007). For that reason, we adopt an alternative tactic to build our selection of papers. We draw on Locke and Golden-Biddle's concept of "synthesized coherence," a representation and organization of knowledge that brings together previously unrelated work from different research programs (Locke & Golden-Biddle, 1997) under an "umbrella concept" (Hirsch & Levin, 1999). This notion is specifically recommended to capture and organize previously unrelated elements.

We first developed a heuristic definition of pluralistic organizations by specifying what they are not. This resulted in a wide, umbrella-like definition that corresponded to different names and concepts in the literature. Second, we made extensive use of

peer advice from conferences, paper's peer reviews, and informal discussions to identify the major papers on pluralistic organizations and to determine a selection of journals that may be more likely to contain articles on pluralistic organizations. Third, the titles of all these journal articles and abstracts published over a period of ten years (2002-2012) were carefully read and the papers which mainly focus on pluralistic organizations were retained. Fourth, another round of discussions with peers helped us ensure that no major or "classical" papers had been dismissed.

2.2 Clarifying the Concept:

Our first step was to clarify the concept by specifying *what pluralistic organizations are not.* First, pluralistic organizations are not bureaucratic organizations. In other words, they are not classical bureaucratic organizations characterized by "means-end rationality," "hierarchical and centralized authority," and "formal and exhaustive rules that are sustained by a specialized and formal division of tasks" (Ashcraft, 2001). Diffuse power and competing perspectives are more likely to be found outside bureaucratic organizations because unlike pluralistic organization, bureaucratic organizations have a tendency to homogenize their constituents. Morrison and Milliken call this tendency "organizational silence": in most organizations, managers are afraid of negative feedback. Moreover, they often hold the implicit belief that employees look out for their interests first, that managers know best, and that unity over discord is preferable for the organization. As a result, all perspectives except that of the managers tend to be dismissed, which in turn leads to the collective distortion of the sense-making process, and fosters homogeneity in a self-enforcing manner (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Additionally, organizations do not usually allow for

controversies, because they generally focus on means-end rationality (Hoogenboom & Ossewaarde, 2005).

Second, on the other end of the spectrum, pluralistic organizations are not informal networks of individuals or stakeholders. In fact, they are formally organized (Trist, 1983) which entails that they have "members, a hierarchy, autonomy, and a constitution" (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008). Pluralistic organizations remove constituents from their local social context and recombine them in an organized setting and, as such, are organizations (Tsoukas, 2001).

Third, pluralistic organizations are also different from inter-organizational forms of organization, such as strategic alliances, partnerships, and joint ventures, for two reasons. Firstly, while in trans-organizational collaboration, constituents usually join to pursue common purposes (Cummings, 1984), pluralistic organizations often present themselves as neutral third parties that provide a space for their constituents to debate value-laden issues (Lawrence & Hardy, 1999). The purposes of pluralistic organizations are generally linked to broader social concerns (Ashcraft, 2001; Waddock & Post, 1995). Secondly, constituents in pluralistic organizations usually hold the "legitimacy to ensure their goals" ((Jarzabkowski, Matthiesen, & Van de Ven, 2008), and if not, they are free to leave a collaboration that is not sustained by any direct incentives nor stabilized by a coercive power (Demil & Lecocq, 2006; Makadok & Coff, 2009). All of this makes these organizations considerably more democratic in essence (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008).

2.3 Literature Review Process:

Our second step was to review articles that conceptualize and examine pluralistic organizations. In the preliminary stage, we collected references through advice, conferences, and feedback received from paper peer reviews. At this stage, we identified twelve relevant papers and two books with a strong contribution to the study and theorization of structures enabling collective action in pluralistic settings, which allowed us to refine our scope on organizations. In a second stage, with the help of peers, we selected scientific journals most likely to be receptive to the theorization of pluralistic organizations in management in their column. We first looked for more established journals, drawing on the *Financial Times* 2010 list of journals used in research rankings. We selected journals ranked among the top 30, either those for generalists or those related to management or international management, that were theoretical and research oriented. We also added *Organization Science*, *Organization Studies*, and *Human Relations* to this list because they were often mentioned in exchanges and conversations with experts on this subject.

In these journals, we retained 93 articles published between 2000 and 2011 that focused on collaboration in a pluralistic environment. The titles and abstracts of each article were read carefully to identify a list of articles that focus on the concept of an organization that inherently operates in a pluralistic environment and to remove papers on bureaucratic organizations, informal network strategic alliances, and concepts based on the above-mentioned criteria (in the section “clarifying the concept”).

After this second stage, discussions with peers and the examination of frequently-cited articles in the literature review enabled us to identify three additional articles from *The*

Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, *Social Studies of Science*, and the *European Journal of Operational Research*. We thus had a list of 24 articles that primarily focus on pluralistic organizations.

Table 2.I - Overview of the Selected Articles (EBSCO and ABI Inform Complete)

Journal	Total viewed	Retained	Central
Academy of Management Journal	870	16	4
Academy of Management Perspectives	330	0	0
Academy of Management Review	803		2
Administrative Science Quarterly	665	10	2
Journal of International Business Studies	782	9	1
Journal of Management Studies	886	3	3
Organization Science	673	25	2
Organization Studies	1202	25	3
Humans Relations	896	8	3
European Journal of Operational Research	1	1	1
Journal of Applied Behavioral Science	3	3	3
Social Studies of Science	1	1	1

We then built the list of concepts in Table 2. We realized that those concepts can be grouped into four research traditions. A first research tradition, *inter-organizational collaboration*, is associated with organization theory. Already in the mid-60s, authors were concerned with the changing and problematic nature of an organization's environment (Emery & Trist, 1965). In the 80s, this gave rise to the idea that, facing challenging environments, organizations had no choice but to develop inter-organizational collaboration, and concepts of pluralistic organizations began to appear. A second research tradition, *institutional change*, is a part of the research program of new institutionalism. In the 90s, as new institutionalism became interested in institutional change, it began to theorize the kind of organizations that take part in it. Our third research tradition, *deterministic approaches*, differs from the preceding two

because it derives from three research traditions less inclined to conceptualize pluralistic organisations. Population ecology, network theory and transaction cost theory tend to study organizations from a macro perspective, using qualitative methods with highly integrated theories. As a result they generally develop a deterministic view on organizations paying less attention to actors, power and substantive issues. Nevertheless, over time empirical research has challenged the theoretical framework of these three research traditions and generated concepts of pluralistic organizations. Our fourth research tradition, *social studies of science*, is related to a broader discussion on boundaries originating in the social sciences. Interested in the interactions of actors at the boundary of different social worlds—such as the interaction between scientists and politicians regarding research funds allocation—social studies of science have also developed a series of concepts related to boundary organizations. We shall now present and describe in detail these concepts and their respective research traditions to assess what we have learned about pluralistic organizations and what needs to be further explored.

Table 2.II - Concepts of Pluralistic Organizations in the Management Literature

Concepts	Reference	Definitions
	Inter-organizational Collaboration	
Referent Organization	Trist, 1983	*"An organization of this type is called a "referent organization" (Trist, 1977b), a term developed from the concept of reference groups. Such organizations [...] are of critical importance for domain development. [...] Moreover, they are to be controlled by the stakeholders involved in the domain, not from the outside.*
Supra-	Pasquero, 1991	*"Supra-organizational systems of collaboration*

organizational Collaboration		*are defined as loosely coupled, multilayered networks of referent organizations designed to lead stakeholders to take voluntary initiatives towards solving a shared social problem."*
Interaction Space	Ostanello & Tsoukiàs, 1993	*"A meta-object relies on 'complex' multiple organizational processes. It favours the development of a 'public' interaction space (IS), i.e., an inter-organizational informal structure that facilitates communication; actors' interactions are possible in an IS and can be regulated both to integrate and legitimate behaviour and to reduce some actors' uncertainty."*
Catalytic Alliance	Waddock, 1995	*"Catalytic alliances are distinguished from all other forms of organization by goals that tend to focus on changes in public awareness of a social problem, not on direct intervention or resolution. Rather than take direct action, such as feeding the hungry or interdicting drugs, they accomplish their purposes through the extensive use of the media as a means of building public awareness, stimulating the concern of others, and promoting action by individuals and organizations that will directly respond to the problem in new ways. The primary assumption is that some appropriate foundation of public awareness, concern, and commitment must be developed in order to support a broad scale program of social change."*
MultiSTK Collaborative Roundtable		
	Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001	*Cf. Pasquero 1991, multistakeholder collaborative roundtable are, in fact, referent organizations*
Pluralistic Organization	Denis, Lamothe & Langley, 2001	*"Pluralistic organizations are by definition settings in which a multiplicity of actors and groups pursue varying goals. [...] [They are] characterized by fragmented power and multiple objectives. Where reconciliation by fiat is not an option, these opposing forces [environment, organizational objectives, and opportunities] are in constant dynamic tension."*
Temporary Organization	Betchky, 2006	*"The portrayal of temporary organizations as ephemeral, unstable systems that require swift trust is inaccurate. In fact, these organizations are organized around enduring, structured role systems whose nuances are negotiated in situ. I find that what drives coordination in these*

		temporary organizations and maintains continuity across projects is the negotiated reproduction of role structures—the mutual reinforcement of the generalized role structure and repeated enactments of these roles on specific sets."
Meta-organization	Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008	*"Meta-organizations are organizations that have other organizations as their members. The term meta is chosen because much of what the meta-organization does deals with the organizational forms of their members as well as the interaction between them and their identity and status."*
	Institutional change	
Bridging Organization	Brown, 1991; Lawrence & Hardy, 1999	*"Bridging organizations and their constituent networks are shaped by values and visions, their tasks, member diversity, and external threats. [...] Bridging organizations can play a key role in building local organizations, creating horizontal linkages, increasing grassroots influence on policy, and disseminating new visions and organizational innovations" (p. 807). (Brown, 1991)*
Proto-institution	Lawrence et al., 2002	*"We refer to practices, technologies, and rules that are narrowly diffused and only weakly entrenched, but that have the potential to become widely institutionalized as proto-institutions. These new practices, technologies, and rules are institutions in the making: they have the potential to become full-fledged institutions if social processes develop that entrench them and they are diffused throughout an institutional field."*
Reflexive Organization	Hoogenboom & Ossenwarde, 2005;	*"Reflexive organizations are integrated through the collective consciousness that members enter a temporary alliance, rather than some stable network of relations, in order to cast doubt on the accountability of administrative decision-making. In reflexive organizations, the commitment and empowerment of members result not from a policy of community building, but from collective doubt regarding the merits of how things are organized. (...) the point is how to integrate members in a context of extreme uncertainty (...) [reflexive organizations] are confronted with a divergence and conflict of*

		ethical perceptions of members."
Field-Configuring Event	Lampel & Meyer, 2008; Hardy & Maguire, 2010	*"FCEs have six defining characteristics, which for the purpose of this Special Issue, constitute an operational definition: 1,[...] in one location, actors from diverse professional, organizational, and geographical backgrounds. 2, [...] [their] duration is limited, normally running from a few hours to a few days. 3, FCEs provide unstructured opportunities for face-to-face social interaction. 4, FCEs include ceremonial and dramaturgical activities. 5, FCEs are occasions for information exchange and collective sense-making. 6, FCEs generate social and reputational resources that can be deployed elsewhere and for other purposes." (Lampel & Meyer, 2008)*
Federal Collective Action Organizations	Lee, 2009	*Federal collective organization: "What distinguishes federations from other interorganizational forms is the partitioning of control between affiliates and a headquarters (Provan, 1983; Warren, 1967)." Lee also explained how federal organizations must both homogenize and mobilize constituents"*
Local Collective Action Organizations		*"Local collective action organizations can serve as "problem-solving structures" that exhibit flexibility and context-sensitive responsiveness to emergent problems and concerns (Clarke, 2001: 136). Studies of cooperatives, clubs, interest groups, and citizens' associations have demonstrated strong relationships between organizations' presences in a community and economic and social improvements (Esman & Uphoff, 1984)."*
	Deterministic approaches	
<u>*Population Ecology*</u>		
Overarching Inter-organizational Collectivity	Astley & Fombrun, 1983	*This analysis highlights the importance of collective, as opposed to individual, forms of organizational adaptation and suggests the usefulness of the concept of "collective strategy:" the joint mobilization of resources and the formulation of action within collectives*

		of organizations.
Collective Organization	Barnett et al., 2000	*Many organizations are made up of other organizations that have decided to act collectively, as is the case with research and development consortia, industrial alliances, trade associations, and formal political coalitions. These collective organizations can be characterized by their differing strategies: some are general in scope, while others specialize in a narrower purpose.*
		Network theory
Latent Organization	Starkey et al., 2000	*"Latent organizations remain dormant until market demand presents an opportunity for them to reanimate themselves as active production systems. A latent organization provides an alternative to hierarchy, market, and other network forms of organization in contexts where relationships are ongoing, but projects are episodic and spread unpredictably over time. Latent organizations offer a unique way of managing the key strategic challenges of controlling costs and ensuring quality in this context because they guarantee that key players who know and trust each other can be brought together for critical projects on a recurring basis."*
Network-Weaving Organization	Ingram & Torfasson, 2010	*"This article examines the population dynamics and viability of network weavers, which are organizations that provide network relations for others."*
Transaction cost economics		
Bazaar governance	Demil & Lecocq, 2006	*"Drawing on transaction cost economics, we propose that open source projects illustrate a new generic governance structure, which we label bazaar governance, based on a specific legal contract: the open licence. We characterize this structure in terms of its strengths and weaknesses and compare it to market, firm, and network forms. Low levels of control and weak incentive intensity are the distinctive features of the bazaar from, lending a high uncertainty to governed transactions. However, bazaar governance promotes the openness of open source communities, which*

		can generate strong positive network externalities and subsequent efficiency in cumulative transactions"
Hybrid governance	Makadok & Coff, 2009	*"true hybrid forms (…) can arise when the three dimensions of incentives, ownership, and authority vary independently."*
	Social study of science	
Boundary Organization	Guston, 1999, 2001; O'Mahony & Bechky, 200 Fujimura, 1999 Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010	*"They have at least the following three characteristics: 1, they provide a space that legitimizes the creation and use of boundary objects and standardized packages; 2, they involve the participation of both principals and agents as well as specialized or professionalized mediators; and 3, they exist on the frontier of two relatively distinct social worlds with definite lines of responsibility and accountability to each. These boundary organizations also perform the monitoring and apply the sanctions and incentives explicit in the principal-agent account."* *"Boundary organizations facilitate collaboration between scientists and non-scientists by remaining accountable to both" (Guston, 1999)*

3 Four Research Traditions on Pluralistic Organizations

3.1 Inter-Organizational Collaboration in Organization Theory

Organization theory and institutionalism are the most represented traditions of research in our review. Some authors trace the origins of organization theory back to Weber himself (Handel, 2003; Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006; Shafritz, Ott, & Jang, 1992). Because it is an old research tradition which led to the development of several others (detailed below), it was among the first research traditions to elaborate concepts of pluralistic organizations in the early 1980s (Trist, 1983). Until now, we have discussed pluralism as a phenomenological concept describing a plurality of actors in an organization, but from an epistemological stance, organization theory is pluralistic in

essence (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006; Morgan, 1997; Rouleau, 2007). In other words, it draws on numerous approaches, schools, methods, and perspectives, “including transaction cost economics, resource dependence theory, organizational ecology, new institutional theory, and agency theory in financial economics” (Davis & Marquis, 2005). The epistemological diversity translates into a diversity in the lenses used to analyze pluralistic organizations: authors combine organization theory with institutional economics (Pasquero, 1991), leadership theory (Denis et al., 2001), social movement theory (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008), and symbolic interactionism (Bechky, 2006; Pasquero, 1991). As a result, these papers share a common focus, namely the organization and how it handles problems related to pluralism, rather than a common theoretical framework per se.

Scholars in organizational theory have been developing concepts of pluralistic organizations mostly out of concern for the changing nature of certain empirical phenomena. As early as the 1960s, authors had noticed the spread of a “turbulent environment” (Emery & Trist, 1965) which led to the need for organizations to become more interdependent and interconnected. Research moved closer to the idea of pluralistic organizations in the beginning of the 1980s, with the observation that organizations were facing new types of problems designated as “meta-problems.” In "advanced industrial societies of western type" with turbulent environments, organizations faced an increasing number of meta-problems:

> Complex societies in fast-changing environments give rise to sets or systems of problems (meta-problems) rather than discrete problems. [...] a set of problems, or societal problem area, which constitutes a domain of common concern for its members [...] The issues involved are too extensive and too many-sided to be coped with by any single organization, however large." (Trist, 1983: 269-270)

These meta-problems are a source of turbulence that directly and indirectly affects organizations, which are often ill-equipped to address meta-problems (Aldrich, 1977; Ostanello & Tsoukias, 1993; Trist, 1983; Waddock & Post, 1995). Meta-problems are connected to broad social issues such as environmental concerns (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001a), the spread of a "temporary contingent form of work" (Bechky, 2006), and public policy matters such as urbanism (Ostanello & Tsoukias, 1993). Meta-problems impact a variety of actors across social fields, all interconnected and interdependent. Therefore, a single organization cannot easily solve meta-problems. Meta-problems have thus triggered discussions around new forms of organizations, as well as the development of a variety of concepts relating to pluralistic organizations. Most of these papers (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008; Lawrence, 2006; Trist, 1983; Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001a) set pluralistic organizations in the broader perspective of societal changes.

In this research tradition, research questions are exploratory and aim at theorizing new forms of organizations beyond bureaucratic forms. Papers theorize organizations that can handle meta-problems (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008; Ostanello & Tsoukias, 1993; Pasquero, 1991; Trist, 1983). Some are more operational, focusing on the outcomes of such organizations (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001a), on their strategic management and leadership (Denis et al., 2001), or on their membership and system of control (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008). Three articles focus on theoretical development rather than on empirical research, although they do use examples as illustrations (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008; Brown, 1991; Pasquero, 1991; Trist, 1983). The empirical settings of these papers are mostly inter-organizational, such as the "Jamestown Area Labor

Committee," an organization promoting regional industrialization (Trist, 1983); the Canadian Roundtable on the Environment (Pasquero, 1991; Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001a); and a coalition of actors working on the reuse of industrial buildings in an Italian urban area (Ostanello & Tsoukias, 1993). The only exception in this selection is Denis et al., who conduct a comparative analysis of pluralistic organizations between three hospitals (Denis et al., 2001).

Research in organizational theory has found that pluralistic organizations perform five functions at local and organizational levels. At the local level, they first facilitate collaboration among a plurality of actors and second, offer some strategic opportunities to their constituents. The three following functions occur at the level of their organizational domain: pluralistic organizations take part in the solving of meta-problems, in regulation, and in the development of community. These functions are detailed in the two paragraphs below.

At the local or organizational level, pluralistic organizations enhance and facilitate collaboration by providing structures (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008; Trist, 1983), mediating conflicts (Pasquero, 1991), changing the conditions of interaction between members, and sometimes by exerting influence on them (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008). They are places where the identity of professions and the relationships between them are negotiated (Smith, 2003) and places where consensus, if often limited to general statements, is achieved (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001a). They assist in the progression of the collaboration by aligning the objectives of three different levels: constituents, collaboration, and demands from the broader environment (Denis et al., 2001). In the long run, they also help constituents to learn how to collaborate in a multi-stakeholder

trans-organizational context (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001a). Pluralistic organizations also offer strategic benefits to their constituents, as pluralistic organisations are sometimes showcased in industry (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001a). They are places where new trends, identities (Trist, 1983; Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001a) and potential allies (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001a) can be found. Lastly, pluralistic organizations foster innovation through the blending of diverse actors (Ostanello & Tsoukias, 1993).

At the organizational domain level, pluralistic organizations also perform important tasks for their environments. They help actors gain a better understanding of their domain and its meta-problems (Ostanello & Tsoukias, 1993; Trist, 1983), especially in jointly developing specific common categories to comprehend those meta-problems (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001a). Pluralistic organizations are places where the rules of specific social environments are being defined. They either directly regulate the field (Trist, 1983), or constitute arenas in which broad conceptions of a phenomenon can be discussed (Pasquero, 1991). They also help develop communities by establishing social bonds among actors (Pasquero, 1991) and creating common representations of actors (Ostanello & Tsoukias, 1993) as well as their typification (Ostanello & Tsoukias, 1993). Sometimes, they create new actors, identities, or statuses (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008).

According to this research tradition, recurrent tensions are due to the plurality of perspectives amongst an organization's members (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008; Denis et al., 2001; Ostanello & Tsoukias, 1993; Trist, 1983; Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001a) and are worsened by diffuse power (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008; Denis et al., 2001) and pluralistic organizations' lack of resources (Trist, 1983). As a consequence, one

challenge is to maintain the costs associated with collaboration at a manageable level through the development of trust among their constituents (Bechky, 2006). As pluralistic organizations tackle substantive and consequential issues and regulate environmental issues (Pasquero, 1991), a second challenge for them lies in dealing with normative pressure from their organizational domain. There is a normative tension between their objectives for the common good and the manipulative means that might be employed to achieve them in their quest for power against established institutions (Waddock & Post, 1995). As a third challenge, pluralistic organizations must handle their own products, which are often unpredictable and sometimes even undesirable (Ostanello & Tsoukias, 1993). For example, analyzing leadership in pluralistic organization, Denis et al. underlined how "group members may promote change through their actions, except where these actions simultaneously alter the future form and viability of the leadership group because their legitimacy is constantly being revaluated by powerful constituencies." (Denis et al., 2001: 810). A last tension for pluralistic organizations arises from the difficulty of developing a consensus at a global level while ensuring implementation at the local level (Waddock & Post, 1995).

The study of inter-organizational collaboration in organization theory has been generative of developments in the study of pluralistic organizations, greatly aiding the development of new concepts. In particular, the development of the concepts of meta-problems, as well as the oft-mentioned question of social issues, signal pluralistic organizations' reactivity to emerging social trends. As a research tradition, organization theory has been a sort of theoretical playground where many concepts related to pluralistic organizations are experimented upon. However, an important

challenge for the study of inter-organizational collaboration consists in integrating this variety of concepts. For example, one can wonder why a promising concept such as "referent organization," developed in 1983 by Trist (Trist, 1983) was further developed by several authors (for example Pasquero, 1991) for some time but seems to have been abandoned in 2001, while several other similar concepts have been developed.

3.2 Institutional Change

The second research tradition under review is institutionalism. In the 1980s, new institutionalism was primarily concerned with homogeneity and isomorphism in populations of organizations (Greenwood, Oliver, Sahlin, & Suddaby, 2008; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991). From then on, students of institutionalism in the field of management have devoted increasing attention to institutional change (Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott, 2002), and have emphasized the role played by actors in this process through the twin concepts of "institutional entrepreneurs" and "institutional work" (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009; Garud et al., 2007). Simultaneously, research has revealed the importance of pluralism in institutional change through the notion of "institutional logics" (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999; van Gestel & Hillebrand, 2011)& Hillebrand, 2011), defined as "supraorganizational patterns, both symbolic and material, that order reality and provide meaning to actions and structure conflict" (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999)

Through research on institutional change, pluralistic organizations have been conceptualized as structures that empower and facilitate actors' actions and mediate conflicting institutional logics. In contrast to other research traditions, new

institutionalism has developed the idea of pluralistic organizations in order to answer theoretical puzzles and to further develop institutional theory. In other words, the concept of pluralistic organizations does not emerge out of troubling empirical evidence. Brown is the only scholar who describes pluralistic organizations as a mechanism that faces broader social changes (Brown, 1991). For all other authors in our literature review, pluralistic organizations are not connected to postmodernity, global change, or any other problem peculiar to contemporary societies, but are instead mundane organizations that play a role in "cycles" of institutionalization.

Most research in new institutionalism aims to further advance institutional theory so that it will encompass different types of pluralistic organizations and articulate their role in the broader process of institutionalization. The cases investigated are concrete examples of inter-organizational collaborations, such as the NGO "Mère et enfant" (Lawrence, Hardy, & Phillips, 2002), usually with a strong mandate to define the rules of the field, such as the Federal Drug Administration (Lee, 2009), the Asian NGO coalition (Brown, 1991), the Canadian Council for Refugees (Lawrence & Hardy, 1999), or the United Nations Conference on the Stockholm Convention (Hardy & Maguire, 2010). Some of these organizations have a strong symbolic status, such as professional gatherings or awards ceremonies (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). Scholars in new institutionalism use fine-grained qualitative studies to grasp in full detail the mechanisms by which pluralistic organizations impact processes of institutional change. They also at times mobilize discourse analysis to provide a broader picture and to highlight the importance of pluralistic organizations and their institutional environment (Hardy & Maguire, 2010).

For institutionalist scholars, the main functions of pluralistic organizations are to establish new institutions or to reinforce existing ones. They are key mechanisms at the collaborative level of the institutional process that facilitate collaboration (Lawrence et al., 2002). Pluralistic organizations bring constituents together across different institutional fields (Brown, 1991); within a field, they bridge dominant-central and weaker-peripheral constituents (Lawrence & Hardy, 1999). They do so by creating specific spaces: spaces in which central and peripheral actors can meet under a less constraining institutional context (Hardy & Maguire, 2010), spaces in which individuals can represent both themselves and their organizations (Lampel & Meyer, 2008), and spaces in which the acceptance of criticism allows the development of more reflexive relationships (Mintzberg, 1979). Pluralistic organizations act as "brokers of meaning" for their constituents. However, Waddock believes they only "speed-up actions that are already underway, rather than creating new relationships" (Waddock & Post, 1995). Overall, they facilitate or accelerate institutional innovation and change (Hardy & Maguire, 2010). Within their field, pluralistic organizations yield important "second-order" outcomes, developing field beliefs (Hardy & Maguire, 2010; Mintzberg, 1979), regulating activities (Hardy & Maguire, 2010; Lee, 2009), changing institutional networks (Hardy & Maguire, 2010), promoting institutional innovation (Brown, 1991; Lee, 2009), and keeping actors mobilized (Lee, 2009b). Once they are better established, those organizations sustain and diffuse freshly formed institutions (Brown, 1991), especially when they are composed of highly embedded actors who are also very involved in these organizations (Lawrence et al.,

2002). They also deal with the unintended consequences of institutional change (Mintzberg, 1979).

Nonetheless, most of these authors describe pluralistic organizations as an under-studied phenomenon (Lampel & Meyer, 2008; Lawrence et al., 2002; Lee, 2009a). These organizations face tensions with respect to the institutionalization process. Some authors underline tensions at the level of the institutional field including the following: tensions between standardization and innovation (Ashcraft, 2001; Lee, 2009), normative tensions associated with the development of the best possible institutions (Brown, 1991; Lee, 2009), tensions related to the institutionalization of practices (Lawrence et al., 2002), as well as tensions created when introducing institutional change and diffusing best practices (Mintzberg, 1979). Most authors also identify tensions at the organizational level. They discuss how to cope with the diversity of constituents and, especially in an institutional context, how to attract dominant-central actors while retaining weaker and more peripheral ones (Brown, 1991; Lawrence & Hardy, 1999). In other words, they ask, how can an organization be seen as neutral and independent while still being part of the field (Lawrence & Hardy, 1999)? What are the consequences of the exclusion or inclusion of actors in space created by pluralistic organizations (Hardy & Maguire, 2010)? How do pluralistic organizations help resolve the embedded agency paradox? Specifically, how do they help actors leave the institutional logic they are embedded in so as to innovate (Lampel & Meyer, 2008)? Institutionalists examine how, on an ongoing basis, pluralistic organizations must reconcile the need to mobilize their constituents by activating their particular identities, values, and beliefs at the local level while, at the same time, creating some

uniformity by conflating or downplaying those very same identities, values, and beliefs at the global level (Lee, 2009). In a more business-like environment, they are concerned with how to keep the costs of coordination low between actors who are not used to working together (Bechky, 2006).

The study of institutional change has done remarkable work in exploring dimensions of pluralistic organizations pertaining to their institutional environment. Scholars have shed light on the importance of these organizations' "field mandate" to transform their environment, on their legitimacy, and on their symbolic status. They have also provided a very strong account of the determinants that favour or prevent the diffusion of norms and rules produced in pluralistic organizations, in particular the importance of having both legitimate and more marginal actors as involved as possible. However, contrary to other research traditions, new institutionalism sees pluralism as a transitional state in the broader process of institutionalization between two institutional orders, and one cannot help but wonder if this does not hide the perennial nature of pluralism. According to other research traditions, pluralism is a constant and rising state in most environments. As a consequence, new institutionalism sometimes lacks the political dimension found elsewhere, and also puts less emphasis on persistent organizational structure for managing constant pluralism.

3.3 Deterministic Approaches

Deterministic approaches are drawn from three research traditions: population ecology, network theory and transaction cost theory. In all three research traditions, interest in pluralistic organizations has been marginal and articles on pluralistic organizations are few. Interest in pluralistic organizations is connected with the

identification of theoretical contradictions or "theoretical monsters" (Lakatos, 1976) in network theory and transaction cost economics, and to a lesser extent in population ecology. Theoretical monsters are phenomena that contradict a theoretical framework, and as such generate further development. Nevertheless, while the study of pluralistic organizations by deterministic approaches has been less intensive than in other research traditions, those three research traditions allow the use of more macro, quantitative methodologies and bring sophisticated theoretical lenses to the study of pluralistic organizations.

Population Ecology

Drawing from natural science, population ecology is interested in the evolution of organizational characteristics in relation to their environment (Hannan & Freeman, 1977); however, its "materialistic" approach has paid less attention to the "human dimension" of organizations (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006). As we have seen, subjectivity and value issues are central to pluralistic organizations, but these seem to have been infrequently discussed in population ecology. Nonetheless, we identified two papers associated with population ecology that have developed concepts of pluralistic organizations. They propose to hybridize the perspective of population ecology with the perspectives of social ecology (Astley & Fombrun, 1983; Barnett et al., 2000).

Theoretical developments from population ecology on pluralistic organizations are either empirically driven by the emergence of "meta-problems," a concept borrowed from organizational theory (Trist, 1983), or they emerge through the identification of a theoretical gap because collective organizations have been under-studied until now (Astley & Fombrun, 1983). Since "research has tended to emphasize member

organizations as the primary unit of analysis, […] far less research has focused […] on collective organization" (Barnett et al., 2000).

Astley and Fombrun's research question aims to adapt population ecology to a collective population of organizations (Astley & Fombrun, 1983). Barnett et al. conduct a canonical study in population ecology: they observe and compare the evolution of two populations. Yet, instead of populations of organizations, they compare populations of collective organizations. In so doing, they address pluralistic organizations in terms of ecology of population. This approach requires theoretical development or hybridization (Astley & Fombrun, 1983) but it allows the authors to use a well-established quantitative methodology to analyze population dynamics in pluralistic organizations (Barnett et al., 2000). The organizations under study are populations of organizations such as the pharmaceutical industry, the American Medical Association (Astley & Fombrun, 1983), and the US research and development consortia (Barnett & King, 2008).

Population ecology provides insights into the meso- and macro-levels of functioning in pluralistic organizations. Overarching interorganizational collectives make collective agency possible and enable organizations to manage their environment. Their design depends first on the type of association between members, which can be either a direct relationship or an indirect (market) relationship; and second, on the population of members that join, particularly whether they are from the same industry (communal) or from different industries (symbiotic). Astley and Fombrun identified four important factors which must continue to flow when bringing organizations together: information, influence, work, and interpersonal relationships (Astley &

Fombrun, 1983). Collective organizations have two types of strategies: the first, general (ex. trade associations), as when coordinating organizations on a multiplicity issues; the second, narrow (ex. political interest coalitions), as when focused on a limited number of issues. Generalists "grow at a greater rate and more contagiously than specialists, and […] this growth in turn would decrease the founding rate of new collective organizations" (Barnett et al., 2000).

Unsolved questions and tensions concerning pluralistic organizations in population ecology concern the collective action problem: how to control those organizations, avoid free riders, and maintain connections among actors (Astley & Fombrun, 1983)? What are the best strategies to attract organizations and funding (Barnett & King, 2008)?

Population ecology enables the use of a more quantitative methodology and, consequently, the elaboration of general laws of pluralistic organizations. For example, research suggests that generalist pluralistic organizations are more successful in attracting and retaining members than specialist ones. As bureaucratic forms of organization appear to be less relevant in pluralistic contexts, population ecology also bridges the study of organizations and natural science providing inspiration to imagine and study new forms of collaboration. However, population ecology's "materialistic" approach leaves less room for the agency of actors and organizational design than other research traditions; it is also less interested in the micro-levels of functioning of organizational pluralism.

Network Theory

Network theory concentrates on new forms of collaboration and, of course, makes networks its privileged object of study (Powell, 1990). It has thus paid less attention to pluralistic organizations. Furthermore, this theoretical tradition has favoured stylized quantitative research, leading to network mapping (Starkey & Crane, 2003), which has tended to eclipse actors' identities, values, and beliefs (Feld, 1981). We believe this theoretical framework has also tended to conceal debates on substantial issues, the pluralism of members, and controversies, which are all key dimensions of pluralism.

Research on pluralistic organizations in network theory emerge from an inherent and central theoretical interrogation in this research tradition: how do networks become more than a collection of individuals, how are knowledge, trust, and institutions, essential for any functional network to be brought into being? What stands beyond or below the networks? Some authors have criticized the "floating" vision of network theory, which describes loosely connected actors. These authors are especially interested in the idea that networks require some sort of overarching organization to persist over time. Starkey et al. believe that networks are not viable in an economic context because they damage trust and inhibit knowledge sharing among collaborators. Thus, a more stable and permanent organization must remedy this instability (Starkey & Crane, 2003). Ingram and Torfasson go further and propose that networks are actually designed and organized by specific organizations contributing to the rise of a "world society." These organizations are in competition to attract members to their networks; Ingram and Torfasson thus introduce power and controversies and make network theory closer to a pluralistic view of the world (Ingram & Torfason, 2010).

These two papers aim to further develop network theory, at the global level in the case of Starkey et al., and at the level of industry in the case of Ingram and Torfasson. The latter focuses on an international governmental organization, while the former examines the production of cultural industry. These papers illustrate the methodological flexibility of network theory by their different paths. Starkey et al.'s quantitative in-depth analysis of the UK television industry develops the role played by a pluralistic organization for networks (Starkey, Barnatt, & Tempest, 2000), while Ingram and Torfason's quantitative study of dyadic relationship between 498 international governmental organizations and nation-states provides a general understanding of criteria under which a pluralistic organization is more likely to successfully sustain networks (Ingram & Torfason, 2010)

Latent organizations remedy the undesirable economic effects of networks by sustaining relationships among their constituents between projects. Latent organizations thus maintain trust and foster knowledge-sharing and development over time. They also point to the idea that the level of formalization of an organization can vary over time depending on the context. If a pluralistic organization is to develop networks, the study of network-weaving organizations shows that it is easier to gather and manage similar members, but that connecting dissimilar members whose many connections are not connected to each other can be the most rewarding. In network theory language, connecting these dissimilar members is called "spanning the structural hole." Another finding concerns the legitimacy that must be sought by pluralistic organizations in each social world in which they operate. Competitiveness in attracting members is another key element in the success of pluralistic

organizations. This type of organization may be conceived as a “network supplier” and it may want to operate in environments with few pluralistic organizations and thus less competition (Ingram & Torfason, 2010).

Network theory contributes to our understanding of pluralistic organizations as it provides insightful examples of how networks are created and sustained over time. It reveals the importance of attracting both similar and dissimilar actors, the tensions that arise in attempts to create a common sense of identity among dissimilar actors, the risk of a possible competition for members between pluralistic organizations that act as “network suppliers,” as well as the contest for legitimacy in this competition. However, one weakness of network theory is that it contributes very little to our understanding of the “second order effects” of pluralistic organizations. These are the often unpredictable effects that transform not only the network but also the very institutional framework in which pluralistic organizations operate.

Network theory provides researchers with a dynamic and relatively macroscopic perspective on pluralistic organizations in interaction with one another. The notion that connecting unrelated networks together can cover a “structural hole” is useful to understanding the success or failure of pluralistic organizations in situations of competition. The shortcomings of network theory are also a source of learning, as they suggest the necessity of supra-organizations, on top of common institutions, that support well-functioning networks. However, network theory tends to consider organizations as "black-boxes" or nodes, and, like population ecology or grand sociology, it pays less attention to the micro, human, and internal dimensions of pluralistic organizations.

Transaction Cost Economics

The notion of pluralistic organizations appeared in the mid-2000s in transaction cost economics. Originating in the 1930s in the wake of the financial crisis, transaction cost economics is based on the idea that the costs associated with transactions between actors can explain the emergence of organizations from the market (Coase, 1937; Williamson, Winter, & Coase, 1991). Because of its scope, this theory quickly caught the shortcomings of bureaucratic organizations, as compared to the market, in maintaining low transaction costs in complex environments with high uncertainty. However, this very scope has limited the scientific discussion in transaction cost economics to the choice between a hierarchy and the market, casting aside other forms of organization (Demil & Lecocq, 2006; Makadok & Coff, 2009).

During the last decade, scholars in transaction cost economics have observed new forms of economic relationships between actors, as well as new forms of governance and ownership. Examples include the open-software community or multi-stakeholder projects in the automotive industry. Some of them have questioned and challenged the "hierarchy-market" continuum (Makadok & Coff, 2009), and they have drawn attention to a theoretical paradox associated with transaction cost economics : whereas the core principles of transaction cost economics indicate that governance should fluctuate between strong incentive and weak control (market), and weak incentive and strong control (hierarchical) systems, pluralistic organizations contradict these principles because they are functional within both weak (formal) incentives and (hierarchical) controls simultaneously (Demil & Lecocq, 2006; Makadok & Coff, 2009). Furthermore, they also function without social control, since actors are only

weakly socially embedded (Demil & Lecocq, 2006). In short, transaction cost economics define, in economic terms, the paradox of pluralistic collaborations: weak controls, weak incentives, and socially disembbeded actors.

Therefore, research questions are operational and attempt to integrate pluralistic organizations, a kind of "theoretical monster" (Lakatos, 1976), into the theoretical framework of transaction cost economics. These papers study mainstream organizations or industries, such as McDonald's or the automotive industry, with mesmerizing forms of collaboration (Makadok & Coff, 2009), or new and puzzling organizations such as the Open Linux project (Demil & Lecocq, 2006). Both papers propose a theoretical discussion illustrated by empirical examples to integrate pluralistic organizations within the broader perspective of transaction cost economics. These papers focus on collaboration and contribute to the discussion on pluralistic organizations by studying pluralistic collaboration despite its weak controls, incentives, and social embeddedness. Bazaar organizations develop mechanisms that reduce transaction and production costs. These mechanisms enable a greater number of actors to contribute to pluralistic organizations, and they generate positive externalities for their broader environments (Demil & Lecocq, 2006). Hybrid organizations can be explained by introducing the structure of owernship as a third dimension to the classical hierachy-market continuum (Makadok & Coff, 2009).

Transaction cost theory provides very interesting insights into the functioning of pluralistic organizations, thanks to its elegant and original model. However, these need to be further developed. At the level of their environment, these papers touch upon stimulating possibilities, but these possibilities remain largely unexplored. Bazaar

governance generates positive externalities, but authors say little about the mechanisms by which these positive externalities favour collaboration, nor do we know how these externalities can be measured or assessed (Demil & Lecocq, 2006). For Makadok and Coff, “legal and institutional structures” could explain the emergence of new forms of organization and should thus be integrated in the research agenda, but these are still largely under-studied (Makadok & Coff, 2009), perhaps because there is little empirical research on pluralistic organizations involving transaction cost economics.

Transaction cost economics has contributed to our understanding of pluralistic organizations by elegantly formalizing their paradox: how can socially disembedded actors collaborate in the context of weak incentives and weak controls? Transaction cost economics also provides an operational focus on collaboration and reveals the importance of external rewards – most often informal – given by the environment as well as the importance of membership flexibility. However, compared to other research traditions, these scholars remain relatively silent on boundary organizations’ "second-order" effects (Woolley & Fuchs, 2011), that is, the effects of these organizations on the structure of their field. The example of external rewards is illustrative: although it is a very interesting idea, authors say very little about what these rewards are, how they actually impact collaboration, and how they can be assessed.

3.4 Social Studies of Science

There is a long and rich tradition of research in the social sciences dedicated to boundaries. If this tradition has been mostly interested in boundaries as “separation,”

"typification," and "exclusion" between social worlds (Bourdieu, 1990; Foucault, 1975), one stream of research has taken a different path: the social studies of science (Latour, 1987; Star & Griesemer, 1989).

Because it is interested in empirical studies of interactions between politicians and scientists regarding public policy issues, it has developed the idea that boundaries are not only separation, but also constitute an "interface facilitating knowledge production," "communication," and "exchange" across social worlds (Lamont & Molnar, 2002). Therefore social studies of science can make an important contribution to our understanding of pluralistic organizations through the development of theories and concepts of interfaces for collaboration across social worlds. Since the end of the 90s, this research tradition has developed a first generation of concepts that help a plurality of actors collaborate on value-laden issues such as "boundary objects" (Star & Griesemer, 1989) and "standardized packages" (Fujimura, 1996). At the turn of the century, social studies of science have contributed more directly to our understanding of pluralistic organizations with the concept of "boundary organizations."

Guston (1999) is interested in how politicians attempt to "manage the moral hazard of the productivity of research," as he combines the notion of boundary organizations with principal-agent theory. O'Mahony and Bechky infuse the concept of boundary organizations with social movement theory to study how these organizations facilitate the collaboration of challengers and defenders of a social system (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008). All these papers illustrate their theoretical development through empirical qualitative research on "extreme cases" (Yin, 1994): that is, cases where boundary organizations' properties are the most visible, for instance, in the

collaboration between scientists and politicians at the National Institute of Health Office of Technology Transfer (Guston, 1999), and in the community management of the open-source software community (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008).

At the level of collaboration, these organizations stabilize cooperation around boundary objects (Guston, 1999) that are vague enough to be adopted by a plurality of actors and yet meaningful enough for actors to feel concerned and engaged in negotiating their meaning (Star & Griesemer, 1989). Boundary organizations do so by clarifying mutual interests, establishing various lines of accountability, and providing actors with a way to define the boundaries of a field that supports their perspective (Guston, 1999). They also allow collaboration between unexpected allies because they act as a third party in the rearrangement of the four critical domains of practices in organizations: governance, membership, ownership, and control over production (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008). Within their field, pluralistic organizations promote social change. They create a "social vision" which enables constituents' coordination, especially in mobilizing media. However, this might have unintended effects (Waddock & Post, 1995). They define the role structure of a field (Bechky, 2006; O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008) as well as the boundaries between convergent and divergent interests, and they are "durable structures for mutual adjustment" (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008).

Boundary organizations face a challenge in collaborations: how can a collaboration between a plurality of actors be stabilized (Guston, 1999) and, more precisely, how can trust between their constituents be created and maintained (Bechky, 2006; O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008)? In the context of social conflict, these organizations

favour negotiations over conflict and guarantee that all interests will be preserved (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008). The construction of membership in pluralistic organizations then appears to be crucial to collaboration across social worlds (Acquier, Gond, & Pasquero, 2011; Barach & Zimmer, 1983; Bonardi, 2005; Guston, 1999), especially in the establishment of who participates and who does not. For example, in their study of harvesting practices in the coastal forest industry of British Columbia, Zietsma and Lawrence explain how the government allows and controls forest tenures, and thus excludes or includes some players (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). The authors also describe a normative tension, as these organizations face the risk that their outcomes could be politicized or commercialized (Guston, 1999).

The social studies of science have been quite successful in suggesting that artifacts and organizations could be designed to favor collaboration among a plurality of actors. They provide a theoretical framework with several intermediary concepts such as "boundary objects," "standardized packages," and of course "boundary organizations," which capture the interactions in organized forms of collaboration in a pluralistic environment. They have yielded empirical results, especially on the question of mediating different interests across social worlds. However, their focus on relationships between scientists and politicians may hinder the field’s ability to generalize and to assess "meta-problems." This focus may also have disconnected the social studies of sciences from broader societal issues or trends at work in the multiplication of this type of organization.

4 Contribution, Discussion Future Research

A first contribution of this paper is methodological as it illustrates the heuristic interest of developing an umbrella concept (Hafsi & Thomas, 2005). The second contribution is a focus on the phenomenon of pluralistic organizations, as this literature helps us to pinpoint the knowledge acquired about pluralistic organizations as well as the tensions and paradoxes that constitute future avenues for research. It also connects disparate scientific discussions about a single phenomenon that have until now remained isolated (see Söderlun and Gond for further information on fragmented fields and alternate theoretical lenses).

4.1 Developing an Umbrella Concept

A first contribution of this paper is methodological. This literature review illustrates and reinforces the argument made by Hirsch and Levin regarding the role and importance of developing umbrella concepts at various point in the “life-cycle” of theory (Hirsch & Levin, 1999). The two authors believe that umbrella concepts are particularly needed when the field lacks theoretical consensus. According to them, the advantage of developing an umbrella framework is twofold. Firstly, on a cognitive level, umbrella concepts help to order disconnected elements that nonetheless belong to same phenomenon. Secondly, from a paradigmatic perspective, an umbrella concept gives a common word for scholars interested in the same phenomenon to engage in a scientific discussion, without prematurely closing the debate.

Our research reinforces these two points and elucidates four schools of thought and how they have developed concepts around pluralistic organizations. A recap of these schools of thought appears in the table below.

Table 2.III – Four Research Traditions on the Concept of Pluralistic Organizations

Intra-organizational collaboration	New type of environment described as "turbulent environment" with "meta-problems" requiring new organizational forms. Inclined towards theoretical hybridization	Theory-building through the generation of new concepts illustrated by concrete examples.	*Canadian roundtable on environment; Jamestown Area Labour Committee; International Federation for Organic Agriculture Movements*	*<u>Locally:</u> they enhance and facilitate collaboration; the combination of diverse actors produces innovation; actors have reputational incentives to be part of the organization; they improve their social capital. <u>Organizational field :</u> they frame the field's cognitive categories, values, and identities*	*Lack of hierarchical authority *Pressures from the environment, and ethical questioning, as pluralistic organizations deal with substantial/ political issues *Unintended outcomes risk transforming one's environment
Institutional change	Part of the research program related to institutional change: the role of organizations in the "institutionalization cycles."	Theory development related to institutional change though qualitative fine-grained case analysis in which mechanisms related to institutional change are studied	*The Society For Participatory Research In Asia; the British Refugee Council; the NGO mère & enfant ; Annual Meeting of the American Bar Association; the Food and Drug Administration*	*<u>Locally:</u> they bring together central and peripheral actors from an institutional field: they act as an "institutional shelter," that is, a device which eases locally and temporarily institutional constraints. <u>Organizational field :</u> they develop field beliefs, identities, and institutional innovation but are also reinforcing institutions and constraining the behaviors of actors*	*Institutionalization vs. innovation *Issues of legitimacy when making and promoting institutions *Transforming institutional boundaries between actors *Mobilizing identities while transforming them
	Theoretical context	Methodological approach	Exemples of pluralistic organizations	Main ideas on pluralistic organizations	Tension

Deterministic approaches	Developments concerning pluralistic organizations are more marginal and emerge out of "theoretical monsters" and inconsistencies in paradigm.	"Normal science's" program (Kuhn, 1996): canonical research questions and endogenous quantitative methods	Population ecology (PE): *populations of organizations like the pharmaceutical industry, the American Medical Association* Network Theory (NT): *cultural industry production* Transaction cost economics (TCE): *Wikipedia*	*PE: Pluralistic organizations as specific populations of organizations.* *NT: Pluralistic organizations as "network providers," that is, the organizations behind the networks (latent organization), the importance of connecting dissimilar actors (spanning structural holes).* *TCE: Pluralistic organizations as an economic form of collaboration. The paradox of collaboration in a pluralistic organization: low control, low incentives, no social embeddedness. The collaboration works because of the number of contributors and positive externalities ("Bazaar governance")*	*Collective action problems: i.e. free riding, group cohesion *Shared identity vs. dissimilar actors *Competition for members between pluralistic organizations *Evasive nature of external rewards and difficulty to capture them through classical theoretical lenses
	Theoretical context	Methodological approach	Exemples of pluralistic organizations	Main ideas on pluralistic organizations	Tension

Social study of science	Part of the social sciences' discussion on boundaries. The social studies of science has been particularly interested in collaboration between politicians and scientists.	Qualitative research, exploratory design, "extreme cases" (Yin, 1994) to investigate boundary organizations	National Institutes of Health; Office of Technology Transfer; open source project communities; the coastal forest industry of British Columbia; the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at the University of California, Berkeley	*Locally: degree of pluralistic organization: boundary objects => boundary package => boundary organizations; the importance of ambiguity and neutrality. Boundary organizations create and control exclusion/inclusion mechanisms. Organizational field : delineate and transform boundaries across social worlds.*	*Stabilizing and conserving a plurality of actors *Inclusion vs. exclusion *Generalizability beyond the cooperation of scientists and politicians
	Theoretical context	Methodological approach	Exemples of pluralistic organizations	Main ideas on pluralistic organizations	Tension

We shall now detail the current state of knowledge on pluralistic organizations.

4.2 Knowledge on Pluralistic Organization

Scholars of pluralistic organizations have made their first contribution by empirically identifying a new form of organization. Organization theory, transaction cost economics, social studies of science, and grand sociology acknowledge the existence of a new kind of problem through the concept of "meta-problems," which in turn generates these forms of organizations, namely pluralistic organization. This global perspective helps us understand the political dimension of pluralistic organizations.

Scholars have also advanced our knowledge of the interaction between pluralistic organizations and their environments. The concept of pluralistic organizations helps us to considerably refine the somewhat dichotomized view, inherited from the study of bureaucratic organization, of an organization as either being dominated by its environment or dominating it. Based on the idea that pluralistic organizations deal with value-laden issues across different fields, authors have been able to bring to light a variety of mechanisms through which pluralistic organizations interact with their environments. Pluralistic organizations are places where roles, rules, and norms are proactively enacted, negotiated, reinforced, or transformed, where alliances are done and undone, and where resources are deliberately ventilated across the field. They are thus quite different from bureaucratic organizations.

Another important step forward lies in the status of actors in pluralistic organization. As research shows there is competition—sometimes fierce—among pluralistic

organizations, unparalleled in bureaucratic organizations, to attract and retain a variety of members. This has driven students of pluralistic organizations to renew old questions from the study of organizations such as the development of membership, as well as the definition and conservation of members. In particular, scholars have reassessed the importance of sustaining a diversity of institutional identities within pluralistic organizations. A diversity of members' institutional identities can be a key success factor in pluralistic organizations, particularly in impacting their field. This renewed view of members as political actors also allows for a better grasp of their role in shaping their institutional environment through the design of pluralistic organizations.

Our understanding of pluralistic organizations has also progressed on another point concerning conflict and power. In our literature review, there is a consensus that pluralistic organizations are a connecting device, either as a "broker of meaning" in institutional theory or as a "supplier of network" in network theory. However, research on pluralistic organizations has taken a step forward by theorizing pluralistic organizations as a mediating device: they mediate between conflicting parties because pluralistic organizations develop an impartial and neutral discourse with respect to all identities. Several authors have adopted the view of pluralistic organizations as spaces of freedom, and even as spaces of catharsis in institutional theory, where actors are temporarily and partially free from their institutional framework.

If remarkable progress has been made in our understanding of pluralistic organizations, it is because each research tradition has made a contribution, albeit each with their own weaknesses as well as strengths. This literature review allows us to

better understand that each research tradition constitutes an “episteme” (Foucault, 1966) in itself with its own perspective, tools, strengths, and weaknesses regarding the study of pluralistic organizations. However, this literature review also helps us to define a common research agenda for scholars interested in the study of pluralistic organizations.

4.3 Future Research

Though these results are already quite interesting, there is still room for a better understanding of the mechanisms that allow collaboration in pluralistic organizations. As shown by transaction cost economics, collaboration represents a theoretical paradox central to pluralistic organizations.

Up until now, studies of pluralistic organizations have been mostly qualitative. More quantitative studies of pluralistic organizations are expected in the future, which will increase the validity of the theories, encourage scholars to think more in terms of generalizability, and, as such, lead to some theoretical consensus. Regarding this question, our literature review exhibits potentially very interesting examples where introducing the concept of boundary organizations in established research traditions with a history of quantitative research yielded results about pluralistic organizations. For example, network theory has shown to be pluralistic with general goals, and proven to be more successful than those with a narrower scope (Jarzabkowski & Paul Spee, 2009).

The relationship between pluralistic organizations and their environment also constitutes a key topic in the study of pluralistic organizations, where there is a broad consensus that pluralistic organizations inherently have “second-order” effects on their

environment through which they change the very structure of the field in which they operate. However, very little is known about the "rebound effect" these changes have on organizations. In other words, how do environments react to pluralistic organizations' activities? And how does this reaction affect pluralistic organizations? As a matter of fact, scholars have touched on this "rebound effect" intuitively, in the description of the outcomes of pluralistic organizations as "unpredictable" or "unexpected" (Ostanello & Tsoukias, 1993). Further research is needed to deepen our understanding of these complex and intertwined interactions.

A second avenue for further research would focus on the evolution of pluralistic organizations' status over time. There are tensions in our literature review between research traditions such as social studies of science or organization theory, which view pluralism as a permanent state and call for new forms of organization better equipped to handle it, and the tradition of new institutionalism, which views pluralistic organizations as a transitional state. How do pluralistic organizations evolve over time and in different contexts? More quantitative longitudinal studies over a significant period of time are required to address this question.

A third avenue for further research is related to ethics in pluralistic organizations. In bureaucratic organizations, this question has been traditionally tackled by business ethics. However, because pluralistic organizations do not concentrate on means-end rationality, but, on the contrary, deal with value-laden issues, and because they involve a plurality of actors, they give new importance to old ethical questions. Moreover, they ask new ones. Should organizations with a mandate to establish norms and roles in a field operate under the same ethical rules as a classical organization? In a pluralistic

collaboration, how can a variety of actors be handled? Should weaker actors be treated differently? As research shows the importance of external rewards, which type of rewards should be granted to actors participating in pluralistic organizations? How can organizations remain transparent and accountable for these rewards?

5 Conclusion

In this paper, we defined the umbrella concept of pluralistic organization through a focus on the empirical and theoretical concerns it elicits. We then identified and discussed concepts related to pluralistic organizations across four research traditions: inter-organizational collaboration, institutional change, deterministic approaches and social studies of science. For each tradition, we have provided synthesis, illustrations, and key concepts pertinent to pluralistic organizations. We have also identified the prospects and limitations of these approaches. This has allowed us to portray the state of research on pluralistic organizations, to evaluate the contributions of different research traditions, and to propose new avenues of research for the study of pluralistic organizations.

This paper is original on both methodological and theoretical counts. It represents a first attempt to map research traditions around a central concept of a yet-to-be-consolidated rising phenomenon in our societies and organizations. This generates a methodological contribution: this literature review had to create its own sui generis search and consolidation methods in order to identify, make sense of, and solidify these definitions in their respective traditions following the notions of “umbrella concepts” (Hirsch & Levin, 1999) and “synthetic coherence” (Rose, 1990). This methodology could be further explored and developed.

Our findings suggest a proliferation rather than a convergence of concepts of pluralistic organizations. We hope our umbrella concept of pluralistic organizations will make the scientific discussion on pluralistic organizations more explicit and contribute to its coordination. This literature review provides scholars with an overview of the current state of research on pluralistic organizations, of the different perspectives on them and their specificity, of the tensions within and between them, and of their potential to further contribute to our understanding of pluralistic organizations. Most importantly, it contributes to the ongoing debate on new forms of organization (Cf. Academy of Management Journal vol. 44 issue 6).

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Essay 2: Power and Institutions in Global Standardization[*]

The Role and the Importance of Ambiguity in Institutionalizing New Standards of OSR

LUC BRES AND EMMANUEL RAUFFLET[**]

Dieser Artikel untersucht die von der International Organization for Standardization (ISO) geschaffene Plattform, mit deren Hilfe es in fast zehnjähriger Verhandlung gelang, den ISO 26000 Standard zu veröffentlichen. Die Argumentation erfolgt in zwei Schritten. Zunächst werden neoinstitutionelle und politische Theorieansätze kombiniert, um zu erklären wie die ISO verschiedene konkurrierende Gruppen erfolgreich an den Verhandlungstisch brachte. In einem weiteren Schritt wird das Konzept der "Plattform" eingeführt und es wird dargelegt, wie Plattformen die Schaffung neuer Institutionen auf internationaler Ebene ermöglichen. Diese theoretischen Schritte können erklären, wie politische Orte in der neu entstehenden globalen Infrastruktur für die soziale Verantwortung von Organisationen funktonieren.

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Power and Institutions in Global Standardization

The Role and the Importance of Ambiguity in Institutionalizing New Standards of OSR

Macht und Institutionen in der globalen Standardisierung: Die Rolle und Bedeutung von Ambiguität bei der Standardisierung von organisatorischer Verantwortung

"It [power] is at its most effective when least accessible to observation." (Lukes, 2005: 64)

This paper seeks to understand the success of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in creating a platform for the development of ISO 26000, a standard of organizational social responsibility (OSR). The contribution of this paper is twofold. First, neo-institutional theory combined with political theory will help us to understand how ISO successfully managed to attract and maintain the participation of several opposing groups in the development process of its ISO 26000 standard. Second, we introduce here the concept of platform and examine how institutional platforms facilitate the construction of new institutions at an international level. This will lead us to propose an account of how new political places work in the emerging global infrastructure on OSR.

1 Introduction

Our Motivation for this paper stems from a simple, though puzzling, question from field research on the ISO 26000: how to explain the success of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in the development of a standard for Organizational Social Responsibility (OSR)? It does so by combining neo-institutional theories and the typology of political places by Bryson and Crosby (Bryson/Crosby 1992) to develop theoretical lenses for investigating ISO's positioning as a platform for the development of this standard. Results presented here are derived from a field-study conducted from 2008 to 2010. They reveal the importance of maintaining a certain degree of ambiguity when developing norms and standards. The importance of ambiguity has already been mentioned by several authors (Douglas 1986; Turcotte/Pasquero 2001); here we further explore the nature of this ambiguity.

In many ways, the success of ISO in creating a platform for the negotiation of ISO 26000 is amazing. There is indeed strong competition in the development of norms and standards for OSR. Several authors have reported a burst of norms and standards related to OSR over the past few years (ISO Advisory Group on Social Responsibility 2004; Tamm Hallström 2004; Waddock 2008). So much so that in 2005, Lingteringer and Zadek identified more than 300 OSR tools (Ligteringer/Zadek 2005). This proliferation, as Waddock calls it, is problematic because it hampers the emergence of an international institutional infrastructure for organizational social responsibility (Waddock 2008). Yet, standards are only the tip of the iceberg; beyond the competition over standards there is another intense rivalry between the platforms on which those standards are developed. This is particularly noticeable in the case of ISO: habitually enjoying an oligopolistic position as one of the few developers of technical standards applied in engineering and manufacturing, ISO now faces major competitors as with ISO 26000 it is entering a realm closer to public policy (Ruwet 2009; Tamm Hallström 2005). In this field several international organizations already offer well-established platforms for standard development. For instance, since 1977 the International Labour Organization (ILO) has released three editions of its Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy; in 2000 the United Nations developed the Global Compact (GC) and in the same year the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) launched its first sustainability reporting guidelines. These organizations, and others, had been developing standards related to OSR for years before the ISO 26000 development process even started.

However, as of 2010, the situation seems to have turned around. After nearly 10 years of intense negotiations, ISO finally reached an international consensus on OSR crowned by the publication of ISO 26000 on 1 November 2010. Moreover, two signals indicate that ISO 26000 is likely to be a reference in terms of OSR:

- ISO has succeeded in attracting and maintaining most of the major players in OSR in the discussion: all the countries from the G-20 major economies; international organizations such as ILO, the UN Global Compact and the OECD; NGOs like the Fair Labor Association; and so on.
- Several national standard bodies and governments have already started to develop their own certifiable version of the ISO 26000 in Portugal and Brazil or will do so soon in Austria and Denmark.

Accordingly, ISO—an organization confined to the development of technical standards until the 1980s—now appears to be a major platform on which the definition of the OSR is negotiated. How to explain this success? This question regarding the success of the ISO 26000 has been asked by several researchers coming from different theoretical streams (Castka/Balzarova 2008; Ruwet 2009; Tamm Hallström 2005).

The contribution of this paper is twofold. First, neo-institutional theory combined with political theory will help us to understand how ISO successfully managed to attract and maintain the participation of several opposing groups in the development process of its ISO 26000 standard. Second, we introduce here the concept of platform and examine how platforms facilitate the construction of new institutions at an international level. This will lead us to propose an account of how new political places work in the emerging global infrastructure on OSR.

The remainder of this paper is divided into three sections. In the first section, we describe the qualitative methodology on which our analysis is based. The second prepares the reader to understand our argument by describing the context in which ISO 26000 is developed, useful results from previous research and the theoretical lenses for our investigation. The third section then proposes to explain how ISO succeeded by maintaining a certain ambiguity that we shall further explain.

2 Case Study Design

The ISO 26000 development process implies complexity and social innovation. Indeed the number—more than 400 experts—and diversity of the actors involved in this multi-stakeholder negotiation are unprecedented in a non-governmental negotiation on a social issue. The duration of the process, which has officially reached six years from 2004 to 2010—although it actually started 4 years prior to the official launch—along with its international dimension, have required new and innovative structures. Accordingly, several authors have described ISO 26000 as a very complex and innovative process (Egyedi/Toffaletti 2008: 3; Igalens 2009: 100). The study of a complex and rather understudied phenomenon like this one requires an exploratory methodological design that will facilitate the collection of rich, emergent, “deep” data, some of which is tacit, deeply-embedded and hard to get at. For such phenomena, the case study methodological approach is particularly useful (Patton 2002: 14; Yin 2009: 6). More precisely, the ISO 26000 development process, because of its innovative nature, constitutes a “revelatory case”, defined as contemporary phenomenon newly available for study (Yin 2009: 43).

Data were collected from a range of qualitative sources. The first source is composed of (1) 300 publically available internal documents, available on ISO's website[4]. Closer attention was paid to documents establishing operational and decisional procedures for the process, which represent more than 100 texts. (2) A detailed examination of a yet small but growing literature on ISO, namely the 32 articles which contain "ISO 26000" either in the title, citation or abstract that appear in the ABI/INFORM database. (3) Around 20 academic papers gathered through contact with actors involved in the development of ISO 26000.

The second source stemmed from semi-directed interviews with 15 experts involved in the ISO 26000 development process who seemed likely to be the most influential based on an analysis of ISO 26000's decision structures. Their importance in the decision making process was cross-checked with researchers from different universities also studying ISO 26000, as well as with the authors' informal relations with the participants and, later on, by a new series of 5 interviews with other participants. These 15 interviews ranging from 27 to 150 minutes each were transcribed, resulting in an interview data set of approximately 75,000 words.

The third source is a set of data gathered from semi-participative observations conducted foremost during ISO's Québec plenary meeting in May 2009. During that event, 70 hours of observation were conducted in the course of one week and more than 100 pages of notes and internal documents were produced or gathered. Further data were generated in fall 2009 during a participative observation. At this occasion,

[4] http://isotc.iso.org/livelink/livelink/fetch/2000/2122/830949/3934883/3935096/home.html?nodeid=4451259&vernum=0, website accessed in October 2010.

the author was a member of the Québécois mirror committee that gathered on October, 29th 2009 for preparing commentaries on the ISO 26000's draft international standard (DIS).

Data-analysis was processed first by constructing a narrative to make sense of the data along a longitudinal dimension (Langley 1999; Pettigrew 1990). This helped us better understand the political dynamics at work in the process. The different sources of data allowed a triangulation to validate the narrative, that was eventually confirmed with participants in follow-up interviews (Yin 2009). We then started to code the data. Our coding was influenced both by the data (Glaser 1992), and by our conceptual framework (Miles/Huberman 1994). At this point, the analysis of the actors' purposes in the process as well as the outcomes, in terms of regulation, they perceived as likely to emerge from the negotiations appeared to us as meaningful dimensions for the coding. These dimensions allowed us to map and periodize (Langley 1999) the actors' various interests in taking part in this process, and the type of regulation they expected to emerge from the negotiation process. We used different sources of data as a first way to triangulate our finding; we also conducted 5 additional interviews with different participants 2 years after our first series of interviews. These interviews provided information that strengthen the narrative, the mapping and the periodization but did not introduce major changes.

3 Understanding ISO's Success: Insights from Previous Research and Theories

3.1 *Institutional Change, Opponents and Advocates of the ISO 26000 Platform*

One convenient distinction that can be drawn from neo-institutionalist literature on institutional change is between opponents and advocates of institutional change (DiMaggio 1991; Greenwood, Suddaby, & Hinings 2002; Seo/Creed 2002; Tolbert/Zucker 1996). For those theorists, generally, opponents are those favored by the existing institutional order who do not want to jeopardize their privileged position (Garud, Hardy, & Maguire 2007: 961). On contrary, advocates of institutional change are those in less central positions, from the "institutional fringes", who expect to benefit from an institutional reconfiguration (Czarniawska 2009). In practice, power distribution engendered by institutional arrangements can undermine the possibility for change. On the one hand, actors at the center of institutional arrangements may seek to maintain existing arrangements because they benefit from them. On the other hand, peripheral actors may be wary of political places where they feel powerless next to other institutional actors. In any case, this discourages actors from engaging in collaborative dialog about institutional change.

In her recent Ph.D. thesis, Ruwet provides a particularly interesting analysis of the stakeholders involved in the ISO 26000 development process that echoes this distinction. According to her, two kinds of stakeholders were involved: the stakeholders that represent interests and those that represent perspectives. The former are often more organized and participate with clearly defined objectives attempting to advance their own agendas. The latter are far less organized, more innovative, and

eager to extend the debate to a broad range of issues. In fact, they join the debate with an intention to engage in in-depth discussions on these issues (Ruwet 2009: 10).

Ruwet's (2009) distinction parallels and enriches that made between opponents and advocates of change by neo-institutionalists. Opponents to change are very similar to the stakeholders defending interests as described by Ruwet. They occupy a central position in the field of OSR international regulation and are wary of the coming change. Advocates of change can be assimilated under Ruwet's concept of stakeholders representing a perspective. They come from the institutional fringes with a real interest in institutional change. Traditionally marginalized from political processes, they too are reluctant to participate because they have often been pushed aside by the more powerful actors in the OSR field.

Illustration:

In the ISO 26000 development process, labor representatives provide a good example of stakeholders defending interests. For years, they have been engaged in the development of standards in the field of OSR. For instance, they participated in the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy within the ILO, in the development of several norms for occupational health and safety, and so on. Their long-standing and strong position in the OSR international regulation field allowed them to play a major role in the overall process. However, since the ILO is engaged in a similar process of norm development, labor representatives participated reluctantly. As expressed in International Trade Union Confederation n°26 documents, the ILO officially challenges the legitimacy of a semi-private organization such as ISO to develop an OSR standard. It nonetheless eventually joined in the ISO process.

At the other extreme, one can consider NGOs as good examples of stakeholders defending perspectives. In this process, NGOs represent a wide range of interests which may even conflict at times. Examples of NGOs range from anti-child labor activists to biodiversity champions. They certainly bring different views to the discussion, but also find it a challenge to achieve a common position at ISO, and to maintain it as soon as debates get heated. Meanwhile, some of the world's most famous NGOs, such as Greenpeace, considered it a waste of resources to participate in the process.

In the next section we discuss how potentially conflicting actors are being mobilized to collaborate in the development of the ISO 26000 process.

3.2 *An Ambiguous Field*

In describing multi-stakeholder collaborative negotiation processes, Pasquero and Turcotte have underlined the importance of maintaining some degree of ambiguity throughout the negotiation process (Turcotte/Pasquero 2001: 459). We shall now analyze further the nature of this ambiguity.

A first level of ambiguity concerns the field of international OSR. This field is fairly close to what has been described as the field of global environmental regulation by Maguire and Hardy:

> Such fields are constituted by sets of institutional entrepreneurs including government bodies, business groups and NGOs, 'who seek to influence a shared outcome (such as regulation) and pay attention to one another' (McNichol and Bensedrine 2003: 220). They are Arenas of power relations, where institutional entrepreneurs 'compete over the definition of issues and the form of institutions that will guide organizational behaviour' (Hoffman, 1999: 352) such transnational negotiations represent a space 'where interactions take place and behavioural patterns get structured' (Maguire/Hardy 2006: 8-9).

As global governance is still rather undefined, a high level of ambiguity exists across the entire field. More precisely, the nature and definition of the new global political places, namely places where global rules for OSR would be defined, is not clear. Beck recently called for the advent of a new global order regulated by a “quasi-state” (Beck

2008). Waddock has foreseen an emerging new institutional infrastructure on corporate social responsibility that still needs to be further developed (Waddock 2008: 106). For most actors engaged in the field of OSR this incompleteness of the global governance is full of ambiguities, uncertainties and potential conflicts. In terms of institutional change, this has been described by Dorado as a “hazy field” where cognitive, social and material support necessary to institutional change are not easy to access for the actors (Dorado 2005).

In this context, and since the beginning of the 1980s, authors have begun to theorize organizations capable of establishing a link between actors from different institutional fields: Trist, for instance, has developed the concept of “referent organizations” that facilitate interorganizational collaboration (Trist 1983); Brown and David describe “bridging organizations” which link actors both local and global as well as weak and powerful (Brown 1991); and more recently Ahrne and Brunsson have defined “meta-organizations” as organizations with organizations as members instead of individuals (Ahrne/Brunsson 2008). However, these concepts remain under-theorized.

Apart from this general ambiguity within the field of international OSR, ISO itself as an organization occupies an ambiguous position: neither a public nor a private instance of regulation. As a matter of fact, participants in the ISO 26000 development process have been noted to provide contradictory statements when asked whether ISO was a public or private organization (Tamm Hallström 2004: 20). In its official documents,

ISO describes itself as a bridge between private and public sectors[5]. Thus it is not clear what type of political place ISO has set up for the development of ISO 26000.

3.3 *Three categories of political places by Bryson and Crosby*

While international political places remain to be more fully theorized, national level political places have been the subject of considerable research. Bryson and Crosby connect public action and social structure; they define three types of "shared-power settings" which we here refer to as political places: Courts, Forums and Arenas (Bryson/Crosby 1992: 86). Courts can be discarded here as they deal mainly with the "practice of judging or evaluating" the application of laws and norms (Bryson/Crosby 1992: 108). By contrast, the Forum and Arena concepts are very effective in explaining the ambiguities observed in the ISO 26000 development process. As will be seen in the remainder of this article, the observed ambiguities can be explained by ISO lying at the boundaries separating Forums and Arenas. Most recently, paralleling this distinction, Latour has proposed to redesign traditional national-state bicameralism towards a more explicit Forum/Arena system. His new bicameralism would then be composed of two new assemblies: the upper house akin to a Forum, and the lower house more similar to an Arena. "The distinction between two new assemblies—the first [i.e. the upper house] of which will ask 'How many are we?' and the second [i.e. the lower house] 'Can we live together?' " (Latour 2004: 10).

Bryson and Crosby define Forums as: "A practice of linking speaker and audiences wherein meaning is created and communicated through discussion, debate, or

[5] http://www.iso.org/iso/about.htm, website accessed in October 2010.

deliberation." For instance, Forums can be "newspapers", "television", "professional journals", "discussion groups" or "public hearings" (Bryson/Crosby 1992: 92). Based on this definition, we argue that during institutional change Forums are more prone to influence what Scott has defined as the "cultural-cognitive pillar", namely "a cultural cognitive conception of institutions stresses the central role played by the socially mediated construction of a common framework of meaning" (Scott 2001: 58). In general terms, public opinion is influenced by the dialog in Forums, more so than that in Arenas.

Whereas Forums include a broad range of actors involved in producing all forms of discourse, Arenas are the sites of formal policy development and see the involvement of a much narrower set of actors. Arenas are defined as the "participation by actors in a delimited domain of activity as part of the process of policy making". Their effect is "the maintenance or change of political and economic relations especially through distribution and redistribution of access to the exercise of power". Examples of Arenas are "corporate executive committees", "city councils" and "legislatures"(Bryson/Crosby 1992: 103). Therefore access to an Arena defines the ability of actors to exercise power over policy-making. The concept of Arenas is consistent with Scott's regulative pillar since: "Scholars more specifically associated with the regulatory pillar are distinguished by the prominence they give to explicit regulatory processes: rule-setting, monitoring, and sanctioning activities."(Scott 2001: 52).

As we shall see, the ambiguity of the ISO platform used to develop the 26000 standard lies in its shifting position from a Forum at certain times to an Arena at other times.

While some stakeholders participate with the intention of entering a Forum, others do so intending to enter an Arena. ISO has succeeded thus far in providing both groups with what they desire.

4 ISO Positioning in the International Field of OSR: Maintaining a Fundamental Ambiguity

4.1 *ISO as a Forum*

According to institutional theory, stakeholders defending an interest already have a central position in the field. They are in a position of "hegemony" with resources and a central position in the institutional arrangement (Levy/Scully 2007). This means that they have control over existing Arenas, therefore control over political agendas and hence would prefer not to see any new Arenas emerge. This idea of keeping control over the political agenda has been well-researched in political science (Lukes 2004). None-the-less, taking part in a Forum is a way for the powerful to keep an eye on what Berger and Luckmann have called the "social provinces of meaning", which are marginal institutions that could eventually become competitors to dominant institutions. The powerful may seek to annihilate—that is, in Berger and Luckmann's terms, to delegitimize—these marginal institutions if necessary (Berger/Luckmann 1967). Hence, these stakeholders can accept the emergence of a new Forum rather than an Arena which is actually vested with power.

The potential of platforms to become Forums has already been recognized in the literature. Brown and David (1991) have theorized platforms as "bridging organizations" that constitute a "conduit of ideas" and practices that mediate across

various social provinces. Meanwhile, according to Trist (1983), “referent organizations” are at the nexus of social movements and can provide members with an “appreciation” of future trends (Trist 1983: 275).

For the ILO, as mentioned by one of our interviewees, a key motive for taking part in the process was “the importance to learn from ISO and other actors”. As a matter of fact, several authors have reported ISO’s “low profile” image as an incentive for major players to step in(Tamm Hallström 2004: 25). Early in the process, ISO appeared as a Forum by officially eschewing its original goal to make the standard certifiable. This restriction limited the standard’s impact in “monitoring, and sanctioning activities”, and distanced ISO 26000 from international regulations such as those provided by the World Trade Organization (WTO). ISO also provided some effective guarantees to international organizations that they would be able to influence the process. This was known within ISO as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): the power to participate and comment throughout the entire process. For instance, the ILO was provided with such a privilege along with the “veto power over labor related sections” (Castka/Balzarova 2007: 85). From this we derive proposition 1:

Proposition1: for opponents to change, ISO has managed to appear as a credible Forum—and not as an Arena—since the beginning of the process.

4.2 *ISO as an Arena*

However, stakeholders defending perspectives experienced two important barriers that hampered their participation in the ISO 26000 development process. Firstly, the costs associated with their participation, which have been discussed by several authors in the

field (Tamm Hallström 2005). Stakeholders defending a perspective need to justify the costs to their funders. Even though ISO has set up specific funds to facilitate participation, most stakeholders are participating at their own cost which has undermined the democratic aspect of the process (Igalens 2009). Secondly, it is not clear whether ISO is a private organization defending private interests or a public organization working for the common good. Some stakeholders have expressed their concerns that the ISO 26000 standard will reflect the interests of the consulting industry because of the business it will eventually generate for them (Castka/Balzarova 2008). As mentioned during one of the preliminary interviews, stakeholders representing a perspective were afraid of being used as legitimating puppets without having the chance to influence the outcome of the process. Therefore, such stakeholders have little desire to take part in yet another Forum, but instead they would prefer to step into an Arena. They believe it is only if the platform is vested with policy-making power that they can influence organizations' day-to-day operations. No doubt ISO's past record with the certifiable standards ISO 9000 and 140000 was taken into consideration. Those standards have yielded a total of more than 1,000,000 certifications around the world (ISO 2008).

Platforms have been recognized as having the potential to become Arenas in the literature. They have been discussed as having the capacity to establish "common ground rules" with the capacity to serve as "infrastructure support" (Castka/Balzarova 2005: 275). The literature also reports occasions where platforms have "mobilized and channeled the resources and energy." (Brown 1991).

More purposefully, ISO has also placed a strong emphasis on the procedural justice of this process. A strong argument advanced by ISO during the launch of the process in 2004 was that, given that 75 percent of its membership was made up of developing countries, these countries could expect to have a greater impact on the definition of OSR standards here than in any other place (Castka/Balzarova 2008). A shared presidency was established between national representatives from Sweden and Brazil, a developed and developing country respectively. A similar structure was replicated throughout all subcommittees. These subcommittees were presided over by a "twin arrangement", that is they were co-chaired by an expert from a developed country and an expert from a developing country. ISO did its best to appear as a credible and fair Arena for those actors. Hence proposition 2:

Proposition 2: to advocates for change, ISO has managed to appear as a credible Arena and not simply a Forum.

Table 3.1 below recaps the definitions and effective outcomes from the collective structures favoring institutional work described above.

Table 3.I - Definition and Outcomes of Collective Structures Favoring Institutional Work

References	Name of the collective structure	Definition	Example	Effects or outcomes, competence
Trist, 1983	Referent Organization	"An organization of this type is called a "referent organization" (Trist, 1977b) - a term developed from the concept of reference groups. Such organizations (...) are of critical importance for domain development.(...) Moreover it is to be controlled by the stakeholders involved in the domain, not from the outside. Yet it will not be isolated." (p. 270-271)	Organization for promoting regional industrialization, "Jamestown Area Labor Comittee", "International Foundation for Development Alternative" an organization in charge of representing NGO interests	"Table II. Functions of Referent Organizations Regulation... of present relationships and activities; establishing ground rules and maintaining base values. Appreciation... of emergent trends and issues; developing a shared image of a desirable future Infrastructure support... resource, information sharing, special projects, etc." (p. 275)
Brown, 1991	Bridging Organization	"Bridging organizations and their constituent networks are shaped by values and visions, their tasks, member diversity, and external threats. (...) Bridging organizations can play a key role in building local organizations, creating horizontal linkages, increasing grassroots influence on policy, and disseminating new visions and organizational inovations" (p. 807)	The Asian NGO Coalition The Society For Participatory Research In Asia Saving Development Movement The Urban Popular Movement and the Coalition of Earthquake Victims	Build local institutions : "mobilized and channeled the ressources, energy, and creativity of poor people." "Also mobilized orther organizations -government ministries, interantional donors (...)- to support those clubs (p. 825) Build horizontal linkage : "Promoting collaboration among diverse organizations is particularly difficult when the organizations have histories of conflict and mistrust, but bridging organization that understand the interest of different constituents and create programs that offer mutual gain can exert considerable leverage for expanding and sustaining development" (p. 826) Innovation sharing and public education : "Articulating and disseminating innovations in development thinking (...) encouraged discussion of development innovations among its members and wider audiences though publication and conferences." (p. 826)
Bryson and Crosby, 1992	Arena	"Participation by actors in a delimited domain of activity as part of the process of policy making" (p. 103)	Corporate executives committees, city councils, cartels, faculty senates, boards of directors, legislatures	"Structural basis for a set of potential nondecisions and decisions about policy, and transformation of that set into actual nondecisions and decisions" (p. 103)
Bryson and Crosby, 1992	Forum	"A practice of linking speakers and audiences wherein meaning is created and communicated through discussion, debate, or deliberation." (p. 92)	Discussion groups, public hearings, formal debates, newspapers, television, radio, professional journals	"A potential list of decisions, issues, conflicts, or policy preferences available for discussion. In addition, a forum mediates the transformation of that list into an actual list of decisions, issues, conflicts, or policy preferences to be discussed and not to be discussed" (p. 92)
Latour 2004	New collectives and its two assemblies: Upper house & Lower house	"imagine, under the name of collective, a successor to the political institutions that have been awkwardly brought together up to now under the aegis of nature and society. This new collective will allow us to proceed (..) to the transformation of the venerable distinction between facts and values; we shall replace it with a new separation of powers* that will offer us more satisfactory moral guarantees. The distinction between two new assemblies—the first of which will ask "How many are we?" and the second "Can we live together?"—will serve political ecology as its Constitution." (p.	Upper House Lower House	Power to take into account "Answer the question : "How many are we ?" Perplexity: inquiry on the best way to detect and voice candidates who want to exist in the debate Consultation: inquiry on the best way to set up a jury for determing consequences of each proposal on the others habits" (p. 242) Power to arrange in rank order "Answer the question : "Can we live together ?" Hierarchy : inquiry on contradictory scenario for establishing an optimal hierarchy Institution : Inquiry on the means to set up for stabilizing internally and externally the collectives" (p. 242)

4.3 *ISO as a Political Place*

In order to better acknowledge the ambiguity ISO was able to set up, it is necessary to understand that as a political place the platform appeared both as a credible Forum and Arena, a dual nature on which ISO played skillfully.

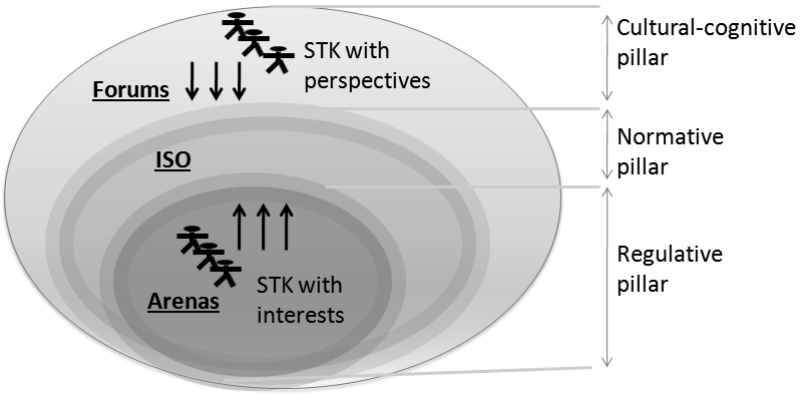

Figure 3.1 - Distribution of the institutional layers among the different political places and institutional actors

Though sometimes ISO may appear to be more of a Forum, it is in fact positioned at the border of the Arenas as described in figure 1. As we have explained, stakeholders defending interests tend to push in this direction. It then appears as a place to express debate and opinion. Indeed, in this case ISO is very close to what Latour (2004) has described as the "upper house" in *Politics of Nature*. It has "the power to take into account", that is to say to list the most important statement in the field of OSR, and eventually, in the case of ISO, to register them in a written document: ISO 26000. When first asked to reflect on the possibility for ISO to develop a standard on OSR in 2000, COPOLCO—the group usually defending consumer interests within ISO—set up an internet-based Forum with completely free, open and public participation. At that time, it is obvious that ISO 26000 was more of a Forum.

Sometimes ISO is more of an Arena. However, this Arena is always close to being a Forum. As described in figure 1, not only stakeholders representing a perspective are pushing in this direction, but arguably also ISO itself since it is looking for some gains in terms of political power (Brunsson/Jacobsson 2005; Murphy/Yates 2009). ISO is

then very similar to Latour's concept of "lower house"(Latour 2004). It has the power to arrange in rank order the stakeholders' different propositions on OSR and to translate them into a meaning common to every stakeholder involved in the process. For example, the current version of the text has referenced and ranked in terms of relevance many of the other initiatives for Corporate social responsibility (ISO/DIS 26000, Table 1.A).

Returning to theory, let us sum up what hypotheses can be formulated from the analysis of ISO 26000 as a Platform. Recall that ISO plays on its dual nature, sometimes being more of a Forum, sometimes more of an Arena. This ambiguity allows it to satisfy both advocates for and opponents to change. In terms of institutional change, ISO does not directly affect the "ineffable" cognitive pillar of institutions constructed in Forums, neither does it have the power of changing directly the regulative pillar as an Arena. Hence it intervenes more on the normative pillar "which define goals or objectives […] but also designate appropriate ways to pursue them" (Scott 2001: 55). In this manner, it managed to have opponents and advocates of institutional change in the OSR regulation field interacting together. Hence proposition 3:

Proposition 3: platforms should play on their dual nature, sometimes being more of an Arena, sometimes more of a Forum to attract opponents and advocates of institutional change to work together.

5 Conclusion:

In this paper, we have further developed the role of ambiguity in the development of standards and norms for OSR and the way it is used by a platform favoring institutional change. In the past, traditional international Arenas such as ILO and the UN have tried with mixed success to regulate OSR; meanwhile international Forums like the International Forum on Globalization or the World Social Forum and others usually lacked the power to regulate directly. Today, with ISO 26000, ISO unveils another type of political place. Neither Forum nor Arena, ISO's platform is a hybrid political place. Its capacity to emulate both Forums and Arenas enabled ISO to bridge the divide between advocates and opponents of change and eventually successfully develop standards of OSR.

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Essay 3: Membership strategies in pluralistic organizations: The case of ISO 26000

Formally organized collaborations in pluralistic settings are currently a rising and widespread phenomenon. Over the past three decades, authors from different research traditions in management have proposed various concepts of pluralistic organizations; they have all pointed out the complex relationships that those organizations maintain with their members and the critical importance of membership strategy. However, no empirical study with a central focus on membership has been conducted to date. This paper proposes to bridge this gap. First, we use insights from new institutionalism and social studies of science to develop a conceptual model for membership in pluralistic organizations. Secondly, we apply this model to the case of ISO 26000. This was the construction of an international norm on highly political subjects, developed by conflicting actors; it constitutes an "extreme case" of a pluralistic organization. We conducted 48 interviews and three field observations and analyzed 186 internal documents, and additional external documents. This case confirms the importance of membership in pluralistic organizations, and it enables propositions to be drawn for membership strategies in pluralistic organizations. In so doing, our paper contributes to ongoing discussions on institutional change, embedded agency, and the design of institutions and pluralistic organizations. More importantly, it provides a new perspective on the question of power in institutional theory and pluralistic organizations.

1 *Introduction*

Management scholars usually define pluralism as a context that faces a multiplicity of divergent, and most often conflicting, logics of actors involved in the negotiation of value-laden issues (Denis et al., 2011; Denis et al., 2001; Glynn et al., 2000; Jackson, 1999; Jarzabkowski et al., 2008; Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Pasquero, 1991; Söderlund, 2011). Pluralism in organizations is a challenge for collaboration because it implies "diffuse power and divergent objectives" (Denis et al., 2001). In other words, all constituents have the legitimacy to promote their perspectives, which

leads to situations in which "reconciliation by fiat is not an option" (Denis et al., 2011; Denis et al., 2001).

Collaborations in those settings are thus challenging, but they nevertheless happen in an organized manner. Since the 80s, several concepts of organized environments have been developed in management to theorize the structures for collaboration in pluralistic organizations: examples from new institutionalism include *proto-institution* (Lawrence et al., 2002), *bridging organization* (Brown, 1991; Lawrence & Hardy, 1999), *private decentralized institution*, and more recently *field configuring event* (Hardy & Maguire, 2010; Lampel & Meyer, 2008); organization theory has developed the concepts of *referent organization* (Pasquero, 1991; Trist, 1983; Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001) and *meta-organization* (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008); social studies of science has contributed the notion of *boundary organizations* (Guston, 2001).

The peculiar nature of their membership is a common characteristic of these organized environments that has not yet been studied in detail. Students of pluralistic organizations have identified members' attributes as a source of considerable difficulty that can hinder collaboration; members are powerful, autonomous, and possess divergent and conflicting views and objectives (Barnett et al., 2000; Pasquero, 1991; Tsoukas, 2008; Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001). Constituents of pluralistic organizations usually hold "legitimacy to ensure their goals" (Jarzabkowski et al., 2008) and they are free to leave a collaboration that is not sustained by any direct incentives nor stabilized by a coercive power (Demil & Lecocq, 2006; Makadok & Coff, 2009). All these factors render these organizations much more democratic in essence (Ahrne &

Brunsson, 2008), but they also constitute a serious challenge to achieving meaningful coordination and concurrence beyond broad agreement and soft consensus (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001).

At first glance, pluralistic organizations seem less equipped to manage their membership than bureaucratic forms of organization. With its means-end rationality, its hierarchical and centralized authority, and its formal and exhaustive rules sustained by a specialized and formal division of tasks, bureaucracy is designed to favour collaboration (Ashcraft, 2001). Ahrne & Brunsson conclude that membership is the most difficult challenge for pluralistic organizations because hierarchical authority is less effective in those organizations than in bureaucratic ones. First, hierarchical controls do not work because participants are formally or informally representing external organizations and interests and as such are reluctant to lose their autonomy. Second, it is difficult for pluralistic organizations to provide direct economic incentives to their members, which are often richer than the organization itself. Microsoft for example is participating in a number of standard developments within ISO; it would be difficult for the ISO central secretariat, with a total budget below 40 million dollars, to influence Microsoft – a company with 72 billion dollars revenues in 2012– through mere economic incentives. Third, it is difficult for pluralistic organizations to expel members without damaging the organization's legitimacy. Fourth, next to traditional hierarchical means of control, Ahrne & Brunson underline that no voting system can be easily justified. They provide an eloquent example: in the European Union, the adoption of a voting system is continuously under debate. In 2007, Poland suggested its deficit of population caused by the Second World War

should be integrated to measure its real demographic weight as its population had been more heavily and unfairly reduced than that of other countries (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008; See also for similar assesment Lenox, 2006). Transaction cost economics provide a sharp yet realistic definition of the problem of membership in pluralistic organizations: how to attract, retain, and channel actors that are socially disembbeded with little control and incentives (Demil & Lecocq, 2006; Makadok & Coff, 2009)?

This is quite a pessimistic portrait of pluralistic organizations, which may leave the reader under the impression that pluralistic organizations are doomed to achieve poor outcomes and weak consensus, and indeed, some research has questioned the real potential of these organizations (Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001). Before jumping to this conclusion, one might consider that pluralistic organizations' ability to coordinate their members rests on different fundamentals: recently, some scholars have underlined the highly porous boundaries of pluralistic organizations (Waddock & Post, 1995) and begun to study how this characteristic might be leveraged to move collaboration forward (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010a). In particular, they have developed the concept of boundary management (Bacharach et al., 2000; O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008; Santos & Eisenhardt, 2005; Sapsed & Salter, 2004; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010a). As several scholars have noted, one of the most critical dimensions in boundary management is membership (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008; Phillips et al., 2000), especially when different institutional logics are at play (Phillips et al., 2000). Given the recognized importance of membership and *membership strategies*, defined as "defining the rules and meaning of membership," it is surprising that these concepts (Lawrence, 1999) have not been the central focus of any empirical

study up until now. This is unfortunate because membership strategies can be a pivotal element in moving collaborations forward in pluralistic settings, as we shall see in the case of an “extreme” pluralistic organization.

To further investigate membership in pluralistic organizations, we make use of qualitative analysis research methods to explore membership in the ISO 26000 construction process. This process is a typical example of a pluralistic organization; it brought together more than 400 experts from fields as diverse as government, industry, standardization, universities and non-governmental organizations. It aimed to establish an international consensus on corporate social responsibility. The process officially lasted five years, which were preceded by two years of formal negotiation with actors in the field of international corporate codes of conducts.

We begin this paper by presenting a tri-dimensional theoretical model of membership in pluralistic organizations central to our analysis; this model is drawn from institutional theory and social studies of science. We then explain the case’s context and our methodology for making sense of membership management in the ISO 26000 construction process. A third part presents our results and brings to light the determinant role of membership strategies in a pluralistic organization and draws propositions for membership strategies for pluralistic organizations. The conclusion returns to the question of membership in pluralistic organizations and clarifies our contribution to institutional theory and social studies of science, and more importantly, to the question of power in non-bureaucratic forms of organization.

2 *Theoretical Background*

Two different research traditions (new institutionalism and social studies of science) examining collaboration in pluralistic settings have unveiled three critical and relatively independent dimensions of actors' membership in pluralistic organizations. Scholars from new institutionalism have shown the importance of members' positions in the organizational field, referred to in the remainder of this text as their "institutional affiliation" (Phillips et al., 2000). During the same period, new institutionalists also developed the related concepts of institutional entrepreneurs and institutional work, shedding light on the importance of actors' involvement in pluralistic organizations. Another stream of research derived from the social studies of science brought a more strategic and organizational perspective to collaboration in pluralistic settings. Interested in the construction of organizations that help actors interact, social studies of science recently reassessed the importance of "formal membership." In pluralistic organizations, actors' membership is based on three key dimensions: 1) institutional affiliation, 2) personal involvement and 3) formal membership, which is the formal status provided by the pluralistic organization.

2.1 New Institutionalism

In the 1980s, new institutionalism (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1977) was primarily concerned with homogeneity and isomorphism (Greenwood et al., 2008). Since then, students of institutions have been paying increasing attention to institutional change (Dacin et al., 2002) and more recently to the role played by actors

in this process through the concepts of institutional entrepreneurs and institutional work (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009; Garud et al., 2007).

Institutional change and collaboration

Initially, "an organizational field is a community of organizations that engage in common activities and are subject to similar reputational and regulatory pressures" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). These organizations are influenced by a common set of institutions, which are "commonly defined rules, norms, and beliefs that describe reality for the organization, explaining what is and is not, what can be acted upon and what cannot" (Hoffman, 1999, p. 351). At the turn of the century, this rather "harmonious" definition was enriched by research on institutional change that revealed a more political aspect of the field as well as the tensions between opponents and advocates of institutional change (DiMaggio, 1991; Greenwood et al., 2002; Seo & Creed, 2002; Tolbert & Zucker, 1996). The definition of *organizational field* changed. Authors began to think of organizational fields as arenas of "power relations" defined by issues that engage a plurality of actors' interests and objectives (Hoffman, 1999). Organizational fields generally comprise both opponents and advocates of change. The former benefit from the existing institutional order and do not want to jeopardize their privileged position (Garud et al., 2007, p. 961), whereas the latter, who occupy less central positions, are relegated to the "institutional fringes" and can be expected to benefit from an institutional reconfiguration (Czarniawska, 2009). These theoretical developments have led authors to grant more importance to the structural components of organizational fields in order to understand how they impact institutional change (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

From there, several scholars broached the subjects of institutional change and the field structures that foster collaboration, highlighting the importance of actors' "institutional affiliation" during collaboration (Phillips et al., 2000; Powell et al., 2005). In their comparative study of refugee systems in Canada, Denmark, and the United Kingdom, Lawrence and Hardy showed how public administrations closer to central actors in the field, such as government, exhibited structures similar to bureaucratic forms of organization, while public administrations operating with peripheral actors, such as activists, demonstrated sectarian structures. These authors highlighted the importance for pluralistic organizations to effectively adapt their structures to both central actors – with high institutional affiliation – and peripheral actors – with low institutional affiliation (Lawrence & Hardy, 1999). More recently, authors have elaborated why institutional affiliation is crucial in pluralistic organizations. Participants' institutional affiliation is correlated to their "systemic power." Phillips et al. (2000) believe that the organizational fields' structure favors central actors, enabling them to make decisions during the process of collaboration, giving them more control of scarce resources, as well as greater legitimacy through either recognized expertise or because they represent wider interests. As this dimension of power depends on the field, it has the specificity of "structurally" advantaging certain groups of actors, without their conscious maintaining or exercise of this power (Lawrence, 2008).

Institutional change and agency

There is a broad consensus on the importance of actors' institutional affiliation in pluralistic organizations; however, actors are not necessarily "cultural dopes"

(Fligstein, 1997). Scholars in new institutionalism have recently underlined the importance of individuals' agency in institutional change and shown actors' ability to transform institutions based on their personal agendas and interests, even if such agency is still considered a paradox (Battilana, 1995; Holm, 1995). According to DiMaggio's idea of institutional entrepreneurs, "new institutions arise when organized actors with sufficient resources see in them an opportunity to realize interests that they value highly" (DiMaggio, 1988). Scholars have researched and revealed how actors may actually play a decisive role in institutional change (Garud et al., 2007). Recent works have proven the role of institutional entrepreneurs to be especially influential in the construction of international corporate codes of conduct (Bartley, 2007), as in the case of the Global Reporting Initiative (Acquier & Aggeri, 2008; Levy et al., 2010). This has not gone unnoticed by students of international politics, who have proposed the concept of "norm entrepreneurs" (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). Norm entrepreneurs are actors with an acute sense of desirable behaviour in their community who are able to craft corresponding norms and to diffuse them at an international level. For instance, Elizabeth Cady Statons' leadership in America was of primary importance in promoting women's suffrage internationally.

Although the concept of "institutional entrepreneur" has been criticized for giving too much importance to individuals (Greenwood et al., 2008), the idea that actors are deliberately influencing institutions has nevertheless percolated. It has given rise to the concept of institutional work, "the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions" (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Institutional work puts less emphasis on the somewhat heroic role of

institutional entrepreneurs, and more emphasis on the day-to-day, mundane practices of numerous actors that actually constantly redefine institutions (Battilana et al., 2009). All in all, this has revealed the importance of the "episodic power" of actors, usually defined as follows:

> Episodic power refers to 'relatively discrete strategic acts of mobilization initiated by self-interested actors' (Lawrence et al., 2001, p. 629). It is the form of power most typically considered in organizational research (Pfeffer, 1981), and underpins traditional theories of intra- and inter-organizational power relations (Hickson et al., 1971; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). Episodic power involves the classic notion of some actor A getting B to do something that B otherwise would not have done (Dahl, 1961). (Lawrence, 2012: 106)

Research has shown that the profile of institutional entrepreneurs who are most likely to favor change at a given step of the process of institutional change, as well as the specific type of institutional work required vary over time (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009; Etzion & Ferraro, 2010). This is why we shall refer merely to "actor involvement" to describe this dimension of membership.

As illustrated by discussions around the embedded agency paradox (Holm, 1995; Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009), institutional theory has struggled to reconcile agency with institutional isomorphism. One notable exception is a recent text by Lawrence et al. which bridges systemic and episodic power in the context of radical change in professional service firms (Lawrence et al., 2012). They provide an insightful portrayal of how those two types of power interplay in organizations. However, their research is restricted to the context of "weak pluralism," in which all actors come from the same professional environment and share a culturally homogeneous background with common traditional values. In this context, systemic power tends to equate to "organizational systems and structures" because organizational systems and structures

are themselves institutionalized, and membership is mostly defined by actors' statuses in the organization. This context of weak pluralism thus reduces the importance of institutional affiliation and hinders the integration of previous research into new institutionalism, compromising our understanding of the importance of the field's institutional affiliation (Phillips, 2000)

Another general shortcoming of new institutionalism has to do with organizational design (Hargrave & Van De Ven, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2009b; Phillips & Malhotra, 2008). Research on institutional change and institutional work has been useful in revealing the importance of institutional affiliation and agency in pluralistic organizations. However, with the noticeable exception of field-configuring events,[6] new institutionalism has remained relatively silent on the question of organizational design –the creation of roles, processes, and formal relationships in an organization –and, more specifically, on which organizational mechanisms favour the collaboration of peripheral and central actors, the actions of institutional entrepreneurs, and actors' institutional work. We shall now turn to social studies of science to better understand the importance of the organizational mechanism in pluralistic organizations.

[6] The study of field-configuring events has highlighted the interplay of actors' involvement and their institutional affiliation when engaging in an organized collaboration. Research on field-configuring events has revealed the importance of protecting individuals from institutional constraints and pressures (Garud, 2008; Lampel & Meyer, 2008) and of diminishing the distance between central and peripheral actors or engaging specific actors through the construction of unexpected discursive spaces with specific rules and understandings (Hardy & Maguire, 2010).

2.2 Social Studies of Science

There is a long and rich tradition of research in the social sciences dedicated to boundaries. If this tradition has been mostly interested in boundaries as "separation," "typification," and "exclusion" between social worlds, one stream of research has taken a different path: the social studies of science (Latour, 1987; Star & Griesemer, 1989). The social studies of science have developed the idea that boundaries are not only a separation but also an "interface facilitating knowledge production," "communication" and "exchange" between actors across social worlds (Lamont & Molnar, 2002). Therefore, social studies of science can make an important contribution to our understanding of pluralistic organizations through the development of theories of organizations for collaboration.

Social studies of science have focused on a specific type of pluralistic organization called "boundary organizations." Boundary organizations mediate negotiations of boundaries and help stabilize collaboration across social worlds. They act as a third party and enable us to conceptualize pluralistic collaboration in terms of its design; they provide opportunities and incentives for actors to negotiate boundaries; they mediate across the two sides – especially in controversial situations – of boundaries; and they sustain different lines of accountability across different social worlds (Guston, 2001). As a concept, boundary organizations made room for the idea that collaboration could be facilitated by a designed organization. Several authors refer to the construction of membership in pluralistic organizations as critical to enable collaboration across social worlds (Guston, 1999; Kellogg et al., 2006; O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010a).

Social studies of science have shed light on three critical dimensions of membership strategies in pluralistic organizations. The first, and maybe the most intuitive, has to do with the inclusion/exclusion process, which is the establishment of who participates and who does not (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010a). The second occurs during the process of collaboration, when pluralistic organizations tend to create classes of members and to allocate status. In their research on corporate involvement in community-managed open-source software development models, O'Mahony and Bechky show the potential of membership strategy in mediations between the challengers and defenders of established social systems (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008). They insist on the importance of maintaining a variety of actors in the organization's locus of power, of formally rewarding the most involved actors with greater rights and specific status, and of skilfully allocating resources across certain classes of members (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008). The third is that formal forms of membership in pluralistic organizations are flexible and dynamic: centers of expertise, authority, and task distribution are constantly shifting and thus pluralistic organizations can also modify membership over time (Kellogg et al., 2006).

As a matter of fact, these organizations do not eliminate social boundaries but rather channel them locally through formal membership, which can increase or diminish its members' "epistemic authority." The concept of epistemic authority has been developed over time through epistemology and the social studies of science. Differentiating "real" science from religion, mundane knowledge, or mere charlatanism is an old project in epistemology (Popper, 2002; Gieryn, 1983). The contribution from social studies of science consists in linking scientific discourses with

the construction of boundaries between science and non-science. These boundaries confer an "epistemic authority" to scientists:

> The distribution of rights and responsibilities regarding what participants can accountably know, how they know it, whether they have right to describe it, and in what terms is directly implicated in organized practice of speaking (Heritage & Raymond, 2005: 16).

To acquire epistemic authority, actors will conduct what Gieryn terms "boundary work;" that is, actors will employ strategic discursive behaviours to maintain or to change boundaries (Gieryn, 1983).

Social studies of science have provided critical insight in terms of the type of organization that actually facilitates collaboration in pluralistic environments; however, as recently shown by Zietsma and Lawrence (2010), this research tradition has mostly studied boundary organizations outside their organizational fields and fields' structure, missing a critical component of their "boundaricity." As underlined by O'Mahony and Bechky (2008), social studies of science have also put less emphasis on the mechanism by which boundary organizations become functional. This is especially true with respect to formal membership, a key mechanism that can be employed to favour collaboration through membership strategies (Guston, 1999; Kellogg, 2006; Zietsma, 2010). Furthermore, the analysis of formal membership by social studies of science raised many unanswered questions including: how to stabilize a plurality of actors (Guston, 1999) and how to foster trust among their constituents (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008; Bechky, 2006)? In spite of these unanswered questions, no empirical study has been conducted specifically on membership in pluralistic organizations to our knowledge. That is why we propose to study membership in the case of ISO 26000 in detail.

2.3 A Three-Dimensional Model of Membership in Pluralistic Organizations

Concepts of boundary work and epistemic authority are complementary to those of episodic and systemic power in new institutionalism, making it possible to hybridize those two theories – as several studies have successfully done (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010a). If episodic power matters at the individual level and systemic power at the institutional level, epistemic authority pertains most to the organizational level. Epistemic authority is attached to a community, sometimes theorized as an "epistemic community," and represents the organizational-level dimension of power that is often lacking in institutional theory (Haas, 2011).

Epistemic authority brings forth the importance of strategically managing boundaries. Although it is not directly exercised by A over B like episodic power, epistemic authority can nonetheless be deliberately constructed and as such differs from systemic power, which is much more "sluggish" and more difficult to directly transform (Knights & McCabe, 1999). With epistemic authority and episodic power, it constitutes a third type of power that is more localized and can be distributed to members by a pluralistic organization. This happens especially though membership allocation, that is to say through "administrative empowerment" (Haas, 2011), as principles and beliefs are developed throughout the collaboration around an "idiosyncratic problem" (Gilbert et al., 2011).

As summarized in figure 1, institutional change and collaboration, institutional agency, and the concept of boundary organizations have allowed us to see three distinct yet critical dimensions of membership in pluralistic organizations:

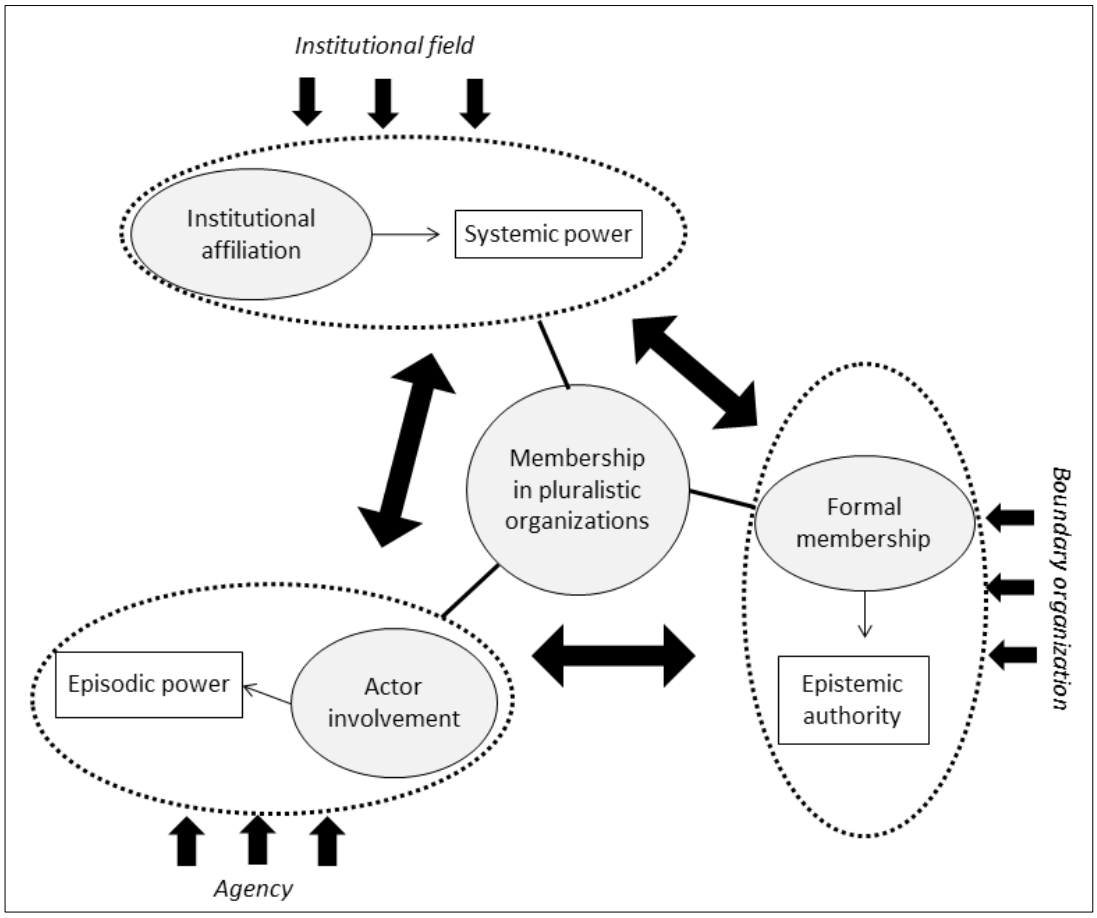


Figure 4.1 - A three-dimensional model of membership in pluralistic organizations

3 *Case Context and Methodology*

3.1 Context

The field of international corporate codes of conduct

After the Second World War, codes and rules supervising corporations' behaviour were developed mostly by international governmental organizations (Fransen & Kolk, 2007), especially by UN agencies and the ILO. As scholars generally agree, the first international corporate codes of conduct emerged during the 70s in the wake of globalization in response to a growing gap: as corporations became more numerous, more international and more powerful, nation states struggled to deal

with international issues of CSR. This gave birth to the idea that corporations needed to be regulated internationally (Bartley, 2007; Clapp, 2005; Gilbert et al., 2011; Mueckenberger & Jastram, 2010).

First attempts to develop corporate codes of conduct by international organizations largely failed. In 1974, the UN set up the UN Center on Transnational Corporations (UNCTC). This group produced a first non-binding international code of conduct for multinationals in 1977 that was never finalized nor formally approved. The business community through the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) strongly opposed the UNCTC, which was finally disbanded and affiliated to UNCTAD after heated debates at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit (Clapp, 2005). More recently, at the Rome conference in 1998, the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice was explicitly restricted to individuals, in order to exclude corporate bodies and to make sure that no legally binding obligation could fall upon international corporations (Shamir, 2004).

Those difficulties led the UN Secretariat to change its approach. At the Rio Summit in 1992, non-state actors were asked to participate in the establishment of an international infrastructure for CSR. (Bendell et al., 2011; Clapp, 2005). At the same time, a growing number of corporate controversies in the 90s (Bartley, 2007; Shamir, 2004) led NGOs to act as watchdogs and to develop corporate codes of conduct. For instance, Corporate Watch was established in 1996. The number of international corporate codes of conduct boomed in the 90s (see Figure 2) and the field of international corporate codes of conduct was born.

Figure 2 shows the aggregate number of international CSR standards that have been published since 1970, reported according to the category of actors who have been developing them and based on selected reports from international governmental organizations and academic publications (see Appendix 1). It confirms the results mentioned above; until late in the 80s, governmental organizations dominated the field as the main producers of international corporate codes of conduct, though business was also publishing several codes. Early in the 90s, the field became more contested, as NGOs and the business world developed a growing number of international codes, eventually surpassing the production by international governmental organizations. In the late 90s, a number of multi-stakeholder initiatives arose and the number of codes produced by states and business stagnated – though NGOs continued to produce a variety of codes – showing what can be understood as the beginning of field sedimentation as new actors are leading the field.

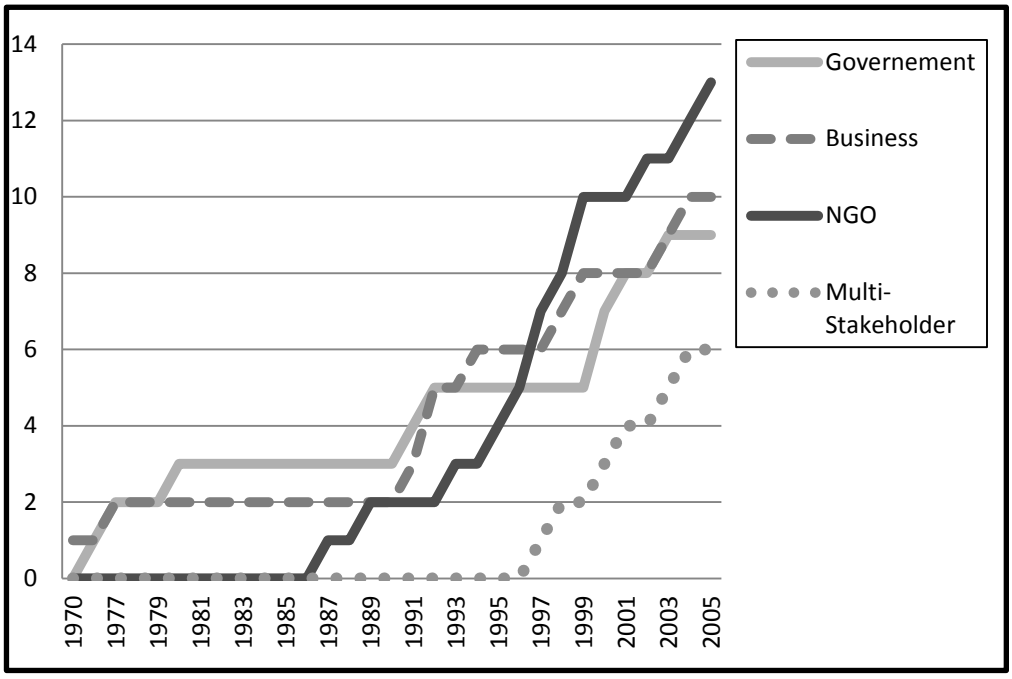


Figure 4.2 – Major international corporate codes of conduct published from 1970 to 2005 by actors.

Since 2000, the development of international corporate codes of conduct has been increasingly undertaken by multi-stakeholder initiatives. If numerous actors from all sectors of society have developed codes, research shows that multi-stakeholder initiatives have been more successful in developing and promoting corporate codes of conduct (e.g. Fransen & Kolk, 2007; Gilbert et al., 2011; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010a). Currently, international corporate codes of conduct are so prominent that they are now a key discussion topic on the G20 and G8 agendas (UNCTAD, 2011) and recent research reveals how government and international organizations are currently integrating international corporate code of conduct within their domestic law (Bendell et al., 2011).

ISO extending its domain of activity

Created in 1946, ISO's importance in the domain of technical standardization cannot be overlooked. From the thickness of credit cards (76 mm) to the size of screws, there is barely any domain of modern life that does not rely on an ISO standard (Mattli & Buthe, 2004). While its role remains obscure for the general media, ISO has grown quickly and its networks now "rival" the UN's network in number of participants (Murphy & Yates, 2009), with ISO committees counting on more than 30,000 actively involved volunteers (Loya & Boli, 1999).

With ISO 26000 this organization went a step further by trying to standardize "political" issues. Not surprisingly, it faced fierce competition from the international organizations mentioned in Appendix 1, which were already active in the field of international corporate codes of conduct (Castka & Balzarova, 2008; Ruwet, 2009; Tamm Hallström, 2005). To meet this challenge, ISO began to develop a pluralistic

organization in September 2002, and unexpectedly managed to establish itself as a prominent producer of international corporate codes of conduct (Ward, 2010). The analysis of membership evolution and management throughout the ISO 26000 negotiation process casts a new light on the political dynamics of actors involved in a pluralistic organization and helps us to understand ISO's success.

4 Methodology

4.1 Case Design

Our longitudinal study focuses on a case of pluralistic organization: the ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility (ISO WG SR). It starts in September 2002 with ISO setting up the first formal preliminary group involving external actors from the field of international corporate codes of conduct to consider a CSR norm – the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) – and it continues to the publication of the norm in November 2010. The ISO 26000 development process involves complexity and social innovation. Indeed, the duration of the process, the number of experts (more than 400), and the diversity of actors involved in this multi-stakeholder negotiation are all unprecedented in a non-governmental negotiation on a social issue (Ward, 2010). At the same time, this was a highly political and contested exercise on controversial issues (Castka, 2005; Helms et al., 2012). Accordingly, several authors have described ISO 26000 as an extraordinarily complex and innovative process (Igalens, 2009; Ward, 2010). The Danish Minister for Economic and Business Affairs called it a "milestone in the history of global cooperation."

We argue that this case provides us with an unprecedented view on pluralistic organizations because of its innovative nature. As such, it constitutes a "revelatory

case," defined as a contemporary phenomenon newly available for study (Yin, 2009). The examination of a complex and relatively understudied phenomenon such as this requires an exploratory methodological design that will facilitate the collection of rich and emergent "deep" data, some of which is tacit, deeply-embedded, and hard to get at. For such phenomena, the methodological approach of the case study is particularly useful (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009).

4.2 Data Collection

Data was collected from a range of qualitative sources. First, from internal documents, as more than 300 ISO documents related to ISO 26000 are publicly available on ISO's website. Close attention was paid to the minutes and resolutions (186 documents), which established formal membership and recorded participants' comments and practices. An additional 76 external documents were also examined. These include speeches or interviews by participants and official communications related to ISO 26000 from their home organizations that provided insight on actors' involvement in the WG SR. Additionally, a small yet growing body of academic literature on ISO was closely examined. It consists of 26 articles pertaining to ISO 26000's construction process, which analyzed first-hand empirical evidence.

A second source of data stemmed from semi-directed interviews with a selection of 40 influential experts involved in ISO 26000. We ensured our interviewees were central to the process by selecting a sample of individuals deemed likely to be influential on the basis of ISO 26000's decision structures. We conducted preliminary interviews with five experts from the national mirror committees, and then we interviewed six experts directly involved in the WG SR to better understand the

structures. Next we met with 27 experts from the production groups and five experts from the support groups (see Table on membership). We conducted three additional interviews with leadership at the ISO headquarters in Geneva to confirm our understanding of the history and design of formal membership. Additionally, we conducted two interviews with experts on the Global Compact and the GRI to clarify these organizations' involvement throughout the process. In total, 49.5 hours of interviews were recorded. Questions about the process and membership included "what are the influential actors and groups?" and "why did the structures evolve?" The interviewees were asked about their feelings towards the WG SR such as, "what do you think of ISO 26000?" and "Do you think it should be certifiable?" Interviews were transcribed and analysed using Nvivo10.

The third and final source of data stemmed from three semi-participative observations conducted mostly during ISO's Québec plenary meeting in May 2007. That event yielded 70 hours of observation over the course of one week during which more than 100 pages of notes and internal documents were gathered. Further data were generated in fall 2009 during a participative observation. On this occasion, the author was a member of the Québécois mirror committee that gathered on October 29, 2009, to prepare commentaries on the ISO 26000 draft international standard (DIS). Finally, the author spent one week at the ISO Geneva headquarters in May 2010 primarily to meet interviewees. In the course of this research travel, 54 pages of notes were taken and 100 pages of internal documents were analyzed.

4.3 Data Analysis

To "make sense" of our rich longitudinal set of data, we followed a four-stage process that combined several techniques of process data analysis (Langley, 1999). First, we relied on interviews and secondary data and on a "narrative analysis strategy" (Langley, 1999) in order to build a rich account of the development of ISO 26000 by the WG SR. Particular attention was paid to changes in membership and decision structures through which we identified three different periods in the process described hereafter. Our subsequent interviews and the existing literature on ISO 26000 corroborated this periodization.

In a second stage, we listed and grouped all the **formal membership** statuses created over the process (Appendix 3). We distinguished individual-based membership such as "chair," "secretary," or "observer" from group-based membership such as "liaison-task-force" (LTF) or "technical groups" (TG). Officially, 19 group-based memberships were created over the process. They can be classified into three main categories according to their mandate: 1) *production groups* had the authority to write the final ISO official document; 2) *support groups* were in charge of supporting the production of the ISO final official document and had the authority to interfere with the rules; 3) *diffusion groups* were responsible for communications about the process and enrolling external actors. In our interviews, we asked questions about and looked for evidence of those groups' influence in the process, according to the participants' perception. Production groups, and to a lesser extent support groups, were perceived as the most influential. This is consistent with the literature, which has underlined the

importance of production in this type of group in decision-making (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008).

We then drew up a list of participants in production groups since 2002. Groups that have been responsible for the production are as follows: the SAG from September 2002 to January 2005, the WG SR Chair and the standard-setting Task Group (TG) from March 2005 to November 2007, and the Integrated Drafting Task Force (IDTF) from November 2007 to November 2010. This resulted in a list of 81 actors. We assessed **their institutional affiliation** based on official ISO records of their home organizations. With the exception of three actors, this affiliation remained the same throughout the process. We then ranked these institutional affiliations with respect to their systemic power. We assessed their home organizations and ordered them into three groups. A first group was composed of all organizations that have been referred to in Appendix 1 as producers of international standards of CSR such as the ILO, the GRI or the Global Compact. As these international organizations are mentioned in reports from international organizations and academics as the key corporate codes producers in the field, they were associated with high systemic power and labeled "high institutional affiliation." A second group composed of governments, big international organizations, and multi-national enterprises (MNEs) comprises valuable potential customers and enforcers or critics of corporate codes of conduct. Although they do not produce international corporate codes of conduct themselves, they were invited into the process because they have both legitimacy in the field of CSR and an international network. They were associated with a medium-level of systemic power and labeled "medium institutional affiliation." Finally, local businesses, freelance

consultants, academics, and national NGOs were associated with a low systemic power and labeled “low institutional affiliation.” Some of these organizations had no interest in CSR prior to their involvement in the process, and they are representative of much smaller networks that are circumscribed locally. If they are sometimes part of larger international networks, such as unions or consumers’ organizations, they generally follow what is decided at an international level. See Appendix 2 for a complete list of organizations with representatives involved in the WG SR and their corresponding institutional affiliation.

In a third stage, we examined our interviews, ISO’s official minutes, and external documents to identify segments associated with **actors’ involvement** in the process using the literature on institutional work to guide us Battilana et al., 2009; Dorado, 2005, Lawrence et al., 2005). We compiled a comprehensive set of segments related to actors’ involvement, and we analyzed them using open coding and constant comparison methods (Glaser, 1967). From this, we identified first-order constructs including “averse,” “neutral-ambiguous” and “advocate.” We then used literature on and definitions of institutional work to sharpen our understanding of actors’ practices. After slight precisions and modifications of their definitions, first constructs of actors’ involvements were associated with concepts of institutional works such as “convening,” or “demonizing.” We then used axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1993) to recode segments associated with actors’ involvement. We managed to capture segments associated with involvement for 63 actors. For the remaining actors, we found too little or too ambiguous evidence so they were left “unassigned.” Appendix 4

summarizes this analysis and provides illustrative quotes for institutional works found in the case.

In a last stage, we mapped every actor involved in a production group for each of the three dimensions of membership in pluralistic organizations (Appendix 5). This mapping allowed us to "quantify" our data (Langley, 1999) and then look at how formal membership, institutional affiliation, and involvement were related and how these evolved over time in order to grasp the **dynamics** of membership in pluralistic organisations.

5 *Findings and Analysis*

Firstly, the comparison of "actors' involvement" with their institutional affiliations allowed us to draw a typology of participating actors. This typology highlights the balance of power at work in the process. Secondly, the creation, allocation, and removal of formal membership over the course of the process help us to understand how this balance of power was modified over time, how the collaboration moved forward, and finally, how the field of international corporate codes of conduct was transformed.

5.1 First Findings: the "True Believers," the "Silent Types," and the "Heavyweights"

In our qualitative analysis of interviews and internal and external documents, we actually found that actors could be categorized into three groups based on their involvement and their institutional affiliation. With a few exceptions, personal involvement and institutional affiliation were stable over time and we were struck by

the strong relation in this case between institutional affiliation and actors' involvement. As shown in Figure 3, there is an inverse relationship between actors' involvement in the process and their institutional affiliation: high institutional affiliation tended to be associated with averse involvement, whereas low institutional affiliation tended to be associated with medium/high involvement. This is consistent with, and further develops, previous findings in the literature, which explains how advocates of change are peripheral in an organizational field, whereas opponents are generally more central (DiMaggio, 1991; Greenwood et al., 2002; Seo & Creed, 2002; Tolbert & Zucker, 1996). It is also consistent with Ruwet's study on ISO 26000 (Ruwet, 2009). We will now discuss those three groups in detail.

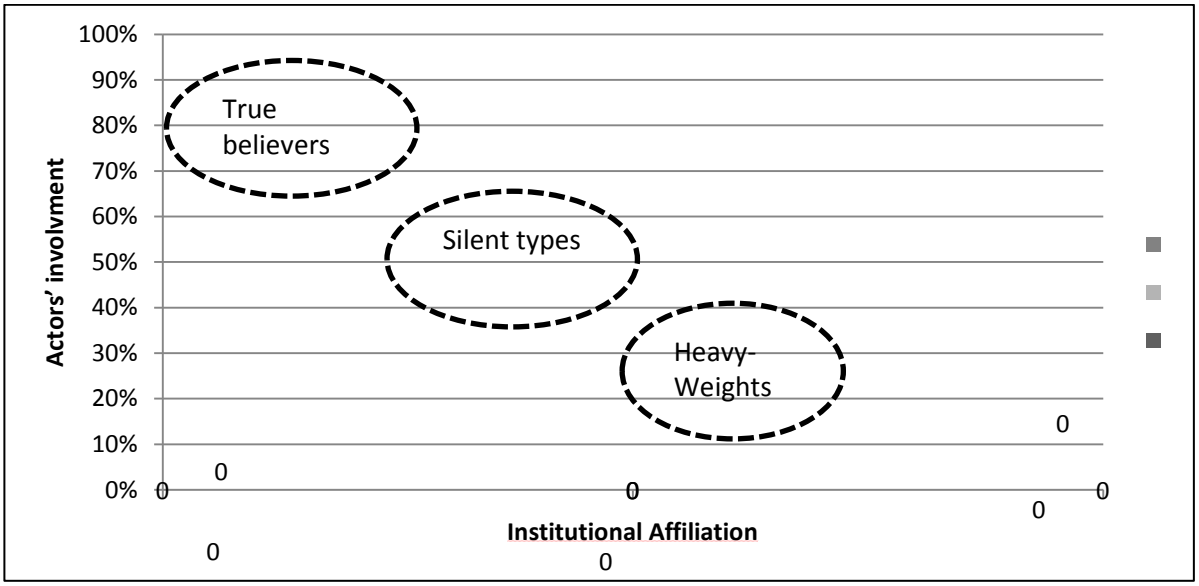


Figure 4.3 - A typology of actors involved in ISO 26000's production groups based on their involvement and institutional affiliation. (N.B.: numbers represent the actual number of actors)

The "true believers"

A first group of actors performed "advocating," "convening," and "mythologizing" work during the process, the type of institutional work we have

associated with “advocate” involvement in ISO 26000. We found these actors to be strongly associated with low institutional affiliation.

> That was the painful part for me throughout the five years, was that people were all just true believers, never asking why. Why certification? What is the advantage? What is it used for? When is it strategically appropriate and when is it not? (Actor 117)

This quotation illustrates the strong, sometimes emotional, involvement of “true believers.” True believers tended to be coming from national or local organizations and companies associated with low institutional affiliations. Our data shows that they actively sought to enter the process. They applied for membership in ISO 26000’s WG SR relentlessly, creating interest groups or becoming involved in mirror committees in their home country, before they finally managed to enter the process. They sometimes convinced organizations to enter the process, so that they could participate as their representatives.

Their common characteristic is that they spoke highly and publicly of, or at least in interview clearly stated their support for, ISO 26000 and ISO’s projects pertaining to CSR. In other words, they were “advocating.” They took a public stance in favour of ISO, sent joint letters to ISO headquarters, and gave enthusiastic interviews in the media. They also organized external networks supporting ISO 26000 meetings and conferences. They were “convening,” consisting of easing the process by creating collaborative arrangements. For example, facing difficulties with English as the official and sole language in the process, several actors brought Spanish-speaking nations together and created the Spanish-Speaking Task Force (SSTF). They improved non-English speakers participation generally as they were soon imitated by French, Arabic, Russian and German-speaking actors. True believers were also involved in

“mythologizing.” "Mythologizing" consists in framing the process as a keystone/landmark event in the history of global governance. Some compared it to the Kyoto protocol or the Brundtland report, or believed the ISO WG SR could eventually win the Nobel Prize, and many trusted that ISO 26000 was the event that would mainstream CSR. They expressed strong faith in the future of ISO 26000, and saw “ISO 26000 as an opportunity to really develop something that might really change the way things are going on in companies and other organizations and to make a real difference about sustainability and all these issues” (Actor 10).

The silent types

A second group of actors performed “enabling,” “policing” and “punctually engaging” work during the process. We have associated these types of institutional works with “neutral-ambiguous” involvement in ISO 26000. We found these actors to be strongly associated with medium institutional affiliations. The “silent types” are actors who either preferred to help the process discreetly behind the scenes or simply put limited efforts in the process. They came from large international organizations, often involved in CSR but not directly in the production of corporate codes of conduct prior to ISO 26000, such as government or international NGOs. They usually joined the process by interest but did not have to make an effort for membership; most of them were invited at an early stage and some actually left the process for “personal reasons," such as a lack of financial means.

Their common characteristic is that they would not venture a normative opinion on ISO 26000 nor on ISO entering the field of CSR, but focused instead on technical issues in the process. ISO staff and actors who had been involved in other ISO

Technical Committee knew this “commitment to neutrality” as an official ISO policy (ISO TMB WG SR N51). As a result, the type of institutional work they were performing was “enabling work.” Through this institutional work, several actors managed to have a real impact on the process. For example, numerous actors were previously part of other ISO technical committees and they leveraged their past experiences to establish rules and procedures to ease the negotiations. The silent types were also doing “policing” work, and four actors were actually watchdogs for the rules and procedures. “[Actor 54] was able to say well, in ISO 14000, we did this, this, and this, and we want to make sure we don’t conflict” (actor 117). We also found practices connected to a somewhat detached behaviour, less described in the institutional literature, which nonetheless impacted the process and that we have called “punctually engaging." This covers actors from large organizations who were found to be often absent, according to the attendance lists, or actors with reactive behaviours: “The reactive people were the majority of the group (…) They are the silent majority who will move from here to there depending on what is actually going on” (actor 10).

Heavyweights

A third group of actors performed “dissociating moral foundation” and “demonizing” work during the process. We have associated those types of institutional work with “critical-averse” involvement in ISO 26000 and found those actors to be strongly associated with high institutional affiliations.

il y avait deux façons d'envisager le problème, soit de mettre autour de la table les meilleurs rédacteurs qui auraient recherché à obtenir un compromis sur le texte pour avoir le meilleur texte possible sur le plan de la cohérence du texte, et quand on regarde les gens qui ont été désignés par les Stakeholders c'était plutôt les poids lourds, c’est à dire que c'était plutôt les politiques qui ont été mis dans le texte. (Actor 91)

Heavyweights are actors representing key international organizations in the field of international corporate codes of conduct. Not only were they invited to participate in the process, but they also had to be persuaded and agreed to participate under a set of conditions.

Their common characteristic is that they were, with varying intensities, openly and publicly critical of the process, most of the time by "dissociating the practices and rules [within the WG SR] from their moral foundation." For example, since its foundation in 1946, one of the key components of ISO legitimacy is "expertise." In all of the 19,000 standards developed by ISO to date, actors participate in ISO on an individual basis as experts. Yet during one of the first plenary sessions, one of the heavyweights stood up and said to the crowd: "there is no such a thing as a CSR expert!" (Actor 74). Another heavyweight criticized actors' representativeness and constantly referred to them as "self-appointed experts" (Actor 117). Alternatively, they tried to make sure that ISO would enforce their own norms or code: "it is our belief that the outcome as a minimum should be consistent with and complement the internationally agreed [actor mentions his organization's code of conduct]. If accomplished, an ISO 26000 standard that reflects the [again mentions his organization's corporate code of conduct] could have important practical use for advancing the [again mentions his organization's corporate code of conduct]" (actor 77). Most averse heavyweights demonized ISO by portraying it as a potential threat to the economy or to global governance. For example: "ISO 26000 in its present form could threaten the competitiveness of [an Asian country] companies" (Actor 25). They

argue that not only ISO 26000 but also the ISO organization needed to be stopped from meddling with political issues.

This typology illustrates the kind of power balance that ISO faced in developing ISO 26000. It shows the challenges of enrolling heavyweights, but also the opportunity to leverage from true-believers, and silent types to a lesser extent. Exactly how was this done during the process?

5.2 Second-Order Findings: Membership Strategies and the Interplay of Systemic, Episodic and Epistemic Powers in the Case of ISO 26000

To answer this question, we shall now focus on the most dynamic dimension of membership in pluralistic organizations: formal membership. In this case, the creation, allocation, transformation, destruction, and removal of formal membership over the process played a critical role in bringing the collaboration to a successful conclusion. This will allow us to draw up some propositions for membership strategy in pluralistic organizations.

In May 2002, a first internal report issued by COPOLCO, the body representing consumers' interests within ISO, recommended that ISO develop a norm for CSR. However, a previous failure to develop an international norm on Office Health and Safety, as well as internal fears regarding ISO's legitimacy, deterred ISO from directly setting up a technical committee as it usually does when developing international standards.

First period: September 2002 to January 2005, "the Trojan horse"

ISO needed heavyweights to embark on the process, so instead of a technical committee, it created the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), and invited prominent actors in the field of corporate codes of conduct to reflect upon an ISO international norm of CSR. The SAG's mission was to publish "a working report" in order "to determine whether ISO should proceed with the development of ISO deliverables in the field of corporate social responsibility" (TMB Resolution 78/2002). Regular participants in the SAG included 31 actors.

At this stage, formal membership is minimalist and consists only in "populating" the SAG. As illustrated in figure 4, there is no group-based membership; the SAG is very much like an "egalitarian society." It is small enough for actors to know each other personally. Interviewees frequently mentioned a friendly atmosphere, open to debate and discussion despite strong disagreements. Personal membership began to appear with the designations of "chair," "secretary" and later "alternate," but was still limited at this time. Observation of the minutes from the SAG meetings reveals that actors' formal memberships were sometimes inconsistently mentioned, or written under brackets, implying that these were less significant than actors' names and institutional affiliations.

During this period, institutional affiliation was the most important dimension of membership as the main goal was to "bring legitimacy to the process" (actor 130). Through the participation of heavyweights and their well-known organizations, the SAG was associated with a strong systemic power. As shown in Figure 4, it is the period associated with the highest percentage (40%) of highly affiliated actors. Within

the SAG, heavyweights reluctant to see ISO entering the field of international corporate codes of conduct were given considerable authority. Accordingly, the SAG published a report which denied ISO the right to develop an international certifiable standard, underlining that "ISO has neither the authority nor legitimacy to set social obligations or expectations that are in the purview and are more appropriately the responsibility of governments and intergovernmental organizations" (SAG Report, 2004). Heavyweights started to see in ISO 26000 a possibility to push for their own international corporate codes of conduct. They secured their influence over the process through institutional arrangements such as the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) signed between the ILO and ISO in March 2005, which actually conferred the ILO with a veto on the process.

Despite what seemed to be a setback, securing the consent and presence of heavyweights in the process increased the interest of true believers and silent types. Many of them who would join the process in a later stage mentioned that they were already following the process from the outside, sometimes as a part of, or even organizing, structures to follow ISO's developments on CSR in their own countries. Simultaneously, within the SAG, interpersonal contacts also triggered and reinforced actors' involvement and implication "from within:"

> Which means that he made contributions well beyond what might have been his original intentions […] in going into it, simply because, look, once you're there, you may as well… Well, we're all human, we all like to be influential (Actor 42)

Our case shows that, in the beginning, it was critical for ISO to secure actors with high institutional affiliation, even though some actors were averse to ISO's involvement in CSR and some even came with their own agendas. That is why we

have called this period “the Trojan horse.” It resulted in the strong involvement of actors with a lower institutional affiliation and actors within the SAG. In other words, systemic power was converted into episodic power.

Proposition 1: *if actors with a high institutional affiliation take part, actors with a lower institutional affiliation will be strongly involved in the process. Systemic power can be turned into episodic power.*

Second Period: March 2005 to November 2007, “the Forum”

Under the conditions required by the SAG, ISO officially opened the ISO 26000 negotiations to a larger group of stakeholders in June 2005, in Stockholm. As a matter of fact, ISO 26000 attracted an unexpectedly high number of actors. An actor involved in the organization recounted the unexpected level of participation at the first meeting in Salvador: “we didn’t know if it would be 50 persons or 500, so we made a guess. But it was a lot more than we thought so everything was a bit chaotic in the room” (actor 133). ISO was basically outnumbered, and the number of participants continued to grow throughout the process, from 225 experts in March 2005 to around 500 in 2010.

Actors’ involvement and their related episodic power generated a complex and hierarchic structure of formal membership. This second period witnessed intense formal membership creation. Six personal-based formal memberships combined with 13 group-based memberships were created; Figure 4 shows the WG SR’s organizational chart and its drastic expansion during this period. This proliferation of formal memberships brought complexity to the process, which in turn made ISO WG SR an “opportunity hazy” environment {Dorado, 2005 #986}, where a means-end

relationship between formal memberships and their impact was difficult to establish. Several of our interviewees described feeling a bit lost. At the same time, this proliferation also introduced differentiation and specialization. Figure 4 shows three different "families" of groups defined by their mandates: production, support, or diffusion. When asked to comment on the most influential groups in the process, interviewees consistently mentioned the production groups. Likewise, when asked who the influential actors involved in the WG SR were, they pointed to actors belonging to the production group. We realized this proliferation of formal membership had also introduced a hierarchy, which began to vest some actors with an epistemic authority.

Closer analysis of the production groups created during this period allowed us to see how episodic power was further used to strengthen the newly created epistemic authority. During this period, ISO's secretary and the WG chair had a lot of influence on the creation and composition of production groups. They created four groups with the power to write different parts of the norm and named these groups the standard-setting task groups (standard-setting TGs). As shown in Figure 4, the Chair and the standard-setting TGs replaced the SAG as production groups during the second period. Actors interested in coordinating the TGs applied formally to ISO; while coordinators were approved by the experts through a vote, the Chair selected and nominated them. Analysis of production group's composition (Appendix 5) shows that in the standard-setting TGs, heavyweights were replaced by silent types and true believers. During this period, 15 actors were regularly recorded on formal documents as members of the standard-setting TGs, and they were all either silent types operating behind closed

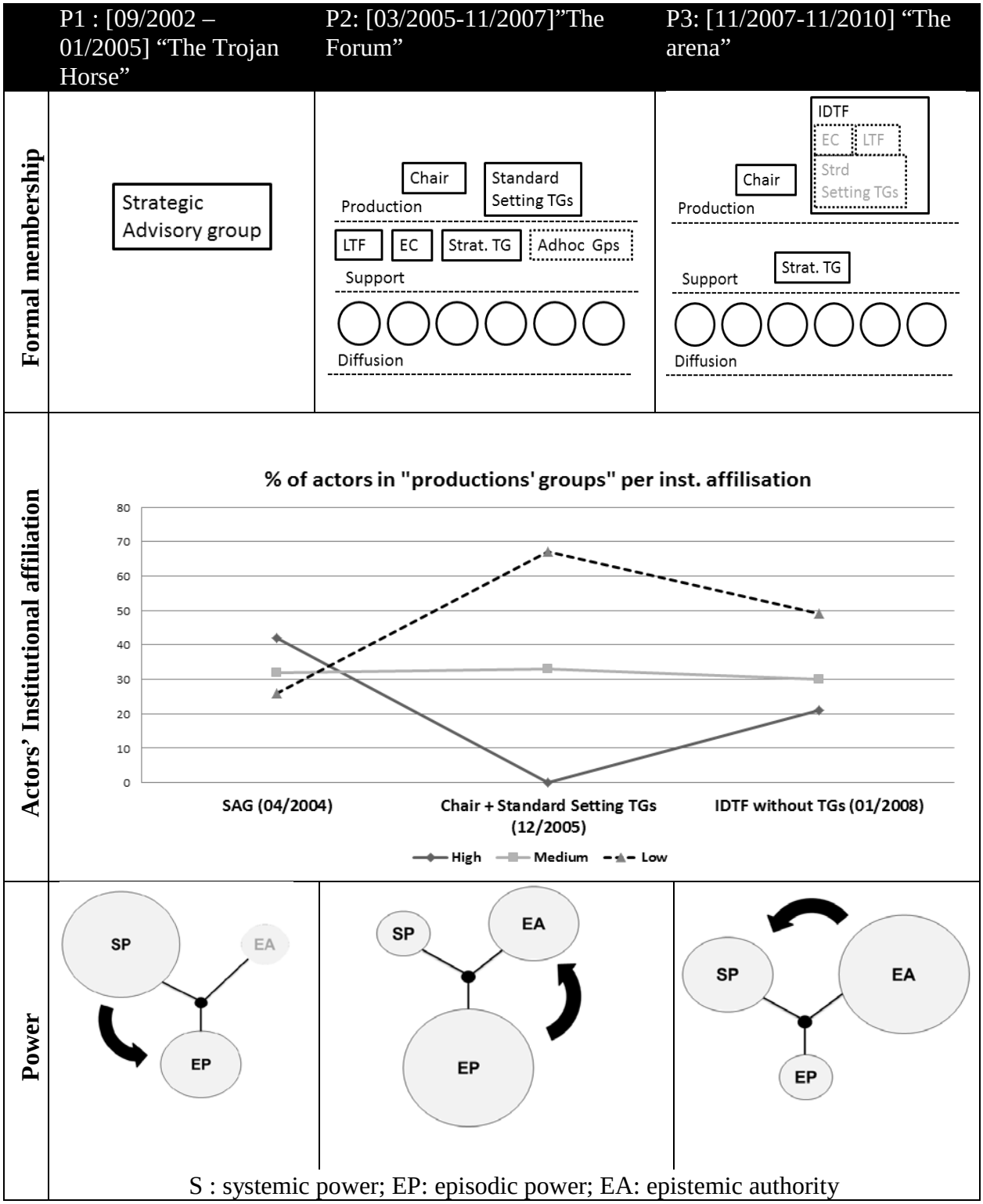
doors through “convening” or “enabling work” or true believers publicly “mythologizing” about the importance of the process. These practices benefited the process and reinforced the epistemic authority associated with the WG SR.

On the contrary, as visible in Figure 4, the level of highly affiliated actors in the standard-setting TGs dropped to zero. It is noteworthy that no heavyweights were involved in the production groups during this period. In other words, even though they were active in the process, actors with high-institutional affiliation did not hold the formal memberships that were considered the most influential. This generated a growing tension: heavyweights questioned the formal membership created during this period and its allocation and they became more involved in the process as, one actor reports, “we basically all realized that we had no official status in the structure” (actor 53).

The case shows that once a growing number of actors became involved in the process, it was possible to leverage this involvement and to open the process through the creation and allocation of a multiplicity of formal memberships. We have called this period “the forum” because the process was open at this stage and not only welcomed numerous actors with medium/low institutional affiliations but furthermore gave them an official status through the development of a formal membership. This created a “hazy environment” which left room for the allocation of the most influential formal memberships to actors who were highly supportive of the process. Because the actors who were the most supportive of the process tended to be those with the lowest institutional affiliation (see Figure 3), the formal membership structure within the WG SR tended to differ from the field’s structure, which resulted in the creation of an

epistemic authority distinct from the systemic power. In a sense, episodic power was converted into epistemic authority.

Proposition 2: *If there is a proliferation of formal membership, it is possible to allocate formal membership in such a way as to locally alter the hierarchy of the field. Episodic power can be turned into systemic power.*



S : systemic power; EP: episodic power; EA: epistemic authority

Figure 4.4 - Membership dynamics in the case of ISO 26000

Third Period: November 2007 to November 2010, the "arena"

At the annual summit in Vienna in November 2007, the process almost reached a deadlock. Sustained opposition from the heavyweights combined with chaotic behaviour from other actors prevented the draft of the norms from being approved. At this point, the dynamics of membership strategy changed entirely. From an open and creative "forum-like" design, it became more exclusive, hierarchical, and rigid. The creation of group-based formal memberships decreased sharply to almost a stand still. The overall number of grouped-based memberships declined. As shown in Figure 4, the category of "support groups" almost disappeared, as many support groups were integrated into the newly created production group: the Integrated Drafting Task Force (IDTF). Older production groups from "the forum" period, the standard-setting TGs, were disbanded. In 2007, a new kind of "discriminative" individual-based membership appeared which, instead of giving some rights to actors, was worded so as to exclude targeted groups, namely "media" and later "researchers." Furthermore, the boundaries of the production group were reinforced. Whereas participation in the standard-setting TGs was open to all experts, the IDTF worked behind closed doors. As a result, actors applied pressure and bargained in attempts to enter the IDTF, to the point that an actor threatened to sue another in order to take his place. We also observed a growing number of actors who were conditionally involved in the IDTF with a limited individual-based membership such as "alternate" or "observer," creating a sort of "buffer" zone around the IDTF. The tightening of formal membership within the WG SR made the epistemic authority more tangible.

Closer analysis of the production groups over time showed a shift in the balance of power. The standard-setting TGs were first complemented with a support group named the Liaison Task Group (LTF), which neutralized and replaced them through the creation of a new production group emerging largely out of the LTF itself: the IDFT. This is illustrated by the organizational chart in Figure 4.

> One of the keys was to create something called the Liaison Task Force [LTF]. So they had no mandate, but they were formally set up in order to discuss the different texts (…). And then at the next meeting IDTF was assembled to carry that to a further step to decrease the importance of the silos [the standard setting TGs] and increase the importance of the IDTF. And then that power shifted toward the Integrated Drafting Task Force, the IDTF. (Actor 119)

Epistemic authority was reallocated through the redistribution of formal membership to better integrate heavyweights. Analysis of the IDTF's composition shows that heavyweights were given more room in the production group during this period (Appendix 5). The IDTF, the new production group, included a much higher number of highly affiliated actors than the standard-setting TGs (see Figure 4). This resulted in bringing back the heavyweights and the central organizations they represented in the process. Systemic power was again associated with ISO 26000, and the epistemic authority created during this second period was reinforced by systemic power. However, this came with a price. Several "true believers" and "silent types" needed to be set aside. Their proportion in the IDTF decreased (See Figure 4), and those who were part of the standard-setting TGs saw their influence diminished in the newly created IDTF. They were invited to the IDTF neither for their expertise nor for their representativeness but rather "on the basis that this would be needed to keep the institutional memory" (ISO Draft minutes 2008-08-27). This generated some frustration:

Ce qui a été remarqué par pas mal de gens, c'est que on a l'impression que le processus a été un peu confisqué par l'IDTF qui en fait sa chose, et que les solutions qui sont proposées aux experts ne sont pas trop discutable, enfin qu'il serait de bon ton que les experts suivent les recommandations de l'IDTF. (actor 91)

As a result, the formal membership became more aligned with the overall structure of the field of international corporate codes of conduct, but silent types and true believers were now part of the production group and had acquired some visibility and legitimacy during the process, of which they remained supportive. After Vienna, the formal membership stabilized, and the process went smoothly until ISO 26000 was formally approved as an international guideline in November 2010.

In this third period, actors with a high institutional affiliation started to realize that formal membership within the organization matters and that they were excluded from the most influential formal memberships. They began to delegitimize the process until their high affiliations were acknowledged through formal membership. This required some newcomers to be symbolically sacrificed as well as the reassessment of boundaries in the process through the tightening of formal membership. This is why we have called the period “arena.” It marked a turning point: had some actors with lower institutional affiliation not been set aside, the process might have failed. But in this case the “shift” was properly executed and brought the process to a successful conclusion. At this point, formal membership within the ISO WG SR largely converged to reflect the field’s structure, but it was slightly modified. Many newcomers entered the field or increased their legitimacy thanks to the process starting with ISO itself, now referred to by all the organizations involved as central to the field of international corporate codes of conduct. The structure of the field was altered.

Proposition 3: *If well-timed, the redistribution of formal membership from actors with low or medium institutional affiliation to those with high affiliation will have a small but definitive impact on the field's structure. Epistemic power can be turned into systemic power.*

6 *Contribution and Conclusion*

This paper shows the importance of the three dimensions of membership in pluralistic organizations. It proposes a conceptual model that integrates those three dimensions as well as a methodology to assess them through the development of intermediate constructs: personal involvement, institutional affiliation, and formal membership. These are connected to three types of power: episodic power, systemic power and epistemic power. Our most notable finding consists in showing that although they emanated from different sources, those three powers interplayed in the case of ISO 26000. We show how the skilful crafting of formal membership is actually a way to convert between those three powers to eventually alter the structure of the organizational field.

As such, this paper contributes above all to organization theory, in particular to research on pluralistic organizations. If a dominant view of pluralistic organizations questions their ability to deal with their members owing to their weak control and low incentives (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008; Demil & Lecocq, 2006; Makadok & Coff, 2009), the case of ISO 26000 shows that pluralistic organizations, in comparison to bureaucratic organizations, also have an unprecedented flexibility in formal membership. They create, transform, and massively disband formal membership in a way that cannot be matched by bureaucratic forms of organization. This casts a new

light on pluralistic organizations because it shows that, contrary to what is usually believed, this flexibility may be the most valuable asset of pluralistic organizations. If properly used through a sound membership strategy, it may allow pluralistic organizations to surpass bureaucratic ones in pluralistic settings by more efficient collaboration. What seemed to be an intrinsic weakness in pluralistic organizations can be turned into an asset.

Our paper also contributes to theories of institutional change. It integrates the oft-discussed dimension of institutional affiliation with the organizational level of analysis and shows how the design of formal membership can be used to bring in and retain both advocates and opponents of change. Furthermore, we have shown how membership strategy can be used as a way to alter the very structure of the field. In so doing, our paper bridges institutional theory and organizational design and offers insights for the practitioner on the importance of institutional theory and how to make use of it.

Another contribution to new institutionalism concerns agency. The tension between institutional pressures and individual agency has been captured through the paradox of "embedded agency" (Garud et al., 2007; Dorado, 2005; Battilana et al., 2009). This case illustrates how this tension can be mediated by organizations, which act as a "third party" in locally alleviating the field structure so that actors can get involved in institutional change and perform institutional works. It also contributes to the scholarship on institutional works in showing what form of institutional works interfere with institutional change, at what time, and which type of institutional

affiliations they are attached to. Finally, through the use of social studies of science, this paper reassesses the importance of organizational-level of analysis.

A final contribution involves social studies of science. Though authors have previously discussed the importance of membership in pluralistic organizations, this case constitutes the first empirical in-depth analysis of membership dynamics. It proposes a conceptual model that can be replicated in different settings, and explains the allocation of membership and how it evolves over time to interface with different social worlds. It does so by taking into account the field-structure through the use of institutional theory. Actors' diversity of institutional affiliations is another key dimension of the "boundaricity" of pluralistic organizations still understudied in the literature. This helps to answer questions asked by this tradition of research such as how to stabilize collaboration between a plurality of actors and how to deal with boundaries at the level of boundary organizations.

Appendix

Appendix 1 - Selected List of International Corporate Codes of Conduct

Governement	Business	NGO	Multi-Stakeholder
• OCDE Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (1976) • ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (1977) • UNCTAD - Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices (1980) • Investors in People (1991) • UNCED Agenda 21, Chapter 30 (1992) • UN - Proposed draft human rights code of conduct for companies (2000) • UN - Global Compact (2000) • ILO-OSH 2001 (2001) • UN - Norms on the responsibilities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises with regard to human rights (2003)	• ICC International Code of Advertising (1937) • Sullivan Principles (1977) • ICC Business Charter for Sustainable Development (1991) • ICC International Code on Sponsorship (1992) • ICC The Business Charter for Sustainable Development (1992) • Caux Round Table Principles (1994) • Council on Economic Priorities - Social Accountability 8000 (1998) • ICC - Combating Extortion and Bribery: ICC Rules of Conduct and Recommendations (1999) • Religious interfaith network - Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility: Bench Marks For Measuring Business Performance (1999) • Accountability AA1000AS Assurance Standard (2003) • BSCI Code of Conduct (2004)	• ISO 9000 (1987) • CERES Principles (1989) • The Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility - The Wood-Sheppard Principles for Race Equality in Employment (1993) • ICCR - Benchmarks for Measuring Business Performance is a set of guidelines for global corporate conduct (1995) • ISO 14001 (1996) • Consumers International - Consumer Charter for Global Business (1997) • The ICFTU/ITS Basic Code of Labour Practice (1997) • Amnesty International - Human Rights Principles for Companies (1998) • Global Sullivan Principles (1999) • FAIRTRADE Certification Mark launched (2002) • 'IFAT (WFTO)- Fair Trade Organization Mark (2004) • The Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (2005)	• FLA - workplace code of conduct (1997) • ETI Base Code (1998) • Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines (2000) • Reitaku University - Ethics Compliance Standard 2000 (2001) • Transparency International and SAI - Business Principles for Countering Bribery (2003) • Calvert & UNIFEM- Calvert Women's Principles (2004)

Sources: UNCTAD (2011) "World Investment Report"; Gilbert, Rasch & Waddock (2011); Waddock (2008), Fransen & Kolk (2007); EU Green Paper (2001) "Promoting a European Framework for CSR", OCDE (1999) "Codes of Corporate Conduct: An Inventory"
Methodology: we have listed only international and generalist standards. Standards that were national such as SD21000, or sectorial, such as the Marine Stewardship council, were eliminated because they involved different – more national or sectorial –players, see for instance Zietman on the forest industry (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010b). We also eliminated international codes of conduct which were not applicable to corporations, such as NGO codes of conducts.

Appendix 2 - External Organizations with Representatives Involved the WG SR and their Corresponding Levels of Institutional Affiliation

Organization's name	category	Institutional affiliation
University of Cape Town; Vincular; Reitaku University; The Academy of Labour and Social Relations; The Robert Gordon University	*Academia*	**Low** *Local and national actors*
10 national standard bodies, ex. Sinf; AFNOR; BNQ	*NSB*	
Calidad Ambiental de CV; Groupe Séché; Incite; The CSR Company; Greentrack Strategies; Deni Greene Consulting Services; Learn2improve your planet	*Local Business/ Freelance*	
Akatu; Ecofuturo Institute; ORSE; CIRIDD; Danish Society of Nature Conservation; Ethos Institute; Development Alternatives; Pacific Institute	*Local NGO*	
Rengo; Singapore Shell Employees' Union	*Local Union*	
Consumer Commission; Consumer expert (Malaysia)	*Local consumer organizations*	
Federation of Kenyan employers; Malaysian employers federation; Federation of Austrian Industries	*Local employer organizations*	
France; Brazil; India; Chile	*Government*	**Medium** *Actors with an international network*
IEPF; IISD; WWF; IFAN; IISD; AICC;IIED; BIAC; Environment Africa; ECPAT; IABC	*International organizations*	
Motorola; AngloGold Ashanti; Alcan inc.; Skanska AB; Motorola; Volvo; Sony; Petrobrás; Accountability; Celtel; Scott Wilson; AECOM; Omron; Transdev; Suzano Group; Siemens; Daimler Chrysler; CELTEL; EDF	*MNE*	
ILO; ICFTU; ISO; IOE; ICC; Amnesty International; Forum for the Future; ICC; GRI; Global Compact; Consumer International; IOE; ITUC; UNCTAD	*International organizations referenced in table 1*	**High** *Actors who produce international standards*

Appendix 3 - Formal Memberships in the Development of ISO 26000

Date	ISO name	Official mandate (ISO doc.)	Categories
Individual based membership			
09/2003	Alternate	*Attend only as replacement, i.e. in the CAG: "Alternates may only attend a CAG meeting as a replacement for a permanent CAG member." They are appointed by the permanent member (SR WG Procedures compilation)*	**Limited membership**
10/2004	Interim	*Temporary convenors of working group /discretionary appointment by ISO (Minutes from the 1st meeting of the Brazilian-Swedish leadership of ISO/TMB/WG ST)*	
04/2006	Observer	*Observers have reduced rights of contribution, ex. IDTF: "the observers should not be able to speak or take on an active role within the IDTF unless invited by the convenor to do so..." (Minutes, constitution of Integrated Drafting Task Force, IDTF)*	
09/2003	Secretary	*No specific status found; considered as experts*	**Full membership**
09/2003	ISO Represntatives	*'Participate as experts in working groups and other subgroups" (ISO annexe SE 2001)*	
09/2003	Experts	*"An individual appointed by an ISO member body or a liaison organization to participate actively in the activities of the Working Group. (Participating in the Future International Standard…) "acts in personal capacity, contributing on the basis of their own knowledge" (ISO annexe SE 2001)*	
09/2005	Stakeholder representative	*The representative of their stakeholder category : consumer, government, business, labour, NGO or service support and research (SR WG Procedures compilation)*	
09/2003	Chair	*"Responsible for the management or the activities of a working group" (ISO 2001 Annex SE)*	**Leadership**
01/2005	(Co-) Convener	*Same as chair*	

02/2007	Media	*"People from the media are not allowed to attend: Plenary meetings; Task Group (TG) meetings; Chair's Advisory Group (CAG) meetings; Editing Committee (EC) meetings; Task Force meetings (Translation Task Force, Liaison Task Force); Ad-hoc Group meetings" (ISO WG SR N102)*	**Discriminative membership**
11/2007	Researchers	*"Where they are not nominated as an expert or an observer, researchers may participate in the WG SR according to the same procedures as the media" (document ISO/TMB/WG SR N 102).*	
		Group based membership	
09/2003	SAG	*"Recommend whether ISO should launch work on social responsibility and (…) advise on the scope of this work and the type of ISO document best suited." (ISO Newsletter Feb. 2003)/Appointed by ISO*	**Production**
12/2005-11/2007	TG 4-6 : "Standards Setting"	*Draft different parts of the norm (Salvador, Resolution 15,16 and 17) (WG SR letter to expert, 31-12-2005). Task Group 4 - Scope, SR Context & SR Principles; Task Group 5 - Guidance on core SR subjects/issues; Task Group 6 - Guidance for organizations on implementing SR*	
11/2007	Integrated Drafting Task Force	*Initially mandated only to review the ISO 26000 norm (Vienna Resolution 2), later to review and draft the ISO 26000 norm (Santiago Resolution 5)*	
Ad hoc TG leadership (03-2005/09-2005)			Interim
03/2005	CAG	Only advisory role (Salvador Resolution 4); half elected by Stk and half appointed by ISO	**Support**
03/2005	TG 1-3 : strategic Task Group	Support in : Task group 1 - Funding and stakeholder engagement; Task Group 2 – Communication; Task Group 3 - Operational Procedures (Salvador, Resolution 5-9)	
03/2005	Editing Committee	Support the writing of the norms; appointed by ISO (Salvador Resolution 19)	
05/2006	Liaison Task Force	Coordinate Task groups 4,5,6; Task Group convenors and stakeholder representative "to be selected by the stakeholder groups themselves" (Lisbon Resolution 3)	

Ad hoc planning team (08-2004/08-2004) Ad hoc Group on Design (09-2005/05-2006)			Interim
03/2005	Spanish Transl. Task Force	*Translate into important documents into Spanish (Salvador Resolution 26,27)*	**Diffusion**
9/2005	French-Speaking Task Force	*"to permit/facilitate exchanges in French language between experts, observers and liaison organizations participating in ISO/TMB/ WG SR." Appointed by French-speaking stakeholders (Bangkok Resolution 34)*	
05/2006	Arabic Transl. Task Force	*Translate main documents and facilitate exchange in Arabic; appointed by ISO (Lisbon Resolution 1)*	
05/2006	Russian Transl. Task Force	*Translate main documents and facilitate exchange in Russian; appointed by ISO (Lisbon Resolution 2)*	
11/2007	German Sp. Task Force	*Translate, facilitate exchange, and "give information on the work of WG SR to German-speaking countries and regions"*	

Appendix 4. Actor's Involvement Illustrative Quotes

Advocating "*The mobilization of political and regulatory support through direct and deliberate techniques of social persuasion"* (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2010)	** "I think he won the trust of everybody in the IDTF because of the way he managed things. He always did behind-the-scenes work to try and push participants towards agreement where there was disagreement." (actor 42 comments on actor 59's political involvement)* ** 11-2007 - After a particularly difficult summit, 10 experts send a joint letter to all participants asking them to keep involved and to move the process forward. "ISO26000: Building Consensus, from Vienna to Santiago" (Public document)* ** 07-2010 - 36 experts make a public statement supporting approval of ISO 26000 "ISO SR Working Group Experts from a Range of Stakeholder Categories Announce their Support for ISO 26000 Guidance on Sustainable Responsibility" (public document)*	**Advocate**
Convening Creating collaborative arrangements in order to solve a particular problem (Dorado 2005; Lawrence et al. 2002)	** "I have been involved with and also because of the group of NGOs that I created specifically for this which is the GAO, G-A-O. It is the Group of Articulation of NGOs to ISO 26 000" (actor 10)* **" Afin de renforcer la communication entre les experts impliqués dans l'élaboration d'ISO 26000, un groupe ad hoc a été créé – le «Groupe de contact avec les pays en développement (DCCG)» – à l'occasion de l'atelier des pays en développement organisé en 2005 à Bangkok" (actor 108)* ** "C'était notre cas, il n'y avait pas de représentants des syndicats au comité miroir canadien (...) il y a beaucoup de démarches qui ont été faite du côté anglophone pour aller chercher des représentants des syndicats, et il ne voulaient pas ! Finalement quand je suis arrivé dans le comité (...), j'ai dit ben attendez, je vais appeler mes amis de la CSN [local trade-union], et c'est fait maintenant on a un représentant des syndicats au comité." (actor 14)*	
Mythologizing "Preserve the normative underpinning of institutions by mythologizing their history" (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2010).	** "In my opinion ISO 26000 is the equivalent of the Brundtland report's definition of sustainable development for CSR, similarly now this definition, even though not perfect, is going to be the definition of CSR." (actor 130)* ** "this is the next step in our evolution, on the planet." (actor 85 on ISO26000)* ** " je dis souvent que (...) si l'ISO 26000 est bien diffusée et pris par de nombreuses entreprises pourquoi pas donner dans dix ans donner dans le prix Nobel de la paix de manière collective." (actor 91)*	
	Illustrative quotes and practices	

Enabling Work "*The creation of rules that facilitate, supplement and support institutions*" (Lawrence & Suddaby)	** "I can't remember other than the fact that we persevered but we could see it wasn't going well. [actor 119] and I talked late into the night about how do we fix this. (…) I think we agreed that clearly we can't solve some of these drafting issues in a large group, so we established small groups" (actors 59)* ** "He called to everybody's attention that this is a step-by-step approach. It is necessary to prove that the internal SR Trust Fund can fly by actions from the experts within the WG, before we approach private donors like Ford Foundation, Bill Gates Foundation and so on." (Minutes on actor 116)* ** "You can't let 400 people draft a standard. It just does not work.(...) So you've got to create subgroups and maybe even subgroups of su groups until you get down to a level of people that you can actually get some work done." (actor 112)*	**Neutral-Ambiguous**
Punctually engaging actors that lessen their involvement in the process while continuing to be supportive of it	**"I stopped my active participation in the process. Basically that is my story in the process. (...) So you know, I liked this job, but I'm not putting my pocket money to do it…." (actor 23)* ** Although in a production group, Actor 96 is only mentioned once on the attendance lists* ** "Lisbonne a été ma dernière participation physique, il y a toujours les réunions des pays en voie de développement avant Lisbonne. J'avais le sentiment d'avoir fait tout ce que j'avais à faire." (actor 118)*	
Policing "ensuring compliance through enforcement, auditing and monitoring" (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2010)	** "Donc je suis un peu le gardien du process dans cet environnement (…) on pourrait dire une experte en procédure" (actor 27)* ** "Procedures of defining something and then that is then to be implemented. It makes people calm that everybody is working under the same rules. If one does not capture such procedures or if one does not implement such procedures, there will be a lot of distrust in the process" (actor 119)* ** "I must emphasize that we need to give respect and honour to what our predecessors of the SAG members have contributed to this complex issue in the past for almost two years. The SAG recommendation is full of the advisors' the whole wisdom, insight, and the consensus based on the whole-hearted efforts." (actor 44)*	
	Illustrative quotes and practices	

Dissoc. of moral foundation "dissociating the practice, rule or technology from its moral foundation as appropriate within a specific cultural context" (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2010)	** "Je me rappelle qu'on a demandé à des gens des syndicats de ILO de nous faire une présentation. Parce que leur position aux autres c'était « qu'est ce que vous voulez faire ? On l'a toute faite. C'est dans nos cadres. C'est encadré dans nos standards, dans nos codes, dans nos conventions » c'était toute là, « alors pourquoi on devrait refaire l'exercice sous le drapeau de l'ISO alors qu'on l'a déjà. Prenez le notre et puis ça finit là. »." (actor 45 on labour representatives)* ** "Norm soll kein neues Managementsystem beschreiben und nicht als Grundlage für Drittzertifizierung dienen Anwendbar für alle Organisationen, kein Ersatz für Gesetzgebung/staatliche Aktivitäten" (actor 57)* ** "In Österreich sei gesellschaftlich verantwortungsvolles Handeln der Industrie bereits eine Selbstverständlichkeit, es brauche daher keine Norm" (actor 86)*	**Averse**
Demonizing "Providing for public consumption especially negative examples that illustrate the normative foundation of an institution" (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2010)	** "There are deep concerns that the ISO initiative could be a Trojan Horse for a "corporate social responsibility-lite" approach." (actor 67)* ** "ISO has become a new work item proposal machine. (...) They are just cranking out new work item proposals by the dozen (...). But, you know, it's like, you know, insects hatching: if you hatch thousands then a few hundred are bound to live. And it's simply becoming overwhelming and nobody can track it, nobody can figure out where anything comes from or, you know, where it's going." (actor 53)* ** "it is a terrible analogy but if a house has cockroaches, it's just the walls you know, they are just covered inside with cockroaches, it is a waste of time to just sit there and be stomping the one cockroach that appears on your counter when you know that they are all infested in the wall." (actor 117 on ISO standards)*	
	Illustrative quotes and practices	

Appendix 5. Summary of Institutional Affiliation and Involvement for Actors Participating in Production Groups

	affiliation	involvement	membership	membership	membership		affiliation	involvement	membership	membership	membership
Actor 1	Low	Unassigned	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 70	Medium	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned
Actor 2	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned	Actor 71	Low	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production	Production
Actor 4	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 72	Medium	Averse	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned
Actor7	High	Unassigned	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 74	High	Averse	Production	Support	Production
Actor 10	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 76	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Support	Unassigned
Actor 11	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Support	Unassigned	Actor 77	High	Averse	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned
Actor 13	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 80	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production
Actor 15	High	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Support	Unassigned	Actor 81	Low	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned
Actor 16	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 82	Low	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned
Actor 17	Low	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned	Actor 85	Medium	Advocate	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production
Actor 20	Medium	Advocate	Unassigned	Production	Production	Actor 86	Fluctuate	Averse	Unassigned	Support	Production
Actor 22	High	Unassigned	Unassigned	Support	Unassigned	Actor 87	High	Averse	Unassigned	Support	Unassigned
Actor 23	Low	Advocate	Production	Production	Unassigned	Actor 89	Medium	Unassigned	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production
Actor 25	Low	Averse	Unassigned	Support	Unassigned	Actor 90	High	Averse	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned
Actor 30	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production	Actor 91	Medium	Advocate	Unassigned	Production	Production
Actor 27	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 93	High	Moderate/Ambig.	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned
Actor 31	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Production	Production	Actor 94	High	Unassigned	Unassigned	Support	Production
Actor 34	High	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned	Actor 96	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned
Actor	Medium	Unassigned	Production	Support	Unassigned	Actor	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Support	Unassigned

35						98					
Actor 36	Low	Advocate	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned	Actor 99	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production
Actor 37	Low	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned	Actor 101	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Production	Production
Actor 41	Low	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Support	Unassigned	Actor 103	Low	Unassigned	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production
Actor 39	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production	Actor 106	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production
Actor 42	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 107	Low	Moderate/Ambig.	Production	Support	Unassigned
Actor 44	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production	Actor 108	Low	Advocate	Production	Support	Unassigned
Actor 45	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned	Actor 101	Low	Moderate/Ambig.	Production	Support	Unassigned
Actor 50	Medium	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned	Actor 112	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Production	Support	Unassigned
Actor 51	Medium	Advocate	Production	Unassigned	Production	Actor 115	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned
Actor 52	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 117	High	Averse	Unassigned	Support	Production
Actor 53	High	Averse	Production	Support	Production	Actor 116	Low	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned
Actor 54	Low	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 118	High	Moderate/Ambig.	Production	Support	Unassigned
Actor 55	Medium	Averse	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned	Actor 119	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Production	Production
Actor 56	Medium	Unassigned	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 122	Low	Unassigned	Unassigned	Support	Production
Actor 57	Low	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Support	Production	Actor 123	High	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production
Actor 58	High	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned	Actor 124	Medium	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Support	Unassigned
Actor 59	Low	Moderate/Ambig.	Unassigned	Production	Production	Actor 125	Low	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned
Actor 60	Medium	Advocate	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned	Actor 127	Low	Advocate	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned
Actor	Medium	Advocate	Unassigned	Production	Unassigned	Actor	Fluctuate	Advocate	Production	Support	Production

63						130					
Actor 66	High	Averse	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned	Actor 132	High	Averse	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned
Actor 67	High	Averse	Production	Unassigned	Unassigned	Actor 134	Low	Advocate	Unassigned	Unassigned	Production

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Conclusion générale

Chaque article a sa propre conclusion, l'objectif de cette conclusion générale est donc de proposer un tableau de synthèse sur les principales contributions des différents articles, puis de montrer ce que l'on peut retenir de cette thèse prise comme un ensemble en terme de contribution scientifique.

Tableau 5.I - Contribution par articles

	Domaine de discussion	Contribution
Article 1	*Théorie des organisations - général*	*Identification d'une phénoménologie des organisations pluralistes. Mise en relation des traditions de recherche et structuration de la discussion scientifique sur les organisations pluralistes*
	Collaboration extraorganisationnelle *Changement institutionnel* *Approches déterministes* *Étude sociale des sciences*	*Synthèse des contextes théoriques, des approches méthodologiques, des concepts, des principales idées et des tensions/piste de recherches sur les organisations pluralistes*
Article 2	*Changement institutionnel*	*Importance de l'ambiguïté dans la construction de nouvelles institutions. Différents types d'organisations interviennent à différents moments de la construction de nouvelles institutions*
	Théorie politique	*De nouveaux lieux de pouvoir apparaissent dans la gouvernance internationale qui sont des hybrides et des dérivés des lieux de pouvoir nationaux*
	Organisation pluraliste	*Importance de l'ambiguïté*
Article3	*Changement institutionnel*	*Influence des structures organisationnelles sur le changement institutionnel, et le désencastrement temporaire des acteurs à travers la création de l' « epistemic authority »* *Intégration de la structure du champ au niveau organisationnel*
	Étude sociale de la science	*Mécanisme d'interface* *Prise en compte dynamique du « champ organisationnel » dans les interfaces entre mondes sociaux*
	Organisation pluraliste	*<u>Contribution principale :</u> gérer la dynamique d'engagement des acteurs* *La dimension du pouvoir dans ce type d'organisation*

De manière plus générale, la contribution « fil rouge » de cette thèse est que malgré les nouveaux défis auxquels font face les organisations, la dimension organisationnelle, et plus précisément la dimension formelle des organisations, reste encore et toujours pertinente pour la gestion.

Dans les années 1970 des avancées majeures dans le champ ont remis en question l'importance de l'organisation formelle en insistant sur la rationalité limitée (Cyert & March, 1963; Cohen et al., 1972), l'importance du pouvoir et de l'organisation informelle (Crozier & Friedberg, 2009;), ou encore de l'environnement (Hannan & Freeman, 1977; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1977). Notre travail montre qu'en effet que ces dimensions (rationalité limitée des acteurs, organisation informelle, environnement) jouent un rôle important dans le fonctionnement des organisations, mais qu'elles ne conduisent pas à remettre en cause l'organisation formelle. Au contraire, elles poussent à réaffirmer son importance.

Le cas d'ISO26000, constitue un contexte de pluralisme fort, voire extrême, où ces dimensions jouent un rôle très important : les experts qui participent au processus ne peuvent pas en maîtriser tous les ressorts, ni ISO; les négociations les plus importantes ont lieu derrière des portes closes, des réseaux plus ou moins formels se créent et se défont sans cesse autour des négociations; de puissants intérêts potentiellement touchés par la norme ne manquent d'intervenir de manière plus ou moins occulte tout au long du processus. Pourtant, nos résultats ne nous conduisent pas à relativiser la dimension organisationnelle. Au contraire, l'organisation formelle va jouer un rôle tout à fait central (naturellement, dans certaines limites) pour éclairer les rationalités, dénouer les

crises, réconcilier les intérêts, tout en produisant du changement dans l'organisation, mais surtout dans l'environnement des acteurs !

Cette thèse montre que les organisations pluralistes grâce à leur grande flexibilité peuvent faire face aux environnements qui semblaient pourtant être ceux qui remettaient le plus en cause les structures formelles de l'organisation. C'est possible, mais à condition de repenser assez profondément la structure formelle : non plus comme quelque chose de stable qui fixe les rôles et les responsabilités, mais comme quelque chose qui évolue constamment pour être toujours en adéquation avec l'équilibre des pouvoirs tout en ayant la possibilité de l'influencer un peu; non plus comme quelque chose qui crée des identités, mais comme quelque chose qui les reflète, parfois en les déformant légèrement; non plus comme quelque chose d'interne à l'organisation, mais comme quelque chose qui intègre l'environnement extérieur; non plus comme quelque chose de neutre, froid et d'objectif, mais comme quelque chose de profondément lié au symbolique et aux rôles sociaux; non plus comme quelque chose qui soutient l'organisation, mais comme quelque chose qui a besoin d'être constamment surveillé et transformé parfois au prix de sacrifice important pour permettre à l'organisation d'avancer vers son objectif. Malgré tous ces changements, le « formel », c'est-à-dire le fait d'être explicite, public et reconnu par l'organisation pluraliste continue de trancher sur l' « informel », et il joue ici un rôle clef dans la maturation et l'évolution du champ et des positions sociales. Les organisations pluralistes peuvent transformer durablement et en profondeur leur champ.

Bibliography Conclusion

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