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HEC MONTRÉAL
École affiliée à l'Université de Montréal

Trois essais sur l'acceptabilité sociale des projets de développement

par
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HEC MONTRÉAL
École affiliée à l'Université de Montréal

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Résumé

Depuis le tournant du 21^e siècle, les enjeux d'acceptabilité sociale défraient l'actualité à travers le monde. Ces enjeux se manifestent notamment – mais pas seulement – autour de grands projets de développement à fort impact socio-environnemental. Compte tenu du nombre grandissant de ces controverses autour de grands projets de développement tels que l'exploitation des ressources naturelles, le développement urbain ou des infrastructures publiques, l'acceptabilité sociale s'impose aujourd'hui comme un important défi pour les entreprises, les pouvoirs publics et la société civile. Ce nouveau paradigme émergent du rôle inclusif des parties prenantes bouleverse fortement les façons « traditionnelles » de réaliser des projets de développement et traduit un nouveau paradigme de gestion de l'espace économique. Fréquemment présentée comme un concept managérial, l'acceptabilité sociale a reçu au cours des dernières années une attention importante et croissante dans la sphère académique, où ce concept est au cœur d'une pléthore de définitions et de typologies. Ce champ de recherche en émergence présente toutefois plusieurs limites qui rendent la conceptualisation de l'acceptabilité sociale en tant qu'objet scientifique difficile. En effet, le néant conceptuel, définitionnel et processuel de ce concept appelle à un effort collectif de réflexion. Au moins deux limites méritent d'être soulignées.

D'abord, la littérature sur l'acceptabilité sociale souffre d'ancrages théoriques lacunaires et de perspectives méthodologies peu élaborées. Ensuite, très orienté vers les « meilleures pratiques » visant à faire approuver les projets dans une perspective souvent instrumentale et fonctionnaliste, le corpus de l'acceptabilité sociale peine à aller au-delà d'une vision court-termiste des relations entreprises-communautés basée sur la gestion de conflits. C'est précisément autour de ces enjeux que cette recherche doctorale s'inscrit. Cette thèse a pour objectif d'avancer les connaissances sur l'acceptabilité sociale et les relations entreprises-communautés. Si les recherches portant sur l'acceptabilité sociale sont transdisciplinaires – de l'urbanisme aux études environnementales en passant par la géographie –, la littérature en gestion tend à associer l'acceptabilité sociale au champ des relations entreprises-communautés. Ainsi, cette thèse apporte trois contributions au

champ des relations entreprises-communautés, et plus généralement à celui des théories des organisations. Dans un premier temps, elle effectue une recension systématique des écrits sur l'acceptabilité sociale et propose une cartographie de la littérature. Dans un deuxième temps, elle analyse les processus de développement des capacités d'une communauté locale en matière d'émergence et de développement d'institutions locales, et met en relation ce processus de développement de capacités locales avec la trajectoire d'acceptabilité sociale. Dans un troisième et dernier temps, elle approfondit notre compréhension des processus de négociation entre une communauté locale et un promoteur de projet en situation d'asymétrie de pouvoir, de légitimité et de ressources.

Cette thèse doctorale prend la forme d'une thèse par articles. Les trois articles qui la composent sont interreliés et s'attellent à comprendre chacun une dimension spécifique de l'acceptabilité sociale et des relations entreprises-communautés. Ce faisant, cette thèse identifie les caractéristiques de l'acceptabilité sociale et explore ses dynamiques et processus. Alors que l'acceptabilité sociale des projets est souvent perçue et conceptualisée de manière statique et court-termiste, notre thèse propose d'ancrer – même si cela n'est pas explicite dans tous les articles – les relations entreprises-communautés dans une approche processuelle de type socio-constructionniste. En effet, les trois articles de cette thèse mettent de l'avant le caractère négocié et dynamique de l'acceptabilité sociale et des relations entreprises-communautés. En définitive, les contributions théoriques et pratiques de ces trois articles pris ensemble apportent des éclaircissements sur la pratique de la gestion des relations entreprises-communautés et elles contribuent à notre compréhension plus générale de l'interface entre les entreprises et leur environnement.

Mots clés : acceptabilité sociale; communautés locales; relations entreprises-communautés; parties prenantes.

Méthodes de recherche : méthodes qualitatives; étude de cas; approche longitudinale; recherche inductive.

Abstract

The 21st century has seen issues of social acceptability (or social license to operate) become a reality throughout the world. These issues are manifested in particular – but not only – around major development projects with high socio-environmental impacts. Given the growing number of socio-economic controversies related to major development projects such as natural resource exploitation, urban development or public infrastructure, the social license to operate has become a major management challenge for businesses, public authorities and civil society. This new paradigm of the inclusive role of stakeholders is a major disruption to “traditional” ways of delivering development projects and involves a new paradigm for managing the economic space.

Frequently presented as a managerial concept, the social license to operate has received a significant and growing attention in the academic sphere in recent years, where this concept is the core of a plethora of definitions and typologies. This emerging field of research, however, has several limitations that hinder the conceptualization potential of the social license to operate as a scientific object. Indeed, the conceptual, definitional and processual voids of this concept call for a collective effort. At least two limits are worth highlighting. First, the literature on the social license to operate suffers from lacunar theoretical anchors and poorly developed methodologies. Then, instrumentally oriented towards "best practices" aiming at having the projects approved from a functionalist perspective, this literature struggles to go beyond a short-term vision of business-community relations based on reactive conflict management.

This thesis is precisely positioned around these research issues. It aims to deepen our understanding of business-firm relations and the social license to operate. While research on the social license is transdisciplinary – from urban planning to environmental studies and geography – the literature on management tends to associate this concept with the field of business-community relations. Thus, this thesis offers three contributions to the field of business-community relations, and more generally to the theories of organizations. First, it proposes a systematic review of the literature on the social license

to operate and maps the literature. Secondly, it analyzes the processes of community agency of a local community through the emergence and development of local community-based organizations, while linking this process of community agency with that of the social license to operate. Third and at last, it deepens our understanding of the negotiation process between a local community and a project promoter in a situation of asymmetry of power, legitimacy and resources.

This doctoral thesis is composed of three articles which are interrelated and seek to understand specific yet complementary dimensions of the social license to operate and business-community relations. In doing so, this thesis identifies characteristics of the social license to operate and explores its dynamics and processes. Moreover, while the social license is often perceived and conceptualized in a rather static manner and mostly in a short-term temporal orientation, this thesis suggests positioning – although this is not explicit in all three papers – business-community relations in a socioconstructionist perspective. Indeed, all three papers highlight the negotiated and dynamic nature of business-community relations and the social license to operate.

All in all, the theoretical and practical contributions of these three papers taken together provide insights to the practice of business-community relations and they contribute to our broader understanding of the business-society interface.

Keywords: social license to operate; local communities; business-community relations; stakeholders.

Research methods: qualitative methods; case study; longitudinal approach; inductive research.

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Liste des abréviations

CCR	Corporate-community Relations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
SLO	Social license to operate
JBNQA	James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement
CBO	Community-based Organizations
NYPA	New York Power Authority

À tous ceux qui, à travers le monde, n'ont pas accès au savoir et à l'éducation...

*À la Nation Crie d'Eeyou Istchee pour son courage et sa force qui méritent
admiration et respect...*

“Science, like all creative activity, is exploration, gambling, and adventure. It does not lend itself very well to neat blueprints, detailed road maps, and central planning. Perhaps that's why it's fun.” (Herbert A. Simon, 1964:85)

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Cette thèse est le fruit de plusieurs années de travail. À ma grande surprise, le temps est passé vite. Si vite que j'en conclus que l'aventure intellectuelle était séduisante. Elle fût également enrichissante et transformatrice à maints égards. Lorsque j'ai entamé mon doctorat en septembre 2013, je pensais accroître de façon exponentielle mon savoir. En réalité, j'ai rapidement compris que le doctorat est fait pour accroître de façon exponentielle notre ignorance tant le monde du savoir est illimité. Malgré cela, j'ai pris plaisir à cultiver mon ignorance au fil des mois, des années et des publications. Il me faudra néanmoins plus de temps pour m'y faire !

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Avant-propos

« Hydro-Québec a fait de nous une meilleure communauté et notre communauté a fait d'Hydro-Québec une meilleure entreprise. Notre long conflit nous a mutuellement renforcés. » (John Paul Murdoch, secrétaire général du Grand Conseil des Cris)

Depuis des siècles, les communautés autochtones ont contribué de manière remarquable à l'édification du Canada (Weatherford, 1989; Wright, 2004). Le Canada contemporain que nous connaissons aurait ainsi difficilement pu exister sans cet apport pionnier. Pourtant, la situation actuelle des autochtones du Canada semble trahir cette réalité historique (Olive Patricia Dickason & David Long, 2011). Alors que nombre de rapports et d'études montrent régulièrement la précarité dans laquelle les communautés autochtones canadiennes vivent en dépit des efforts consentis par les gouvernements successifs – jugés insuffisants par certains, inefficaces par d'autres –, la sous-représentation institutionnelle des autochtones de même que le racisme systémique auquel ils font face sont autant de faits alarmants (Kulchyski, 2013a; Neu & Therrien, 2004; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). Le discours sévère du vérificateur général du Canada Michael Ferguson en novembre 2016 illustre bien cet échec : la réalité des peuples autochtones du Canada « est plus qu'inacceptable » (St-Pierre, 2016). Quel que soit le domaine (santé, éducation, niveau de vie, espérance de vie, sécurité, etc.), les peuples autochtones accusent en effet un retard considérable en contraste avec le reste du Canada (Marquis, 2016; Assembly of First Nations, 2011; Gerber, 2014).

Originaire d'Algérie et né d'une mère orpheline de guerre – mes grands-parents ayant lutté durant la guerre de libération algérienne –, je suis naturellement préoccupé par ces problématiques d'injustice, de colonisation et de discrimination. À la base de cette recherche résidait une curiosité intellectuelle et personnelle de mieux comprendre les enjeux d'acceptabilité sociale. J'ignorais alors que j'allais explorer des problématiques politico-sociales proches de celles de ma propre histoire dans mon pays d'origine car, il faut le rappeler, le territoire Cri d'Eeyou Istchee était dans les années 70s et 90s aux

autochtones du monde ce qu'Alger était aux colonisés dans les années 60s : « la Mecque des révolutionnaires » (Le Figaro, 2017). Prenant comme point de départ l'objet scientifique qu'est l'acceptabilité sociale, cette aventure intellectuelle a ainsi rapidement évolué vers une aventure humaine extraordinaire qui m'a permis de faire le lien entre cet intérêt intellectuel et mes propres intérêts en tant que citoyen.

Une aventure marquée par la surprise, l'émerveillement et l'admiration envers un peuple qui a commencé avec peu mais qui a réussi à imposer ses valeurs et sa vision traditionnelle marquée par la sagesse, le respect des aînés et une symbiose avec la Nature (Craik, 2004). Il est des histoires qui bouleversent et nous marquent à tout jamais. À ne pas en douter, celle des Cris en est une. Un peuple qui a réussi à repousser le colonialisme culturel, politique, économique et institutionnel par la mobilisation collective, la force spirituelle et le courage.

Le projet de développement hydroélectrique promu par Hydro-Québec sur le territoire Cri en 1970 a été la locomotive de leurs actions citoyennes et politiques (Houck, 2011; Salisbury, 1986; Whiteman, 2004). La Nation Crie a non seulement joué un rôle clé dans le renforcement des compétences canadiennes en matière de politiques environnementales, mais elle a également joué un rôle clé dans l'édification des droits autochtones à travers le monde, de même que dans la structuration et l'organisation des Premières Nations du Canada (Carlson, 2008; Salisbury, 1986). Les Cris du Québec – grâce à leurs principaux grands chefs Billy Diamond, Ted Moses et Matthew Coon Come – ont aussi occupé une place de premier ordre dans les processus démocratiques québécois et canadiens depuis les années 1970s. Que ce soit dans la remise en question des politiques discriminatoires du gouvernement fédéral à l'égard des autochtones, l'inclusion des droits autochtones dans la constitution canadienne, l'élaboration de politiques environnementales québécoises et canadiennes ou encore le droit à l'autodétermination des peuples autochtones (Craik, 2004). Ted Moses, ancien Grand Chef des Cris, a d'ailleurs été l'un des tout premiers autochtones Ambassadeur au sein des Nations Unies. Pour revenir à la thématique d'acceptabilité sociale et des relations entreprises-communautés, la saga conflictuelle qui a marqué les relations entre la Nation Crie

d'Hydro-Québec pendant plusieurs décennies a permis à Hydro-Québec de devenir un acteur avant-gardiste en matière de gestion des relations entreprises-communautés et de développement local. Hydro-Québec est en effet aujourd'hui reconnu dans le milieu de l'hydroélectricité et des projets de développement des ressources naturelles comme étant un modèle de bonnes pratiques liées à l'acceptabilité sociale des projets et à l'engagement des parties prenantes locales.

Après des décennies de relations conflictuelles et difficiles, Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie s'accordent aujourd'hui pour reconnaître le caractère constructif, positif et exemplaire de leurs relations. Ce phénomène empirique est riche en apprentissages pour notre compréhension du fonctionnement des organisations car, à l'aube d'un monde hyperactif où les controverses défraient l'actualité (Batellier & Sauvé, 2011; Mailhot, 2016; Patriotta, Gond, & Schultz, 2011), il est de notre responsabilité de mieux comprendre comment rendre possible la cohabitation entre différentes logiques institutionnelles.

En définitive, j'ai pris plaisir à apprendre un épisode important de l'histoire du Québec et du Canada moderne grâce à l'histoire d'Hydro-Québec et de la Nation Crie. L'aventure empirique au cœur de cette thèse en est donc une qui dépasse largement les deux articles empiriques que je vous présente, espérant ainsi que ces articles empiriques vous montreront un aspect important de cette histoire : comment des communautés marginalisées parviennent à s'organiser pour faire valoir leur voix dans un processus d'acceptabilité sociale, alors que tout prédestinait leur voix à être écrasée une fois de plus (voir par exemple l'autobiographie du conseiller du Premier ministre Bourassa, Ciaccia, 2015). Bien conscient que l'apport de cette recherche doctorale à notre compréhension de cet épisode historique n'est qu'un caillou dans une montagne de roches, j'espère à tout le moins que ce caillou de connaissances sera utile dans une optique de compréhension théorique et de transformation sociale pour un meilleur monde (Déry, 2013).

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Introduction

Préface

Au cours des dernières années, les questions liées aux relations entreprises-communautés se sont imposées comme d'importants enjeux pour les entreprises, particulièrement dans les secteurs industriel et des ressources naturelles (Hall, Lacey, Carr-Cornish, & Dowd, 2015; Prno & Slocombe, 2012). Ainsi, nombre de projets se retrouvent entravés par des conflits entreprises-communautés. En dépit de l'émergence de ces enjeux tant pour les entreprises, la société civile que les gouvernements, la recherche sur la responsabilité sociale des entreprises a peu abordé, en dépit de son récent développement, les recherches sur la construction de relations entreprises-communautés dans une perspective à long terme (Baba & Raufflet, 2015). Par ailleurs, les recherches actuelles portent une attention particulière à la phase initiale des projets au détriment d'une vision holistique qui s'intéresse à toutes les étapes du cycle de vie des projets (Delannon, Raufflet, & Baba, 2016). Les recherches sur les relations entreprises-communautés ont ainsi mis de côté l'analyse de l'évolution à long terme des relations entreprises-communautés. Il en résulte que nous avons une compréhension encore limitée des conditions nécessaires à la construction et au maintien de bonnes relations entreprises-communautés locales sur une longue période et aux différentes étapes du cycle de vie d'un projet.

Au vu des nombreuses controverses autour de grands projets de développement tels que les projets d'infrastructures ou d'exploitation des ressources naturelles (Davis & Franks, 2014), et dans un contexte où la dichotomie entre croissance économique et contestation du développement est de plus en plus manifeste, l'acceptabilité sociale s'impose aujourd'hui comme un enjeu de gestion majeur (Syn, 2014b). Fréquemment présentée comme un concept managérial (Hall et al., 2015), l'acceptabilité sociale a reçu au cours des dernières années une attention considérable dans la sphère académique où ce concept est au cœur d'une pléthore de définitions et de typologies (Fortin & Fournis, 2014; Fournis & Fortin, 2015; Gendron, 2014).

Ce champ de recherche en émergence présente toutefois plusieurs limites qui rendent sa conceptualisation en tant qu'objet scientifique difficile. D'abord, la littérature sur l'acceptabilité sociale souffre d'ancrages théoriques lacunaires et de perspectives méthodologies peu élaborées. De plus, la littérature sur l'acceptabilité sociale est fragmentée et la plupart des définitions ont été élaborées par des praticiens et des consultants, ainsi que par les institutions financières internationales, les sociétés d'investissement et les dirigeants d'entreprises (Raufflet, Baba, Perras, & Delannon, 2012). Ensuite, une majeure partie des études portant sur les relations entreprises-communautés sont orgo-centrés et ignorent les processus intra-communautés et leur influence sur l'évolution des relations entreprise-communautés locales. Enfin, la dimension institutionnelle – c'est-à-dire la capacité des communautés locales à s'organiser et à structurer leur milieu local de manière à porter leur voix face aux promoteurs – est absente des débats sur l'acceptabilité sociale dans la littérature en gestion.

Face à ces insuffisances, cette thèse fait avancer ces dimensions et, ce faisant, permet de consolider le champ de recherche des relations entreprises-communautés.

Aperçu de la thèse et intégration des articles

Cette thèse doctorale prend la forme d'une thèse par articles. Les trois articles qui la composent sont interreliés et s'attellent à comprendre chacun une dimension spécifique des relations entreprises-communautés (voir Tableau I ci-dessous). Les contributions théoriques de ces trois articles pris ensemble apportent des éclaircissements sur la pratique de la gestion des relations entreprises-communautés et elles contribuent aussi à notre compréhension plus générale de l'interface entre les entreprises et leur environnement sur le plan théorique.

Plus précisément, en intégrant ces trois articles, cette thèse contribue à l'avancement des connaissances dans le domaine des relations entreprises-communautés et de l'acceptabilité sociale à quatre niveaux.

D'abord, elle approfondit notre réflexion sur les relations entreprises-communautés et l'acceptabilité sociale en abordant une dimension importante mais sous-explorée : le

développement des capacités locales des communautés locales et l'importance de ces capacités dans le processus d'acceptabilité sociale. Ensuite, elle nous permet de mieux comprendre le processus de négociation – souvent conflictuel – entre une entreprise et une communauté locale du point de vue de cette communauté locale et dans le cadre d'un enjeu d'acceptabilité sociale teinté par une asymétrie de pouvoir, de légitimité et de ressources. Puis, elle fait avancer la réflexion sur la consolidation théorique de l'acceptabilité sociale et contribue à la consolidation de ce champ de recherche en mettant l'accent sur une vision holistique de l'acceptabilité sociale au détriment d'une vision trop souvent firmo-centrée et axée que sur les phases initiales du projet, permettant de mieux appréhender l'acceptabilité sociale dans une optique de développement durable. Enfin, cette thèse met de l'avant un angle méthodologique négligé dans les travaux qui portent sur l'acceptabilité sociale, celui des études qualitatives longitudinales et processuelles. En effet, en s'intéressant aux études empiriques et à l'évolution à long terme des relations entreprises-communautés, cette thèse en évidence comment construire, cultiver et reconstruire des relations durables et constructives entre entreprises et communautés locales, au-delà des préceptes qui ignorent la dimension dynamique et processuelle de l'acceptabilité sociale et des relations entreprises-communautés.

Le premier article, **l'acceptabilité sociale : une revue critique de la littérature théorique et empirique** (*The Social License to Operate : A Critical Review of the Theoretical and Empirical Literature*), repose sur une revue systématique de la littérature de l'acceptabilité sociale. Cet article propose d'analyser aux plans théorique, méthodologique et épistémologique la littérature académique portant sur l'acceptabilité sociale. L'objectif de cet article est de poser les jalons de ce champ de recherche, d'offrir un regard critique sur la littérature actuelle et de suggérer des pistes de recherche afin de consolider ce champ émergent. À notre connaissance, il s'agit de l'une des rares – sinon la seule – revue de littérature systématique sur l'acceptabilité sociale. Dans cet article, j'analyse 247 articles publiés entre 1980 et 2015 dans 131 revues académiques. Cette analyse m'a permis de cartographier la littérature, de proposer une définition énumérative de l'acceptabilité sociale et de proposer un agenda de recherche afin de consolider ce champ de recherche émergent. Ce faisant, cet article identifie les caractéristiques de l'acceptabilité sociale et explore les dynamiques et certaines des conséquences de ces

caractéristiques pour la recherche et la pratique en management. Il permet notamment de répondre à des questions incluant, mais pas limitées à : qu'est-ce que l'acceptabilité sociale ? Qui évalue l'acceptabilité sociale ? Par rapport à quoi ? Quel est le processus d'acceptabilité sociale ? Quelles sont les diverses conceptions de l'acceptabilité sociale ? Parmi les suggestions que cet article met de l'avant, notons la nécessité de rendre plus rigoureux le processus de recherche qualitative dans le champ de l'acceptabilité sociale et l'intérêt de connecter les recherches sur l'acceptabilité sociale à des théories établies dans le champ des théories des organisations (exemples : théorie de la légitimité, théorie des parties prenantes ou encore la théorie institutionnelle) afin de renforcer notre compréhension de l'acceptabilité sociale et d'enrichir potentiellement ces cadres théoriques en les confrontant à des phénomènes empiriques originaux.

Le deuxième article, **Agence de la communauté, développement de capacités et relations entreprises-communautés : leçons d'Eeyou Istchee** (*'Community agency, capacity building and corporate-community relations: lessons from Eeyou Istchee'*), analyse le processus de développement de capacités d'une communauté locale. La littérature fait clairement ressortir que les processus intra-communautés sont sous-étudiés au profit des études orgo-centrées, en plus d'ignorer dans bien des cas la dimension processuelle et longitudinale de l'évolution des relations entreprises-communautés. Pourtant, la compréhension de ces relations complexes ne peut être réalisée sans une profonde compréhension des processus et de la dynamique interne à ces deux parties prenantes dans la durée. Cette limite est particulièrement dommageable puisqu'elle restreint notre compréhension de l'influence de ces processus intra-communautés sur les relations entreprises-communautés, notamment si l'on s'intéresse au processus de construction de relations durables et constructives entre une entreprise et des parties prenantes locales. Dans cette perspective, ce premier article propose une étude longitudinale de l'évolution des relations-entreprises communautés entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James sur la période 1970-2015 du point de vue du processus de construction de capacités locales de la Nation Crie. L'article suggère deux contributions principales : d'abord, il analyse et conceptualise un processus d'émergence de '*community-based organizations*' permettant aux communautés locales de développer des capacités locales. Ensuite, il définit et construit une typologie de ces organisations

locales selon leurs fonctions pour les communautés locales et leur rôle dans le cadre des relations d'entreprise communautaire. Ce faisant, l'article propose un cadre conceptuel pour comprendre comment une communauté locale peut développer son agence. Cet article discute également l'influence de ce processus sur la trajectoire d'acceptabilité sociale et appelle à plus de recherches centrées sur les processus intra-communautés.

Le troisième article, **De la remise en question du modèle de priorisation des parties prenantes : leçons tirées de parties prenantes locales dormantes** (*'Challenging Stakeholder Salience: Lessons from Dormant Local Stakeholders'*) analyse la manière dont des acteurs marginalisés – avec des ressources limitées, une légitimité et un pouvoir faibles – préservent et défendent leurs intérêts sur une longue période de temps face à des acteurs plus puissants. Cet article remet en question un modèle dominant qui a façonné notre conception de la priorisation des parties prenantes (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997). Ce modèle pionnier propose que la priorisation des parties prenantes devrait se faire en fonction de trois attributs : la légitimité, le pouvoir et l'urgence. Le postulat de base est que les ressources organisationnelles étant limitées, les organisations doivent ainsi accorder une importance particulière aux parties prenantes cruciales, c'est-à-dire celles qui détiennent ces trois attributs et qui peuvent donc représenter une menace. Les parties prenantes dites dormantes, c'est-à-dire celles qui ne possèdent pas ces trois attributs, sont pour leur part délaissées. Cet article, basé sur un puzzle empirique de gestion des parties prenantes, met en évidence les limites de ce modèle. Il montre notamment comment les parties prenantes dormantes développent leur légitimité et pouvoir dans le temps à travers des coalitions et stratégies de lobbying, mettant ainsi en exergue la limite principale de ce modèle qui ne tient pas compte de la dimension processuelle et dynamique des interactions entre parties prenantes. En ce sens, cet article contribue à la théorie des parties prenantes et plus largement au champ des relations entreprises-communautés en proposant (1) de positionner la réflexion sur la priorisation des parties prenantes dans le temps et l'espace, (2) d'accorder une importance aux intérêts des parties prenantes plutôt que de se focaliser sur les parties prenantes seulement, et (3) de penser les interactions entre parties prenantes dans une approche processuelle et dynamique plutôt que statique. En définitive, cet article plaide en faveur d'une approche de priorisation des parties prenantes plus inclusive, complète et dynamique.

Table I - Aperçu de la thèse par articles

	Premier article (Chapitre 1)	Deuxième article (Chapitre 2)	Troisième article (Chapitre 3)
Titre	The Social License to Operate: A Critical Review of the Theoretical and Empirical Literature	Community agency, capacity building and corporate-community relations: lessons from Eeyou Istchee	Challenging Stakeholder Saliency: Lessons from Dormant Local Stakeholders
Thème principal	Cartographier la littérature sur l'acceptabilité sociale et proposer un agenda de recherche	Comprendre le processus intra-communauté de développement de capacités et son rôle dans la trajectoire d'acceptabilité sociale	Comprendre comment des acteurs avec peu de pouvoir et de légitimité parviennent à défendre leurs intérêts
Question de recherche	Quelles sont les caractéristiques théoriques, méthodologiques et épistémologiques du corpus de l'acceptabilité sociale ?	Quel est le processus par lequel les communautés locales développement de l'agence ?	Comment des acteurs marginalisés peuvent défendre leurs intérêts face à des groupes plus établis ?
Ancrage théorique	-	Capacités locales	Théorie des parties prenantes
Concepts principaux	Acceptabilité sociale Licence sociale	Institutions locales Capacités locales	L'influence des parties prenantes Parties prenantes
Niveau d'analyse	Théorique	Micro (communauté locale)	Méso (interface entre la communauté et son environnement)
Design	Revue systématique de la littérature	Article empirique (qualitatif)	Article empirique (qualitatif)
Méthodologie	247 articles 131 revues 1980-2015	Cas longitudinal (1970-2015) Entrevues semi-structurées Discussions de groupe; Archives	Cas longitudinal (1970-2015) Entrevues semi-structurées Discussions de groupe; Archives

Le choix méthodologique et épistémologique

Cette section méthodologique détaille la méthodologie adoptée dans le cadre de la thèse étant donné que les deux premiers articles empiriques ne détaillent pas l'ensemble de ces informations par mesure de sobriété exigée par les revues académiques. L'*Annexe* méthodologique explique de manière plus détaillée la nature des données collectées et le déroulement dans le temps du processus de collecte de données primaires et secondaires.

Choix de la méthodologie et du design de recherche

Cette thèse repose sur une approche historique en reconnaissant la valeur d'une analyse historique détaillée des organisations et des processus institutionnels (Coraiola, Foster, & Suddaby, 2015; Suddaby, Foster, & Mills, 2014). Ainsi, cette thèse reconnaît l'existence de plusieurs courants épistémologiques en ce qui concerne le cours à l'approche historique dans l'analyse organisationnelle et institutionnelle (Coraiola et al., 2015). Cette thèse s'inscrit dans l'approche qui conçoit l'histoire comme étant socialement construite par les acteurs en jeu, mais aussi par les acteurs qui la construisent rétrospectivement. Plus particulièrement, j'essaie dans cette thèse de baser les recherches sur l'intégration contextuelle socio-historique des actions et stratégies des acteurs (à l'instar de Vaara & Lamberg, 2016)

L'étude de cas a été retenue pour mener cette recherche. Étant donné que la présente démarche de recherche s'inscrit dans une logique processuelle dans une approche interprétativiste, je cherche ainsi à comprendre la réalité, soit une dynamique processuelle plutôt qu'à vérifier une théorie. L'observation empirique de la réalité est dans ces cas recommandée (Patton, 2002). De plus, cette recherche correspond aux paramètres proposés par Miles and Huberman (1994) permettant de juger l'utilité de la méthode des cas. En effet, cette recherche peut être considérée comme exploratoire étant donné que je m'intéresse au « comment » de la reconstruction des relations durables avec les communautés locales et du processus d'acceptabilité sociale. Les questions débutant par « pourquoi » et « comment », du fait de leur caractère exploratoire, sont plus susceptibles d'exiger une méthode basée sur l'étude de cas, en raison des liens entre événements qu'elles impliquent et qui doivent être retracés à travers le temps (Miles & Huberman,

1994; Patton, 2002). Ainsi, mon projet de recherche repose sur l'analyse des relations entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James entre 1970 et 2015. Qualifié d'un cas extrême selon les critères de Yin (2003), ce cas porte précisément sur le projet hydroélectrique de la Baie-James, également appelé Projet du siècle.

Deux facteurs principaux font de ce cas un phénomène empirique intéressant à étudier. Premièrement, la controverse autour du projet de la Baie-James est reconnue comme étant l'une des plus longues et médiatisées de l'histoire du Québec, impliquant les gouvernements provincial et fédéral, Hydro-Québec, la Nation Crie et nombre de mouvements sociaux et environnementaux à l'échelle mondiale. Cette controverse a eu impact majeur sur la législation environnementale québécoise et canadienne, et a été sélectionné parmi les huit controverses environnementales ayant changé le monde en termes d'impact sociopolitique (Houck, 2011). En ce sens, l'avantage principal d'un cas « extrême » est d'offrir une manifestation forte d'un phénomène particulier qui facilite sa théorisation puisqu'il présente des spécificités le distinguant de la majorité des cas auxquels il pourrait être comparé (Patton, 2002). Deuxièmement, au-delà de l'intensité de la controverse engendrée par ce projet, son dénouement est également intéressant puisqu'il a abouti à la signature de la *Paix des Braves* en février 2002, une entente historique reconnue à l'échelle internationale et dont le format a servi de prototype à plusieurs protocoles ultérieurs d'engagement avec les communautés autochtones promus par la Banque Mondiale¹. En effet, le projet de la Baie-James est un projet étant passé par des phases contrastées d'acceptabilité sociale depuis un niveau très faible – voire inexistant –

¹ À la suite de la Paix des Braves, la Nation Crie d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James a également signé d'autres ententes historiques avec tant Hydro-Québec, que les gouvernements provincial et fédéral. En juillet 2012, Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie ont signé *L'entente concernant la réappropriation du territoire visé par le projet de l'Eastmain-1-A/Sarcelle/Rupert*. Cette entente en est une sans précédent permettant aux Cris (1) de prendre en charge les obligations d'Hydro-Québec en ce qui concerne le milieu humain ce qui leur donne un pouvoir accru, (2) de participer à un mécanisme leur permettant d'évaluer les efforts d'Hydro-Québec en vertu de leurs obligations, (3) et de profiter d'un fonds d'utilisation et de réappropriation indexé annuellement visant à minimiser les impacts du projet Sarcelle-Rupert-EM1, et de maximiser la pratique traditionnelle des Cris, tant et aussi longtemps que le projet sera en opération. Toujours durant la même période, la Nation Crie et le gouvernement du Québec ont signé *l'Entente sur la gouvernance dans le territoire d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James*, qui permet aujourd'hui aux Cris de cogérer le territoire d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James avec les Jamésiens à travers la création d'un nouveau gouvernement régional qui remplacera la municipalité de Baie-James. Enfin, en juillet 2017, la Nation Crie a signé une entente historique avec le gouvernement fédéral leur accordant davantage d'autonomie sur leur territoire, notamment en ayant eu le droit d'établir leurs propres lois sur les terres près des communautés Cris.

à un niveau actuel reconnu par les parties prenantes comme élevé. À l'inverse du projet initiale des années 1970s, le tout récent projet mené par Hydro-Québec sur le territoire de la Baie-James (East-1A-Sarcelle-Rupert) est considéré comme un projet de « nouvelle génération » du fait qu'il ait mis au premier plan le processus de consultation et d'engagement de la Nation Crie d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James à toutes les étapes du projet.

Considérations de validité

Les critères de Lincoln and Guba (1994) pour assurer la validité des recherches qualitatives (crédibilité, transférabilité, fiabilité et confirmabilité) ont été respectés afin d'assurer la validité des données et de la méthodologie utilisées dans cette thèse.

La crédibilité de la recherche, c'est-à-dire le degré auquel plusieurs constructions de la réalité ont été présentées adéquatement, a été respectée de plusieurs façons. Premièrement, j'ai été impliqué en tant que chercheur principal dans le cas étudié pendant une longue période de temps (depuis février 2012), ce qui m'a permis de documenter le cas, d'en discuter avec différents acteurs, incluant les protagonistes eux-mêmes lors de plusieurs événements, et de raffermir ma compréhension du cas. Cette longue immersion m'a permis de bien comprendre la complexité du contexte, me permettant ainsi de remarquer les anomalies et incohérences dans la collecte de données. Cette immersion m'a aussi permis d'orienter ma collecte de données au fur et à mesure que j'avancais dans le processus de collecte et d'analyse de données. Ce processus itératif est particulièrement enrichissant pour les recherches exploratoires et inductives (Patton, 2002). Deuxièmement, la triangulation des données a été respectée. De nombreuses sources secondaires ont été utilisées, principalement des archives du Grand Conseil des Cris, des livres et des thèses d'historiens et de sociologues qui se sont penchés sur ce cas, ainsi que des articles de presse. La triangulation synchronique des données primaires a également été respectée en prenant en considération la voix de différents acteurs impliqués dans le cas : des cadres d'Hydro-Québec, des hauts fonctionnaires québécois, des cadres du Grand Conseil des Cris et des membres de la communauté crie – employés des conseils de bande,

activistes, *tallymen*² et utilisateurs traditionnels du territoire. Cela m'a permis de retracer les multiples compréhensions et constructions de cette réalité. Plusieurs des intervenants rencontrés et interviewés ont eu un rôle actif durant la controverse et le processus de reconstruction des relations. Certains d'entre eux ont même eu une implication de premier ordre dans le phénomène étudié. Quelques-uns ont été impliqués dans le processus sur une période de plus de trois décennies, tandis que d'autres en ont été témoins, voire victimes dans certains cas. Enfin, j'ai également séjourné pendant 4 semaines dans trois communautés crie (Waskaganish, Nemascau et Mistissini) afin de collecter des données et vivre la réalité de ces communautés qui ont dû s'adapter aux impacts occasionnés par les nombreux projets de développement qui ont eu lieu sur leur territoire. Troisièmement, le recours à plusieurs stratégies d'analyse de données processuelle (narrative, décomposition temporelle, théorie ancrée) a permis d'assurer la cohérence et la robustesse des éclairages analytiques qui ont émergé de cette étude. Cette combinaison de stratégies permet ainsi de concevoir des conceptualisations théoriques « qui englobent des causalités multiples, des phénomènes de rétroaction multidirectionnelle et des pistes d'action parallèles. » (Langley, 1996, p. 20). Quatrièmement, certains des répondants ont relu plusieurs parties de ce travail, ce qui leur a permis de valider les citations utilisées et, le cas échéant, d'y apporter des changements. Cinquièmement et en dernier lieu, la compréhension du cas présenté dans cette thèse est également le fruit de plusieurs autres articles et projets de recherche coécrits et cogérés avec des acteurs cruciaux dans le cas présenté : l'un d'Hydro-Québec, l'autre du Grand Conseil des Cris. Parmi ces collaborations à huit mains (avec Emmanuel Raufflet, Réal Courcelles d'Hydro-Québec et John-Paul Murdoch du Grand Conseil des Cris), notons un article accepté à la revue d'Éthique Publique, un séminaire d'une journée organisé à HEC Montréal en novembre 2015 sur l'évolution des relations entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie sur près de 45 ans, et un projet de recherche conjoint entre la société Niskamoon, le Grand Conseil des

² Chez les Cris d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James, le territoire est divisé en lignes de trappe auxquelles sont assignés des *tallymen* en raison de leur grande maîtrise du savoir traditionnel cri. Ces *tallymen* ont la responsabilité de s'assurer que la biodiversité dans leur ligne de trappe est en mesure de se renouveler naturellement, sans quoi l'activité humaine de chasse, trappe et pêche doit s'adapter au rythme de la biodiversité.

Cris et HEC Montréal portant sur l'acceptabilité sociale dans le territoire d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James.

La transférabilité, c'est-à-dire le degré auquel les résultats de cette recherche peuvent s'appliquer à d'autres cas, est respectée par l'entremise de la narrative détaillée dans les deux articles empiriques, permettant au lecteur d'avoir suffisamment d'informations et de recul pour porter jugement sur la transférabilité et le potentiel de réplication des résultats de cette thèse. Étant donné que j'ai opté pour une étude d'un cas longitudinal, il convient de rappeler que l'analyse ainsi que les résultats de cette thèse ne s'appliquent pas forcément à tous les contextes de relations entreprises-communautés, bien que cette étude ait le potentiel de mener à une généralisation théorique comme j'essaie de le montrer dans les deux articles empiriques. Les mesures décrites précédemment permettent somme toute de garantir des résultats semblables à ceux de cette étude si d'autres chercheurs devaient répliquer cette recherche avec le même devis méthodologique. Finalement, les deux articles empiriques présentés dans cette thèse ont bénéficié d'évaluations externes rigoureuses dans le cadre de conférences internationales dont l'Academy of Management et l'European Group for Organizational Studies. La revue de littérature a également été présentée et discutée lors d'un colloque organisé par le TransAtlantic Doctoral Academy. Ainsi, l'ensemble des mesures décrites ci-haut combinées à une attention particulière accordée à la description de la démarche de recherche en ce qui concerne l'échantillonnage, les sources secondaires utilisées et leur rôle dans l'analyse ou encore les données primaires collectées, permettent d'assurer la confirmabilité et la fiabilité de cette étude, c'est-à-dire l'objectivité de la recherche sur le plan qualitatif (Lincoln & Guba, 1994).

Une note sur l'épistémologie

Sur le plan épistémologique, c'est-à-dire « la constitution des connaissances valables » (Piaget, 1967, p. 6), cette thèse s'inscrit dans le paradigme constructiviste tel que conceptualisé par Lincoln & Guba (1985, 1994). En adhérant à cette posture épistémologique, trois hypothèses épistémiques sont acceptées. La première renvoie au subjectivisme qui reconnaît la proximité du sujet connaissant et de l'objet à connaître dans le processus de production des connaissances. La deuxième hypothèse reconnaît que dans

le processus de production de connaissances, la subjectivité et les valeurs du chercheur occupent inévitablement un rôle dans le processus notamment dans l'interprétation des données. Enfin, la troisième hypothèse est liée au relativisme ontologique, qui reconnaît la relativité de la réalité, perçue comme étant socialement construite par les individus qui donnent continuellement du sens à leurs expériences.

Dans cette même perspective, notre compréhension des relations entreprises-communautés s'inscrit dans une approche socioconstructiviste où ces relations sont perçues comme étant dynamiques plutôt que statiques et continuellement négociées entre acteurs. Ainsi, une approche méthodologique processuelle est adoptée visant à comprendre « comment et pourquoi les choses émergent, se développent, s'amplifient ou se terminent avec le temps » (Langley, Smallman, Tsoukas, & Ven, 2013, p. 1).

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Chapitre 1

The social license to operate: a critical review of the theoretical and empirical literature and research agenda³

Résumé

The concept of the social license to operate — or SLO — is increasingly mobilized by scholars, practitioners and policymakers to highlight the rise of local corporate-community issues surrounding major development projects. Despite growing academic interest in SLO, little attempt has been made to provide a comprehensive review of existing knowledge. In fact, the current state of knowledge about SLO is characterized by conceptual and definitional inconsistencies, persisting methodological gaps and a lack of theoretical anchoring. This paper aims to address this gap and develop our understanding of the SLO. Adopting a ‘systematic’ approach to reviewing the literature, this paper reviews 247 articles on SLO published in 131 journals from 1982 to 2015. Through the analysis of SLO definitions, types, and operationalizations, it develops an enumerative definition of SLO and maps different types of SLO discerned in the literature. It identifies weaknesses in the literature and makes recommendations for extending conceptually, and improving methodologically, future research on SLO, arguing the importance of linking SLO to current theories in organizational theory. Methodological reorientations are also suggested to arrive at more cumulative and practical findings. Based on these analyses, this paper aims at helping to promote future theory development and provide relevant material for policy decisions that managers and executives should make when they manage projects and relations with local stakeholders.

Key words: social license to operate; community relations; community engagement; projects; social acceptance.

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1.1 Introduction

Multi-stakeholder controversies involving local communities, civil society and firms have emerged as major social and managerial issues during the past decade or so. Not a day goes by without the media mentioning such controversies across the globe. While these controversies are not new, they might be increasingly publicized today thanks to the development of means of communication, the advent of social media as well as the emergence of polycentric societies where non-governmental organizations, environmental associations as well as grassroots movements occupy an important role. Recently — during the shale gas controversy in Europe — the United Kingdom experienced an important socio-environmental controversy around the exploitation of shale gas.

In August 2013, major protests occurred in Balcombe (West Sussex) against the government's decision to lift the moratorium on shale gas production in December 2012. In March 2014, local communities have blocked a well in Nottinghamshire in opposition to the health and environmental risks associated to the shale gas industry. More recently, a shale gas exploration site near Blackpool was marked by violent clashes between police officers and anti-fracking activists (Halliday, 2017). Related to these increasing social issues, management scholars have in increasing numbers focused on corporate-community relations and the challenges faced by firms regarding the social acceptance of their projects (Bowen, Newenham-Kahindi, & Herremans, 2010; Idemudia, 2009; Kemp & Owen, 2013; Zandvliet & Anderson, 2009).

Given the increasing complexity of what communities expect from firms, research suggests that these issues are an enduring phenomenon (Hall, Lacey, Carr-Cornish, & Dowd, 2015). The social license to operate — or SLO —, a metaphor that refers to the presence or absence of public consent to an activity, is increasingly being used by firms, policy makers, consultants and international financial organizations to refer to these challenges (Raufflet, Baba, Perras, & Delannon, 2013). Scholars are also increasingly relying on this concept to focus on the social and economic impacts of major development

projects on local communities (Brueckner, Durey, Pforr, & Mayes, 2014; Smits, Justinussen, & Bertelsen, 2016).

Two considerations must be considered regarding this emerging literature. First, these issues are not new. In fact, already in the 1970s, the World Bank's paternalistic approach to development was opposed by many developing countries following which several major projects of the Bank were cancelled due to civil society mobilizations (Khagram, 2004; Miller, 2014). Moreover, as highlighted by Miller (2014), the 1970s were marked by fruitful locally rooted environmental movements which opposed to many economic projects across the globe. Two decades later, in the 1990s, the anti-globalization movement as well as Indigenous peoples' movement for territorial and self-determination rights, have enabled communities across the globe to position themselves as important actors. In this new configuration of post-modern society between "newly liberated organizations and newly empowered communities" (Miller, 2014, p. 386), the SLO concept takes on a particular meaning as it reflects new processes of activism against corporations during the 21st century (Syn, 2014b).

Second, these realities have been captured – perhaps partially – by existing dominant theories and streams of research within the field of management and organizational theory. At least four main streams of research have looked at these issues, regardless of the angle chosen to study them: corporate social responsibility, stakeholder approach, social movement theory and legitimacy. Each of these wide streams of research have different focus per se and some limitations which are highlighted in the table below. But, more importantly, the SLO research has a close relationship with each of them. The SLO can thus be positioned as a complement to reinforce these theories. One example is the legitimacy theory, which has attracted tremendous attention during these past decades (Suddaby, Bitektine, & Haack, 2017). Yet, the legitimacy literature almost strictly explores phenomena at the organizational and field-levels of analysis. While the SLO is closely related to legitimacy – the "endorsement of organizations by social actors" (Deephouse, 1996, p. 1025) – its very nature can open new research frontiers within the legitimacy literature by focusing on legitimacy of organizations' projects. It can be

assumed that organizational legitimacy does not guarantee the legitimacy of a project, and vice versa. The table below synthesizes this discussion about the SLO relationship with these streams of research.

Table II - Streams of research in management studies and their relationship with the SLO

Streams of research	Focus	Relationship with the SLO	Main limitations of the fields of research in relation with the SLO
Stakeholder approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Investigates how organizations manage and integrate stakeholders in their daily operations as well as in their strategic management activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fundamentally, the SLO is about the right of local communities – as legitimate stakeholders – to be involved in decisions about projects that will impact them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Difficulty to move beyond an instrumental perspective of stakeholders, i.e. how to “manage” stakeholders – Moreover, stakeholder approach remains predominantly dominated by a firm-centric and static perspective of the relationship between firms and stakeholders
Social movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Seeks to explain how and why social mobilizations occur, what are the outcomes of such mobilizations and what are the required resources for social movements to attain their objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SLO challenges often take the form of social movements organized by local communities who are impacted or going to be impacted by an organization project, initiative or activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The intersection between social movement and organization studies is relatively young and social movement theorists have mainly focused on societal issues outside of the organizational lens – Moreover, social movement theory has been more focused on <i>how</i> and <i>why</i> social mobilizations achieve certain ‘political’ outcomes than how stakeholders can co-create relationships
Legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Explores why, how and what kind of “actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs” (Suchman, 1995:574) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – While the legitimacy literature mainly focuses on the endorsement of an organization by social actors, the SLO is interested in the endorsement of a specific organization’s projects, initiatives or activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The legitimacy literature has mainly focused on organizational and institutional field levels, neglecting the project level – Moreover, the legitimacy concept has been “widespread application to so many theoretical and empirical contexts has layered the construct with considerable surplus meaning” (Suddaby et al. (2017)
Corporate social responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Looks at the firm-society interface and approaches through which firms can engage in social, environmental and economic initiatives beyond what may be required by laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SLO literature assumes that within their operations, organizations have social responsibilities, including that of considering local communities’ expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Despite some attempts to conceptualize processes of legitimization in relation to CSR (Castelló & Lozano, 2011; Palazzo & Scherer, 2006), studies that explicitly highlight the strategies used by organizations to establish legitimacy through CSR are limited. W. S. Harvey (2014, p. 41) argues that “the academic literature is unclear about the relationship between legitimacy and CSR.”

The concept of SLO originated in the context of the extractive industries and is increasingly mobilized more generally by scholars, practitioners and policymakers around issues related to the acceptance of organizational strategies, activities, and practices by different stakeholders. In fact, while the concept to a large extent is connected to mining and minerals development, it has also found its way into the literature on forest management (Kijazi & Kant, 2011; Ranängen & Zobel, 2014), infrastructure development (Friedl & Reichl, 2016; Iribarren, Martin-Gamboa, Manzano, & Dufour, 2016), the different energy industries (Bronfman, Jimenez, Arevalo, & Cifuentes, 2012; Heikkinen, Lepy, Sarkki, & Komu, 2016; Holley & Mitcham, 2016).

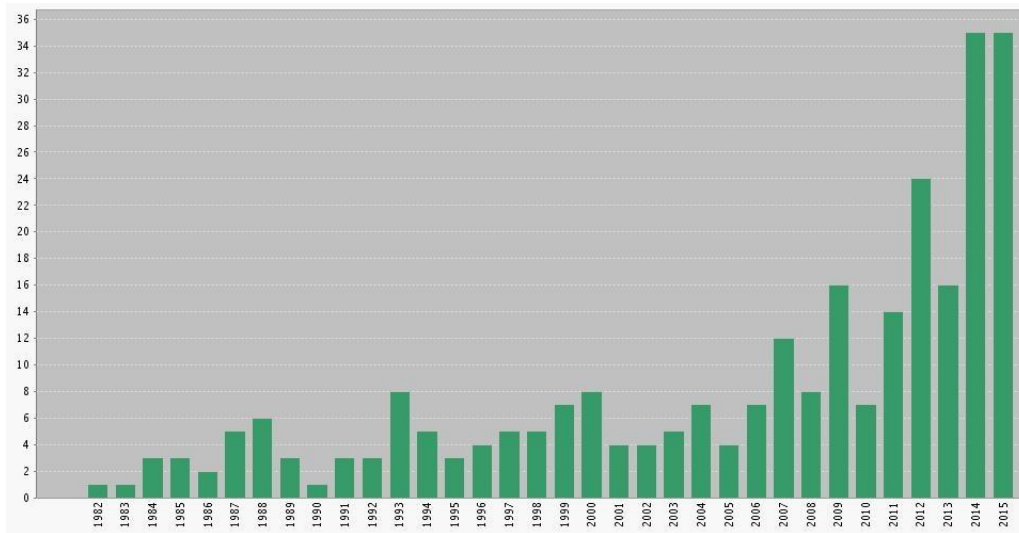
Despite interesting recent academic developments on SLO, we are so far missing a compelling map of the intellectual SLO terrain, exploring conceptualizations, definitions, theory anchoring, methodologies and epistemologies. The emerging field of SLO is fragmented, complex and heterogeneous in terms of theoretical perspectives, methods and conceptualizations, providing only partial or even confusing advice for practitioners and scholars. Although publications on SLO are increasing, none of these has systematically built an overview that integrates all the field of SLO to support both practitioners and researchers. In fact, after two decades of research on a great variety of SLO, we believe that it is time to take stock of what we know and provide a roadmap for future enquiries. More specifically, such an endeavor seems relevant, timely and necessary. As a result, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive review and critique of a diverse range of contemporary literature that informs our understanding of the SLO. The review is undertaken to highlight the importance of this emerging area of interest, to sort the literature and to consolidate the field by providing a collective starting point for future research.

First, it is relevant because, although we know that challenges related to SLO are not new (Rooney, Leach, & Ashworth, 2014; Ruckstuhl, Thompson-Fawcett, & Rae, 2014), SLO is becoming an important managerial challenge for firms and an increasing scholarly topic (Demuijnck & Fasterling, 2016; Melé & Armengou, 2016). Moreover, whereas SLO issues have had a long tradition of taking place in the natural resource sector within

activities such as mining (Hall et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2015), hydropower (Bronfman et al., 2012), wind power (Yuan, Zuo, & Huisingh, 2015) and solar energy (Yuan, Zuo, & Ma, 2011), a myriad of other industries are increasingly facing these issues, including transportation, facilities building, territorial development, urbanism and tourism (Garcia-Yi, 2015; Gifford, 1999; Michel, Buchecker, & Backhaus, 2015; Soma & Haggett, 2015). This shows that what was previously a specific issue becomes an increasing global trend concerning several sectors.

Second, the present study also seems timely as there was recently a spike in the number of scholarly works on SLO being published, resulting in a body of research that is currently growing exponentially (see Figure I⁴). In fact, in the last five years (2010-2015), 131 works with an explicit focus on challenges related to SLO were published in ISI-indexed journals, against 143 during the two previous decades (1980-2009). While 25 papers were published between 1980 and 1990, 206 were published in the past decade (2005-2015), which constitutes an increase of 724% (see Figure I). It seems, then, that it is time to take a deeper look.

Figure I - Published items report from Web of Sciences (1980-2015)



⁴ These figures were gathered by Web of Science by Thomson Reuters. We relied on specific key-words (NIMBY, social licence, social acceptance and social acceptability within journal articles' title, using the 1980-2015-time span. Overall, 274 articles were gathered for these figures. We have excluded journals in the psychology and psychiatry fields, which accounted for an additional 92 articles.

Third and finally, such an undertaking seems necessary, as the increase in research attention to SLO has hardly been accompanied by integration efforts. This has contributed to a state of the field as consisting of many small and largely unconnected pockets of research. To illustrate this diversity, the construct of SLO forms carry a number of different labels, such as social acceptance (Iribarren et al., 2016; C. W. Sun, Yuan, & Yao, 2016), social approval (Bundy & Pfarrer, 2015), not in my backyard (Boudet, 2011; Chiu & Lai, 2009; van der Horst, 2007) and project legitimacy (Aaltonen, 2013), which relate to slightly different paradigms, perspectives and research questions. By placing the challenge of corporate-community relations centrally, pointing out the growth of the sustainable development paradigm with an emphasis on a greater public participation in decision making, and the recognition that firms need to gain an additional SLO to avoid potentially costly conflict and exposure to business risks, this study aims to provide an exhaustive account of the field of SLO which can help us to identify which directions future research might consider. The above is reflected in the following research question: How is the SLO field structured on the definitional, conceptual, methodological, theoretical and epistemological points of view, and how should future research proceed in expanding this important field of enquiry? In this vein, this paper set out to offer an integrated overview of the current body of literature on SLO as a separate field of research, to identify fruitful areas for future research which scholars hoping to expand research on this increasingly important topic could consider.

The structure of the paper is as follows. We begin this paper by summarizing the origin of SLO and follow with a short discussion of the development as a new research area. Next, a summary of the method used for selecting and reviewing the literature is explained, with details on search strategy, studies selection and analysis. Next, we analyze 247 articles on SLO that have been published in 131 journals since 1980, highlighting publication outlets, epistemological, theoretical, methodological and disciplinary scope of the literature. We then discuss the issues arising from our review of the literature and offer some general conclusions on the state of the field, before indicating some avenues for potential future study which could strengthen this emerging field of research. Finally, the last section summarizes the findings, suggestions and contributions while outlining some limitations.

1.2 The social license to operate: origins and conceptual development

Understanding the relationship between a company and its local stakeholders is a strategic issue for businesses (Bowen et al., 2010; Westley & Vredenburg, 1997). The context of sustainable development favored an increasing pressure on companies to act as citizens, that is to say, they must assume both their rights and their responsibilities (Maignan, Ferrell, & Hult, 1999; Matten & Crane, 2005). Corporate-community relations, broadly defined here as the forms of engagement between companies and the local communities in which they operate, have become a salient issue for companies, governments, and civil society (Calvano, 2008; Jenkins, 2004). Issues and controversies surrounding the social acceptance of industrial and business projects have multiplied over the last decade throughout the world (Davis & Franks, 2011; Evans, 2013) and many projects have been challenged, stopped, or delayed due to corporate-community conflicts (Edwards & Lacey, 2014; Houck, 2011). According to R. G. Boutilier (2014, p. 263), the SLO concept first emerged in 1997 during discussions surrounding mining issues at a World Bank meeting. A mining executive from Placer Dome (Canadian gold mining company), James Cooney, first used the “SLO” metaphor with World Bank officials to refer to the increasing mobilization of local communities against mining projects. The World Bank later institutionalized the concept by promoting it as a framework for dealing with corporate-community relations. The concept of SLO has received increasing attention from industry practitioners shortly thereafter. Sustained academic interest in the topic has been a more recent and increasing endeavor.

Originating in the extractive industries, the concept of SLO has increasingly been perceived as a concept that applies to companies in a variety of other industries and it has consequently drawn an increasing amount of attention from both practitioners and academics (Cui, Jo, & Velasquez, 2016; Melé & Armengou, 2016; R. Parsons & Moffat, 2014). In fact, the early literature on the SLO suggested that a firm’s SLO was contingent on how the firm negotiated acceptance of the various impacts its operations might have on the local community and especially on the natural environment (Heikkinen et al., 2016; Owen & Kemp, 2013a). Later conceptual studies expanded this idea to include firms’ impacts on other stakeholder groups including civil society, employees and environmental

groups (Wilburn & Wilburn, 2011). For instance, the World Bank recently argued that the “social license to operate has traditionally referred to the conduct of firms with regard to the impact on local communities and the environment, but the definition has expanded in recent years to include issues related to worker and human rights” (as cited in Cui et al., 2016, p. 775). A SLO exists when a development project is seen as having the broad, ongoing approval and acceptance of society to conduct its operations and local communities are often key arbiters in the process in regards to their proximity to projects, sensitivity to effects, and ability to affect project outcomes through a greater legitimacy to ask for more accountability (Porter & Kramer, 2006). While there is no universally accepted definition of what an SLO is, it is generally taken to refer to local stakeholders acceptance or approval of a specific company project or of the entire company’s ongoing operations in the community (R. Parsons & Moffat, 2014; Rooney et al., 2014).

On a managerial level, corporate-community relations and SLO have emerged as important issues for firms (Dare, Schirmer, & Vanclay, 2014; Melé & Armengou, 2016). Local communities and stakeholders around the world have increasingly come to demand a greater share of benefits from major development projects, more involvement in decision making, and assurances that natural resources exploitation will be conducted safely and responsibly (Delannon, Raufflet, & Baba, 2016). As pointed out by Prno and Slocombe (2012), these trends have been enhanced by the institutionalization of the sustainable development paradigm, with an emphasis on a greater public participation in decision making, and broad governance shifts that have increasingly transferred governing authority towards non-state actors. Moreover, conflict has emerged in many instances when local expectations are not fulfilled, sometimes with significant costs and delays to industry (Davis & Franks, 2011, 2014). At the same time, full legal compliance with state environmental regulations has become an increasingly insufficient means of satisfying society’s expectations with regards to mining issues (Nysten-Haarala, Klyuchnikova, & Helenius, 2015; E. Wilson, 2016).

On the academic level, responding to these increasing concerns, research on company-community relations and SLO has emerged over the last two decades. SLO has often been

related to several other constructs including corporate social responsibility (Wilburn & Wilburn, 2011), stakeholder engagement (Holley & Mitcham, 2016), community engagement (Dare et al., 2014), legitimacy (Melé & Armengou, 2015) and the concept of "free, prior, and informed consent" (Owen & Kemp, 2014). Implicitly, every study of the SLO asserts or assumes that stakeholder analysis and stakeholder engagement are key to acquiring the SLO (Elias, Jackson, & Cavana, 2004; Wilburn & Wilburn, 2011). Firms displaying a commitment to CSR is one way to achieve the SLO, while many companies integrated the SLO to their overall corporate social responsibility strategy (Wilburn & Wilburn, 2011). Overall, SLO, as a research area within the corporate-community relations field, is not new but has burgeoned over the last decade (Alinsky, 1962; Hanson, 1988; Kreuter, Lezin, & Young, 2000; Leach, Mearns, & Scoones, 1999).

From a theoretical standpoint, research on corporate-community relations and SLO has attracted increasing attention. A systematic literature review conducted by Bowen et al. (2010) identified 206 articles published in 11 management journals over the 1994-2007 period. Moreover, several special issues were recently published on corporate-community relations (see *Community Development Journal*, 2013 on extractive industries; *Social Epistemology: A Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Policy*, 2014 on the social license to operate; *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2016 on the ethics of mining). This collection of special issues reflects upon a broad range of emerging corporate-community relations and SLO challenges surrounding economic development and the exploitation of natural resources in different settings worldwide (Maconachie & Hilson, 2013). However, the SLO research – despite its strong growth in recent years – has not yet been systematically reviewed.

1.3 Methods: a systematic review

Given the aims of the paper in reviewing the SLO field, a systematic approach using an archival method is adopted to build a reliable knowledge base of the SLO field (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009; Rousseau, Manning, & Denyer, 2008). Our analysis process includes categorizing, classifying and analyzing the existing literature in SLO, using papers published across more than two three decades (1982 until 2015). This period was chosen

to track the development of the field from the time that SLO papers first appear in the published literature. The primary advantage of systematic reviews is that they move beyond a traditional narrative review to adopt a replicable and transparent process by providing an audit trail of the reviewers' decisions, procedures and conclusions (Rousseau et al., 2008).

Our aim in conducting a systematic review of the SLO literature is to map and assess the existing intellectual territory, and to provide an evidence-based answer to our research questions based on existing knowledge (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003). Although systematic reviews are common in the medical and social policy arenas (Cook et al., 1997; Dixon-Woods et al., 2005), they are becoming increasingly popular in the management literature (Bowen et al., 2010). In this vein, we undertake a systematic qualitative review, consistent with recent suggestions that the methodological rigor of reviews of the management literature should be strengthened (e.g. Denyer & Tranfield, 2009; Keupp, Palmié, & Gassmann, 2012; Tranfield et al., 2003). In the following paragraphs, we have attempted to present this protocol in greater detail.

1.3.1 Data collection

Essentially, systematic reviews are formulated around research questions, and the criteria for inclusion and exclusion of papers are clearly defined at the outset (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Basically, this article follows the principles for systematic review suggested by (Tranfield et al., 2003). In order to provide a systematic, transparent and replicable methodology, the review followed five stages.

First, to ensure a high-quality and unbiased review, two researchers and one practitioner research assistant were involved in the article selection and data extraction process, a mix favored by systematic review methodologists (Tranfield et al., 2003). A review question was identified: 'How is the SLO framed and studied in the literature?' to guide the data collection process. An initial list of keywords based on the author's prior experience was discussed with a review panel of two experienced academics in the field of SLO, corporate-community relations and corporate social responsibility. This initial discussion

yielded a total of 4 keywords: social license, social acceptance, social approval, social acceptability. As our data collection process unfolded, a second discussion allowed us to identify four new keywords used in the literature for the same phenomenon: not in my backyard, locally unwanted land use, social license⁵ and local legitimacy.

Second, keyword searches were employed using predefined search strings to identify articles published between 1980 and 2015 in specific popular management databases (such as ABI ProQuest/Inform Complete, Academic Search Complete, Science Direct, JSTOR and Springer Link). We limited the review to non-invited peer-reviewed journal articles, omitting books, conference proceedings, book chapters and other non-refereed publications, because journal articles can be considered validated knowledge and are likely to have the highest impact on the field (Ordanini, Rubera, & DeFillippi, 2008; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Bachrach, Podsakoff, & 473–488., 2005). This approach provides an accurate and representative picture of relevant scholarly research. The search was limited to articles in English.

Third, at the initial stage of the review 7 387 papers were found. The 7,387 papers were reviewed to develop exclusion and inclusion criteria for the review. Table III highlights the inclusion and exclusion criteria used and their respective justification. Once the inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied within the databases, the number of articles was reduced to 742. The 6,645 citations rejected in this step consisted of citations matching the keywords and criteria used in our literature searches but were not directly related with SLO or corporate-community relations. Examples include literature on: social acceptance of blind children and social acceptance of minorities within neighborhoods. Table IV shows the number of relevant articles that were identified at each stage of the review for each keyword.

⁵ Note that this keyword spells differently 'license' in comparison to 'social licence' initially identified in the first discussion.

Table III - Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria	Reasons for inclusion
All sectors	To gain a wide picture of the SLO field – not just limited to one area
All countries	To ensure a cross-cultural view on the SLO
Theoretical and empirical articles	To capture the overall evolution of the field and all publications
Peer-reviewed journals	To ensure quality and trustworthiness of publications
Selected key-words in title	To ensure the adequacy of the article
Exclusion criteria	Reasons for exclusion
Non-peer reviewed journals	Focus on quality peer-reviewed research
Conference papers, lecture notes, symposiums, trade magazines, workshops, book reviews, letters, chapters	
Psychology and psychiatry fields	To exclude the studies focusing on assessment of an individual’s psyche on topics such as social acceptance of mental ill children
Off-topic according to abstract and/or full paper	Ensure that the word 'acceptance' or 'social licence' is used in contexts of firms interacting with stakeholders

Fourth, the titles and abstracts of the 742 were reviewed against the exclusion and inclusion criteria, leaving 353 as relevant. Furthermore, the resulting 353 studies were reviewed in full-text. If there was doubt regarding inclusion, a second reviewer was involved. This full-text reading reduced the selection to 286 articles, which following the removal of duplicates, were reduced to 220 articles. By performing reference checks of the included articles, we found 27 additional relevant studies. Ultimately, 27 articles were included in the analysis. Altogether, the search methodology yielded a total of 247, of which 47 are conceptual/theoretical in nature and 200 are empirical as follows: 92 rely on qualitative methods, 80 articles contain quantitative methods, and 28 use mixed-methods.

Table IV - Number of journal articles selected at each stage of the review

Selection stage	Key search term							
	Social licence/license*	Social acceptance	Social acceptability	Social approval	Local legitimacy	Not in my backyard (NIMBY)	Locally unwanted land use (LULU)	Total
Original search	<u>506</u>	<u>2 805</u>	<u>1 059</u>	<u>529</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>2 369</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>7 387</u>
<i>ProQuest</i>	238	564	271	138	26	1 268	8	2 513
<i>EBSCO</i>	124	1 411	419	216	39	755	6	2 970
<i>ScienceDirect</i>	107	571	260	110	11	191	2	1 252
<i>JSTOR</i>	19	216	87	54	13	138	13	540
<i>Springer Link</i>	18	43	22	11	1	17	0	112
Post-exclusion and inclusion criteria	139	254	118	8	25	181	17	742
Post abstract analysis	97	79	38	4	0	123	12	353
Post full paper analysis	93	67	30	4	0	83	9	286
Total with duplicate	286							
Total excluding duplicates	220							
Total after reference checks	247							

1.3.2 Data analysis

According to Tranfield et al. (2003), a reliable and trustworthy systematic review should present the primary research upon which the review is founded in a clear and coherent manner, which can be readily understood by scholars and practitioners. In line with this recommendation, we undertook this in two phases by conducting both a descriptive and a content analysis of the field of study.

The overall data analysis process was achieved inductively and in an incremental way over a period of 8 months. A research assistant who's both trained and experienced in sustainable development, corporate social responsibility and social license to operate was hired to support the two authors of this paper. The research assistant was involved in both the analysis criteria selection and the data analysis. An initial meeting was set up to discuss the overall data analysis strategy. After this first meeting, specific criteria were decided by the research team. These first criteria were mainly descriptive and allowed the research assistant to fill in the database. For each criterion, the range of answers were pre-determined, while allowing the research assistant to add new elements of answer which would then be reviewed and discussed with the research team. A second meeting was organized approximately at 75% completion rate of this first step. The second meeting allowed us to validate the database entries and to add new criteria for the descriptive analysis. A couple of weeks later, all descriptive criteria for the 254 articles were populated in the database. A third meeting was then organized to discuss the criteria for the content analysis. Three broad categories emerged (conceptual/definitional, methodological and epistemological). The research assistant then completed the population of the database according to these categories and their respective criteria. Frequent exchanges happened between the research assistant and the main author of this article to validate uncertainties.

First, we analyzed descriptively the field of research in terms of year of publication, reference word, authors, journal of publication, fields of research and research design. Table V below outlines the six criteria used for this first step of analysis and describes more specifically each criterion used.

Table V - Criteria used for the descriptive analysis of the field of SLO

Criteria	Description
Year	Year of publication
Reference word	Key construct mobilized within the title and/or abstract
Authors	Authors of each article
Journal	Journal of publication
Field of research	Area of publication (i.e. management, law, urbanism)
Research design	Type of paper (i.e. conceptual, theoretical or empirical)

Second, to outline what is known and established within the selected published articles, and to identify the key emerging themes, we conducted a content analysis (see Table VI) which focuses on the conceptual and definitional, the methodological and the epistemological criteria. The first criteria assesses the empirical application of each article, the empirical objective and the nature of stakeholders involved. The second criterion looks precisely at the number of cases adopted, the temporal perspective of the study, data sources, data collection transparency and overall qualitative research trustworthiness. Finally, the epistemological criterion looks at the knowledge project of each article, i.e. what is the article's epistemological intent? Table VI below explains in further detail these criteria.

Table VI - Criteria used for the content analysis of the field of SLO

Criteria	Description	Content
Conceptual and definitional		
<i>Empirical application</i>	General sector or activity of application of the construct of SLO	Open coded (i.e. energy, extractive sector, public facilities, transportation, technologies)
<i>Empirical object</i>	Nature of the issue or stake being negotiated among stakeholders	Industry, project, innovation, practice
<i>Stakeholders involved</i>	Nature of stakeholders involved in the SLO process	Local communities, interest groups, citizens, firms

Methodological		
<i>Cases</i>	Number of cases used in the research design	Open coded (i.e. single, multiple)
<i>Temporal perspective</i>	Temporality of the SLO process studied	Open coded (i.e. short term, long term)
<i>Data sources</i>	Data sources used to ensure triangulation	Open coded (i.e. interviews, archives, observation, questionnaires)
<i>Transparency of data collection</i>	Level of transparency of the data collection process	Transparent/not transparent
<i>Overall qualitative research trustworthiness</i>	Trustworthiness of the study according to Lincoln and Guba (1994) four criteria for assessing qualitative studies : credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability	Rigorous/not rigorous
Epistemological	Knowledge project, i.e. purpose of the article in terms of knowledge production	Technical, critical, humanist or nomothetical

Third, each academic source was coded for the content that is described in Tables V and VI. We used the coding to generate the descriptive tables and cross-tabulations below, and as a starting point for our explanatory synthesis.

1.4 Results of the systematic review: towards a framework for understanding the SLO

As highlighted in Figure II below, research on the SLO is rather a new trend. In fact, 153 out of the 247 reviewed papers were published between 2011-2015, which accounts for 62% of the total reviewed papers. That said, early research in this area started in the 1980s, and then expanded and strengthened over the next two decades before establishing itself as a major academic concern in the late 2000s.

Figure II - Evolution of SLO research between 1980 and 2015

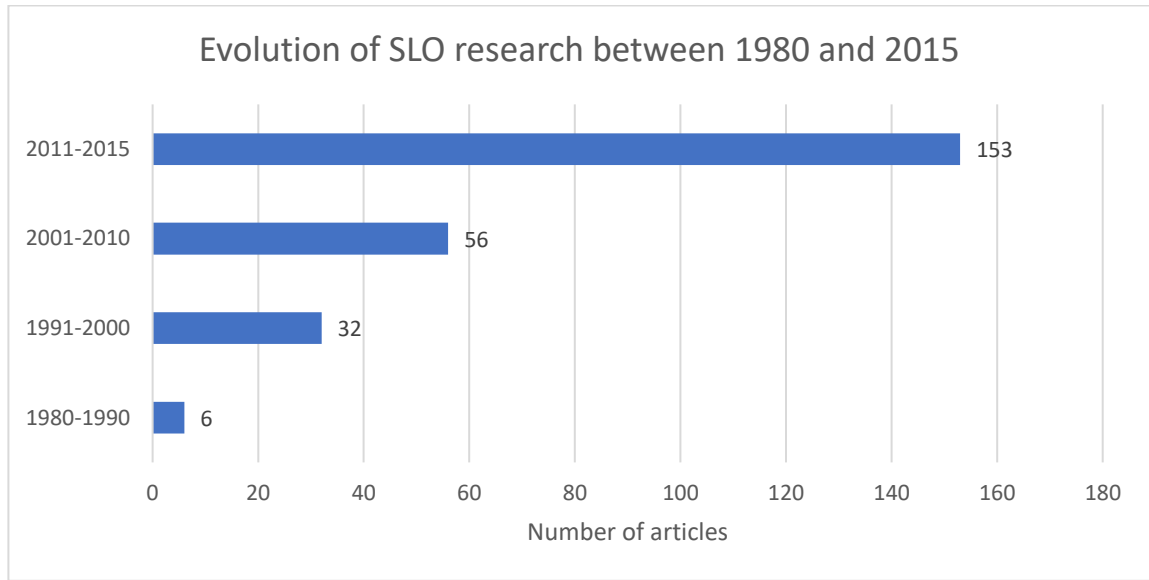


Table VII shows that seventeen fields of research have contributed to the SLO literature, which shows how scattered the literature is. Management (47), energy/resources policy (33), political science (28), economics (28) as well as engineering (26) have contributed the most to the literature with a total of 67% of all reviewed articles. Other varied fields such as geography, psychology, sociology, philosophy and communication have also contributed to advancing knowledge regarding the SLO.

Table VII - Fields contributing to the social license literature

Fields	Number of included citations
Management	47
Energy/resources policy	33
Political science	31
Economics	28
Engineering and technology	26
Geography	16
Environment	12
Psychology	10
Sociology	8
Urbanism	8

Law	9
Territorial development	6
Communication	4
Public Health	4
Industrial ecology	2
Philosophy	2
Anthropology	1

Consistent with the previous table, Table VIII below shows that the 247 reviewed articles were published in a total of 131 journals, which highlights the scattered character of the literature. More surprisingly, 100 articles (40.5%) were published in 10 journals (7.6%), whereas 147 articles (59.5%) were published in 121 journals (92.4%). Energy Policy, a journal devoted to policy related to energy and natural resources, is the journal with the most contributions (37 articles accounting for 15% of the total of reviewed papers). While the advancement of knowledge of a field often moves within intra-disciplinary communities around discussions developed in a journal, the literature on the SLO has developed differently, from a multidisciplinary perspective and in a very large number of journals.

Table VIII - Most popular publication outlets for the social license to operate

Epistemological project	Number of included citations
Energy Policy	37
Resources Policy	11
Social Epistemology	10
Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal	9
Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews	9
Journal of Cleaner Production	7
Energy Research and Social Science	5
Environmental Management	5
Journal of Environmental Planning and Management	4
Journal of Business Ethics	3
Other journals (121 journals)	147

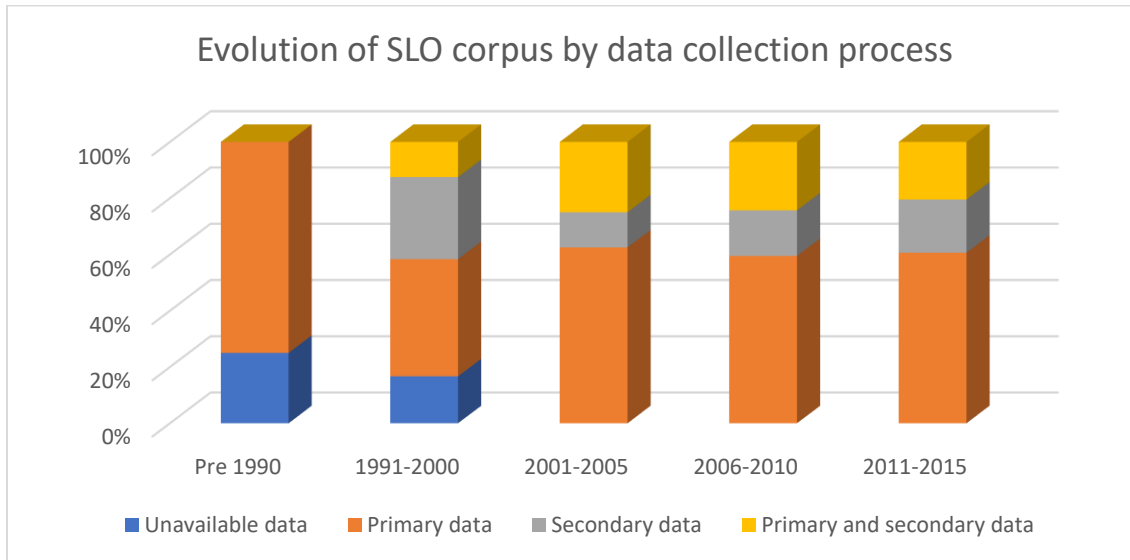
Overall, most of the reviewed SLO literature is empirical (81%), while only 19% is conceptual. Among the first category, 46% articles rely on qualitative methods, 40% rely on quantitative methods and 14% rely on mixed methods. Out of the empirical studies, 78% of reviewed papers rely on a single case study. On a similar note, 45% of multi-case studies rely on two case studies, while the remaining studies are almost equally distributed between three case studies, four case studies and over.

Table IX - Overview of the SLO literature in terms of research designs

Design & number of cases	Single case study	Multi case study				N/A	Grand Total
		2 cases	3 cases	4 cases	Over 4 cases		
Conceptual	-	-	-	-	-	47	47
Qualitative	67	9	4	6	6	-	92
Quantitative	67	8	3		2	-	80
Mixed methods	22	3	2	1	-	-	28
Total	156	20	9	7	8	47	247

In terms of data collection, it is striking to note that most empirical SLO reviewed papers do not necessarily rely on triangulation, i.e. contrasting primary and secondary data to ensure research trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1994). In recent years, exclusive primary data is by far the most used data collection process. The exclusive use of secondary data is minority but increasing since 2001.

Figure III - SLO research data collection sources



In terms of research methodological design, one of the most noticeable aspect of the SLO literature is its static temporal orientation, i.e. articles which empirically study a phenomenon by looking at it from a static perspective rather than a processual one. In total, 116 articles are in this category which account for 58% of all empirical articles. Processual articles account for 40.5% of all empirical reviewed studies, while most of these articles take a short-term view (1-3 years).

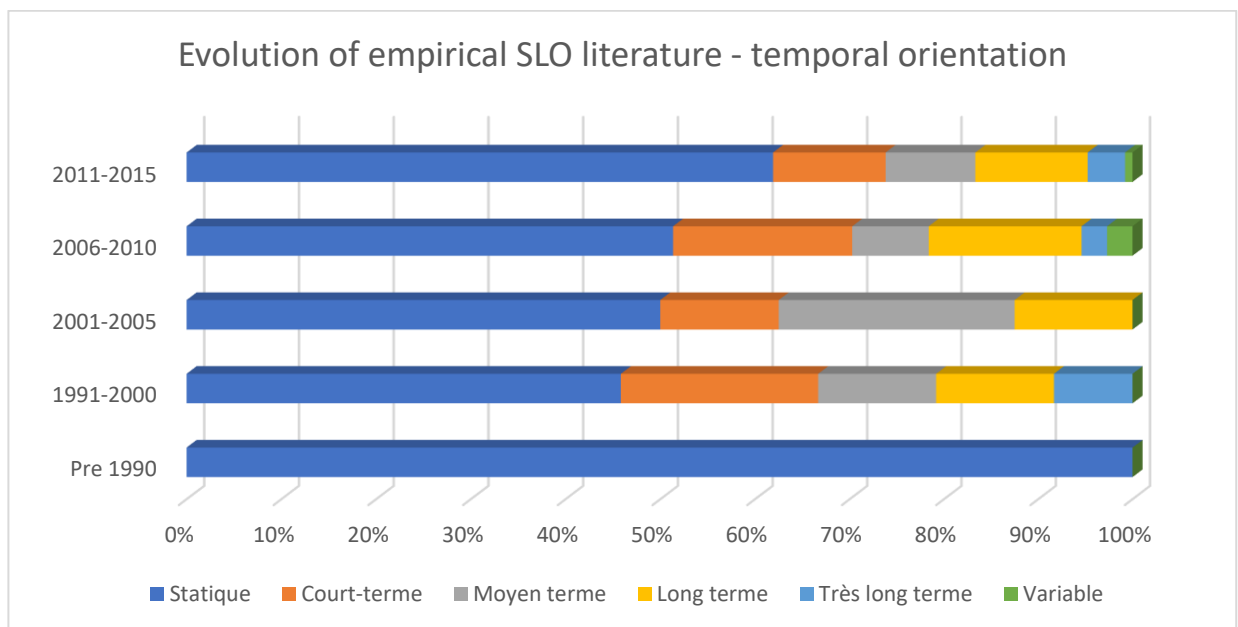
Table X - Social license to operate research studies temporal orientation

Temporal orientation	Number of included citations
Static	116
Processual	81
<i>Short term (1-3 years)</i>	28
<i>Mid term (4-9 years)</i>	20

<i>Long-term (10-24 years)</i>	25
<i>Very long-term (over 25 years)</i>	8
Evolving (according to cases)	3
N/A (conceptual papers)	47

When analyzed in terms of historical evolution, Figure IV below shows that empirical studies adopting a static perspective have remained majority over the 1980-2015 period, with a punctual decrease during the two first phases (pre-1990 to 2000) in favor of processual studies, adopting either a short term, mid-term or long-term perspective. Very long-term studies (i.e. longitudinal studies looking at a phenomenon over a 25-year period or more), remain rare between 1980 and 2015.

Figure IV - Evolution of empirical SLO literature in terms of temporal orientation



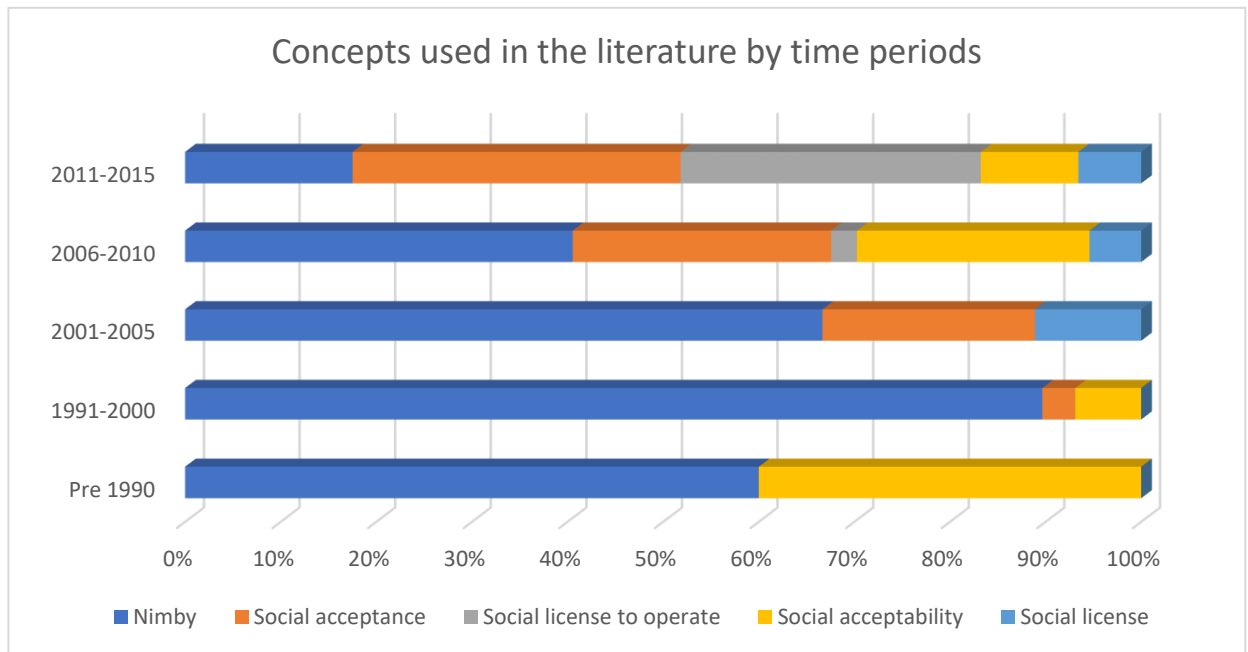
In terms of concepts used in the literature to refer to corporate-community phenomena like that of SLO, it is noteworthy to highlight that the five most used concepts account for 88% of reviewed articles. ‘Not in my backyard’ is the most used concept with 74 occurrences. ‘Social acceptance’ is the second most used concept with 60 articles, followed by ‘social license to operate’, ‘social acceptability’ and ‘social license’.

Table XI - Concepts used in the literature to refer to the social license to operate

Key-words	Number of included citations
Not in my backyard	74
Social acceptance	60
Social licence to operate	44
Social licence	12
Social acceptability	27
Locally unwanted land-use	9
Public acceptance	6
Societal acceptance	5
Social approval	4
Local acceptance	3
Public acceptance	1
Social legitimacy	1
Community acceptance	1

When analyzed through a historical perspective, the most five used concepts in the literature show interesting patterns: in relative numbers, ‘not in my backyard’ and ‘social acceptability’ are the most used concepts in early stages of the field (almost 100% of the concepts used). As time passed, new concepts emerged, such as ‘social acceptance’, ‘social license to operate’ and ‘social license’, which gradually sent the ‘not in my backyard’ concept to a minority position.

Figure V - Evolution of empirical SLO literature in terms of concepts used



According to Piaget (1967), the field of social sciences falls into four categories: nomothetic, philosophical, legal and historical sciences. First, the primary objective of nomothetic sciences is to understand and explain social phenomena by proposing hypotheses and laws supported by causal constructions. As for the philosophical sciences, they wish to give a critical look at the corpus of existing knowledge by bringing a bit of value to it to emancipate individuals and societies. The legal sciences refer to the development of a grammar that allows us to prescribe efficiency, a form of transformation project of reality. By studying standards, the researcher's ambition is to formulate prescriptions and rules to act effectively. Finally, the historical sciences want to reconstitute social phenomena as they have taken shape through time. The objective of the researcher here is to retrace the social phenomena by understanding their dynamics and complexity. Inspired by this framework, Déry (2013) proposes an epistemological classification which he calls knowledge project, i.e. the ultimate objective sought by the researcher through his research. He recognizes two broad categories: understanding and transformation. In the first category, the author suggests three sub-categories: nomothetic projects (understanding, explanation, justification), ideographical (description, historical studies) and philosophical (criticizing). In the second category, the author suggests that

transformation can take the technical form (seeking efficacy through prescriptions and models) or human (seeking a better society).

By linking this framework with our research, we observe that the technical transformation project is the most sought knowledge project in the SLO literature, with a total of 137 articles (55.5%). These figures reveal that the SLO literature is mainly concerned with *practice* and the development of tools and “successful practices” for practitioners and policymakers. The nomothetical projects (i.e. articles seeking to develop theory to better understand practice) account for 72 articles (29%).

Table XII - Epistemological knowledge projects

Epistemological project	Number of included citations
Technical	137
Nomothetical	72
Critical	21
Humanist	17

Moreover, one question that one could ask is the object being discussed within the SLO debate, i.e. SLO of what? Table XIII below highlights that projects and industries are the two most discussed objects within the SLO literature. While projects have been discussed in 88 articles (accounting for 35.6% of reviewed articles), sectors/industries have been conversed in 80 articles (32.4% of reviewed articles). Projects are punctual development initiatives, usually regarding natural resources development. Studies taking the sector/industry level are broader in scope as they look at industries such as wind power, nuclear energy, forestry and shale gas, beyond specific and punctual projects. Other studies have also looked at innovations such as technological advances in producing wind power, specific corporate-practices related to projects and legislations regarding eco-taxes and fiscal incentives, for example.

Table XIII - Object being discussed within the social license debate

Object	Number of included citations
Project	88
Sector/industry	80
Innovation	37
Practice	21
Legislation	17
Organization	2
Multiple	2

While the SLO concept was initially brought forward within the mining community to address corporate-community issues related to mining development, it is not surprising to see in Table XIV that local communities are the ‘exclusive’ stakeholder in 46.5% of reviewed articles. In fact, several other studies have shown that local communities, because they are most affected by the negative impacts of development projects, are more likely to be legitimate in asserting their rights (Delannon et al., 2016; Raufflet et al., 2013). Overall, local communities are stakeholders in 73% of reviewed articles. When they are not an ‘exclusive’ stakeholder, local communities can also be involved with other citizens and interest groups.

Table XIV - Stakeholders involved within the social license debate

Stakeholders involved	Number of included citations
Local communities only	115
Local communities and citizens	9
Local communities and interest groups	20
Local communities, citizens and interest groups	15
Citizens only	54
Citizens and local communities	13
Citizens and firms	3
Citizens and interest groups	6
Interest groups only	3
Interests groups and citizens	1
Interests groups and local communities	8

Interestingly, the SLO debate and discussions usually evolve around controversial projects with high environmental impacts (Costanza, 2016; Idemudia, 2009; Imbun, 2007). Yet, our sample of reviewed papers shows that renewable energy – usually promoted as being eco-friendly – is the most studied empirical field of application of the SLO (23.5%), followed by facility siting (18%) and the extractive sector (14.5%). This remains however coherent with the view that SLO-related discussions often concern projects with a strong environmental and social impact, including projects related to energy and natural resources, as well as construction and infrastructures development projects.

Table XV - Empirical field of application of the social license

Field of application	Number of included citations
Renewable energy	58
Facility siting	44
Extractive sector	36
Land use and infrastructures	14
Forestry	7
Carbon capture/usage	7
Technology	7
Nuclear energy	5
Agriculture	5
Bio energies	5
Others	40

1.5 A pluralistic social license to operate framework

Building on Déry (2013) epistemological knowledge projects (Table XII, previously), the SLO literature is characterized by four research orientations which are each embedded in a specific conception of corporate-society interface⁶. Table XVI suggests four perspectives of the social license to operate literature: (1) SLO as a product embedded in

⁶ This framework is inspired by Gond and Matten (2007) who have conducted a similar reflection in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility. These authors have applied Burrell and Morgan (1979a) heuristic to “stimulate theory building by clarifying the underlying assumptions of CSR research, and by overcoming barriers that previously fostered functionalist reasoning.” (p. 23).

a functionalist view, (2) SLO as a process embedded in a constructivist view, (3) SLO as a power relationship embedded in a socio-political perspective, and (4) SLO as a rhetoric of marginalization embedded in a critical view.

Table XVI - Dimensions of the pluralistic social license to operate framework (*Inspired by Gond and Matten (2007) with contributions of the authors*)

SLO as a...	Property	Process	Power relationship	Rhetoric
Definition of SLO and conception of CCR	Instrumental view of CCR and SLO (firms “manage” local communities)	Socio-constructivist view of CCR and SLO (firms “co-construct” relationships with local communities)	Socio-political view of CCR and SLO (firms “deal” with socio-political processes and dynamics with local stakeholders)	Critical view of CCR and SLO (firms “rely” on the SLO to get their projects approved, with negative effects of marginalization of local communities)
Key questions	How can a firm acquire a SLO for its activities? What are the “best” practices for obtaining a SLO?	How can some firm and local stakeholders co-construct a SLO over time? How do social actors perceive and understand the SLO?	How do local actors negotiate a SLO within failing institutional contexts? How do stakeholders with divergent power negotiate SLO?	How can the SLO become an empowerment vector for local communities? How can the SLO go beyond a tool of marginalization?
Representative key-words	Obtaining, nurturing, developing, acquiring.	Co-construction, negotiated order, process, negotiations.	Power relationships, diversity, diverging interests, multiplicity of stakeholders.	Marginalization, empowerment, local development.
Empirical illustrations	An analysis of factors leading to the establishment of a social licence to operate in the mining industry	Understanding the values and perceptions of local stakeholders and their influence on the process of SLO	Dealing with conflictual relations with local stakeholders within a politicized context	The necessity to rely on the SLO as a vector for empowering local communities
Level of development	High – dominant perspective	Medium – established perspective	Low - emerging	Very low – research opportunity
Illustrative studies	Prno (2013); Michelle Voyer, William Gladstone, and Heather Goodall (2015); Wilburn and Wilburn (2011)	Rooney et al. (2014); E. Wilson (2016)	Costanza (2016); Jijelava and Vanclay (2014); McIntyre, Murphy, and Sirsly (2015)	Miller (2014); Owen and Kemp (2013a); Syn (2014a)

1.5.1 Social license to operate as a property

This perspective conceives the SLO as an intangible resource which enables companies to achieve their strategic objectives. It is a rather static and instrumental view of SLO which is conceptualized as something that can be “owned”, "developed" and “acquired”. Within this perspective - mainstream in the literature - the relationship between firms and local stakeholders is conceptualized within an instrumental “win-win” paradigm. Research in this perspective is mostly centered on the company and its ability to “obtain” the SLO.

The SLO as a property perspective is largely organized around three research areas. The first area generally takes the perspective of companies and has investigated the antecedents of community engagement as well as the key success factors for companies for “acquiring” the SLO (Hall, 2014; K. Moffat & A. R. Zhang, 2014; Prno, 2013; Wilburn & Wilburn, 2011). The second area is concerned with the identification and mapping of levels of SLO (Gall & Rodwell, 2016; Richert, Rogers, & Burton, 2015). The third area has looked at the integration of SLO issues within organizational strategies and governance frameworks (Kemp & Owen, 2013; Soma & Haggett, 2015).

Generic research questions underlying this perspective are: *What are the key conditions for acquiring a SLO? How can firms efficiently measure the extent of SLO? What are the required organizational resources and arrangements to obtain a SLO? What technological methods improve citizen participation for improved SLO? Can the SLO enhance engagement and increase acceptance of energy projects?*

Many empirical studies have sought to deepen our understanding of those questions. For instance, Lin-Hi and Blumberg (2012) have investigated competencies required by firms to “gain” and “sustainably secure” the social acceptance of business. According to them, three interrelated business ethics competencies enable this: (1) the ability to demonstrate that private firms and profit-making have a social function, (2) the ability and knowledge to define what a responsible business stands for, and (3) the ability to implement responsible decision-making processes within firms. In a similar note, Prno (2013) looked

at factors leading to the SLO within the mining sector. Based on an analysis of four international mining projects, the author provides five lessons for “earning a SLO” (p. 577), such as understanding the context, favor long-term relationships, ensure sustainability for local communities, enable local benefits and be flexible to confront the complexity of corporate-community relations.

1.5.2 Social license to operate as a process of social construction

The perspective of SLO as a process is an emerging perspective in the literature, focusing mainly on subjectivity, social construction, social representations and values between firms and local stakeholders. The basis of this perspective is a processual epistemological position which acknowledges social change and the fact that the SLO is socially constructed between firms and local stakeholders through permanent negotiations and interactions. Scholars conducting research within this perspective reject the static view of the SLO and its firm-centered nature. In fact, they argue for a more processual, interactive and dynamic understanding of corporate-community relations. Here, the SLO is defined as a “process” and not a “resource” or a “product” which can be “acquired” or “obtained”. Thus, the SLO is conceptualized as a permanent process of negotiation and interaction between local stakeholders and firms.

Generic research questions underlying this perspective are: *How can some firm and local stakeholders co-construct a SLO over time? How do social actors perceive and understand the SLO? How do values and stakeholders’ perceptions influence the process of SLO?*

Two main research areas have emerged within this perspective. The first one looks at the process of SLO, i.e. how do social actors build, nurture and continually develop the social license? (Cui et al., 2016; Dare et al., 2014; Wexler, 1996). Within this research area, the unit of analysis is the relationship between actors, contrary to the instrumental perspective that mainly investigates the SLO through the firm lens. The second research area focuses on values, norms, social representations and local perceptions of the SLO (Karimi & Toikka, 2014; Kim & Kim, 2015; Ruckstuhl et al., 2014). Studies within this research

area are thus interested in how values, norms and perceptions influence the process of SLO and corporate-community relations.

To illustrate this research perspective, we refer to Dare et al. (2014, p. 188) who argue that while the SLO “is better conceptualized as a continuum of multiple licenses achieved across various levels of society. Viewed in this way, we can consider what is needed to achieve social licenses at given points along that continuum and identify the strengths and weaknesses of specific engagement techniques in achieving particular social licenses.” In a similar note, going beyond a static view of SLO, Rooney et al. (2014, p. 209) presented the benefits of a practical “wisdom-based theorization” which could better capture the process through which “SLOs can be co-produced.” Hall et al. (2015) investigated how the SLO concept was being translated by practitioners in their daily work in energy industries. Interestingly, the authors conclude that “the meaning and application of social license to operate does vary between industries.” (p. 301) Lastly, R. Parsons and Moffat (2014, p. 340) recently pushed towards more processual lens in SLO research by arguing that “there is a need to reconceptualize the nature of company–stakeholder relationships through a more collaborative, dialogic and reflexive process, avoiding the binary state implied by the term license.”

1.5.3 Social license to operate as a power relationship

The power relationship perspective of the SLO focuses on corporate-community relations from the lens of power relationships. In this perspective, SLO is perceived as an area of constant negotiation, struggles and fight to obtain control over resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Here, the focus is on how actors with divergent interests, goals and resources can negotiate an SLO and agree on a settlement. This perspective also looks at the SLO from an institutional and governance perspective.

Generic research questions underlying this perspective are: *How do local actors negotiate a SLO within failing institutional contexts? How do stakeholders with divergent power negotiate SLO? Do firms negotiate differently according to their stakeholders’ power? How can the SLO become a form of regulation?*

The SLO as power relationship perspective has developed around three main research areas. The first one looks at power struggles, conflicts and power relationships in the process of SLO (Feinerman, Finkelshtain, & Kan, 2004; Ruggieroa, Onkilaa, & Kuittinenb, 2014; L. L. Sun, Yung, Chan, & Zhu, 2016). The second looks at how specific structural, institutional, political and cultural determinants (i.e. resources, gender, democracy, power) influence the SLO and corporate-community relations (Craig & Richeson, 2014; Jijelava & Vanclay, 2014; McIntyre et al., 2015). The third and last area of research understands the SLO as a mechanism of governance, focusing on governance frameworks and institutional frameworks (Buhmann, 2016; Deroubaix & Leveque, 2006; Lynch-Wood & Williamson, 2007).

Among many empirical accounts of the socio-political perspective of SLO, Jijelava and Vanclay (2014, p. 283) recently analyzed the SLO from a gender perspective, i.e. examining the “challenges associated with obtaining a gender-aware social license for development assistance organizations working in conservative, traditional rural societies.” McIntyre et al. (2015) examined if firms neglect the SLO within very poor and marginalized communities, focusing on the stakeholder attributes of power, legitimacy and urgency (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997). Moreover, L. L. Sun et al. (2016) examined the issues of ‘not in my backyard’ conflict management in China, focusing on how actors are able to “manage conflicts among local governments, residents and developers.” (p. 133) Lastly, Lynch-Wood and Williamson (2007) argued that the SLO could act as a form of regulation for small and medium enterprises in the sense that social pressures induced by the SLO can generate beyond compliance practices.

1.5.4 Social license to operate as a rhetoric

The critical perspective of the SLO is not so developed and has mainly emerged in recent years. This perspective has developed around three research areas. The first area of research has looked at the SLO concept from a critical point of view through semantic and discursive analysis (Burningham, 2000; McClymont & O’Hare, 2008; Miller, 2014). The second area of research has mainly adopted a critical view on key assumptions within the literature (Aitken, 2010; Harvey & Bice, 2014; Owen & Kemp, 2013b). The third area

of research takes a rather humanistic view to criticize and deconstruct the instrumental and sometimes post-colonial nature of SLO discourse, while promoting a more co-constructed and empowering view of SLO for local communities (B. Harvey, 2014; Syn, 2014b; Szarka, 2006).

Generic research questions underlying this perspective are: *How can the SLO become an empowerment vector for local communities? How can the SLO go beyond a tool of marginalization? Is the SLO just another way of promoting 'development' in contexts where local communities do not adhere to this paradigm?*

Among the few studies in this perspective, Syn (2014b) investigated the SLO concept through the lens of historical land and human rights violations within the extractive sector in developing countries. The author argues that “the idea of a license that can be withdrawn represents an assertion of power by people whose land and human rights have been consistently violated, and a recognition of that power by the corporate sector [...] the social license construct may be used as an empowerment tool for communities to assert their rights and obtain the protection they have been long denied.” (p. 318). Moreover, Owen and Kemp (2013a) have recently expressed criticism over the mainstream instrumental SLO perspective which failed to restore “the lost confidence of impacted communities, stakeholders, and pressure groups” (p. 29). They suggest that it is necessary to beyond a purely firm-centered perspective and adopt a “more constructive approach to stakeholder engagement and collaboration.” (p. 29). Lastly, Miller (2014) recently investigated the dilemma posed by the SLO, “whether it is business practice, sociological reality, or emerging form of governance” (p. 385). The author concludes by arguing that the SLO is flawed by its wish to draw a separation between organizations and communities, and its inability to “acknowledge that transformation, not just operation, is almost always at stake in these encounters.” (p. 385). In other words, Miller (2014) is radically opposed to the functionalist and instrumental perspective of the SLO.

The following suggestions are proposed as hints at directions for further developing SLO's research domain. They range from theoretical to methodological and are made in no significant order. Overall, research on SLO has been scattered among disciplinary areas

of knowledge and management as well as within areas of management. This literature review identifies bridges between these areas of knowledge through future research directions.

1.6 Future research directions

1.6.1 Connect the SLO literature to theory

On the theoretical level, unfortunately, researchers on the SLO and the field of corporate-community relations in general have been slow to embrace organizational theories, despite their important contributions to our understanding of organizations and their functioning in the last decade. Stakeholder theory, network analysis, legitimacy, institutional theory and other perspectives have contributed much insights in the past decades. There is room for more of this kind of research which will enrich research in SLO and vice-versa.

Stakeholder theory. There have already been attempts to connect SLO to stakeholder theory (Ruggieroa et al., 2014; L. L. Sun et al., 2016; Wilburn & Wilburn, 2011). That is all to the good, but there is more work to be done in this area. Stakeholder thinking has contributed considerably to the organizational theory literature by highlighting the significance of the environment in managing organizations (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984).

Since the publishing of Freeman's (1984) seminal work on stakeholder management, the notion of the stakeholder has gained increasing popularity in academic, professional, media, and government publications (Friedman & Miles, 2002). While stakeholder management has become a significant tool and approach in strategic management thinking, it has also been applied to many fields, including project management (Bourne & Walker, 2005; Elias et al., 2004), marketing (De Bussy, Ewing, & Pitt, 2003), information technology (Pouloudi & Whitley, 1997), environmental management (Starik & Rands, 1995), and corporate social responsibility (Clarkson, 1995; Hillman & Keim, 2001). Overall, this stakeholder approach argues that organizations must consider the

legitimate interests of those groups and individuals who are affected by or can affect the firm's activities (Donaldson & Preston, 1995).

SLO scholars can for instance mobilize Mitchell et al. (1997)'s stakeholder salience framework to better understand under what conditions different stakeholders can influence the SLO process. As this framework of stakeholder salience has been critiqued as being largely static, short-term oriented, and firm-centered (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002; Neville, Bell, & Whitwell, 2011), future SLO should include changes in the legal and value-related contexts in their analysis. The careful examination of these slow variables that impact the degree of the salience of the stakeholders could contribute to enriching the SLO level framework, as it would bring relevant elements of the context into the scope of analysis.

Negotiated order theory. The dominant static stakeholder and SLO thinking argues that stakeholders are to be managed as separate entities with separate claims: managers ought to rank and prioritize who matters most. Stakeholder thinking, and issues related to the SLO must be understood in the context of stakeholder interactions and not as given independent entities. In fact, relations between stakeholders and SLO processes should be understood dynamically, while considering the overlapping claims between several stakeholders that would increase their ability to mobilize together and form coalitions (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002). The process-oriented approach of the negotiated-order theory argues that a social order must be constantly recreated through the engagement and work of the stakeholders involved (Strauss, 1993). While the negotiated-order perspective has been widely used in organization studies (Basu, Dirsmith, & Gupta, 1999; Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002; O'Toole & O'Toole, 1981), only a few studies have relied on the negotiated-order perspective to address the dynamics of firm–stakeholder relations and the establishment of mutual agreements between firms and local stakeholders (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002; Wilburn & Wilburn, 2011). Yet, when used with other theories such as stakeholder theory, the negotiated-order perspective can be particularly suitable for understanding SLO and firm–stakeholder relations. In fact, by emphasizing the shifting interactions between stakeholders, the negotiated-order perspective discards the simplistic

view of organizations as inert systems constrained by structures and institutional pressures (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002).

Institutional theory. Institutional theory has risen as a dominant perspective to study management and organizations (Greenwood, Oliver, Sahlin, & Suddaby, 2008). We suggest three main sub-areas of this theory to deepen our understanding of SLO issues: (1) institutional work and change, (2) institutional logics and complexity, and (3) legitimacy.

Institutional work and change. Institutional work - defined as “the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006, p. 215) - offers clearly a bottom-up approach (Zilber, 2013). Institutional work looks at the way actors engage in activities that result in field dynamism through influencing routines, values, practices and existing institutional arrangements (Jarzabkowski, Matthiesen, & Van de Ven, 2009). Institutional work perspective pushes forward the idea that institutional change requires persistent efforts from actors (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2009a, 2009b). For example, recent research explores how actors engage in both defensive institutional work (Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Martí & Fernández, 2013; Micelotta & Washington, 2013); and combination of defensive and proactive institutional work (Mena & Suddaby, 2016; Raviola & Norbäck, 2013; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). Relying on these extensive theoretical developments, SLO scholars can better understand how specific stakeholders rely on institutional work to block or allow development projects within their communities. At the organizational level, what kind of institutional work allows organizations to adopt certain community engagement strategies to the detriment of others (Bowen et al., 2010). More generally, how do marginalized actors rely on institutional work – defensive and proactive – to defend their interests in context of project development?

Institutional logics and complexity. The institutional logics perspective recognizes complexity and pluralism (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011), and provides a micro-macro link of how actors recognize and reconcile competing institutional orders. Contradictions and/or interdependences among multiple logics

provide actors with opportunities to reinterpret or manipulate existing symbolic claims and material practices and build new meanings and initiate new practices that lead to the emergence of new institutional logics (Gawer & Phillips, 2013; McPherson & Sauder, 2013; Purdy & Gray, 2009). Recent studies suggest that actors respond to institutional complexity, defined as the encounter of "incompatible prescriptions from multiple institutional logics" (Greenwood et al., 2011, p. 317) by resisting to the pressure from the new competing logic (D'Aunno, Sutton, & Price, 1991; C. Marquis & Lounsbury, 2007); abandoning the old logic and adoption of new institutional logic (D'Aunno, Succi, & Alexander, 2000; Oakes, Townley, & Cooper, 1998) ; and adopting conflicting logics in the form of hybrid organizing (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Battilana & Lee, 2014). Because SLO is inevitably related to competing institutional logics and rationalities, scholars from this field of research can constructively mobilize institutional logics and complexity theoretical developments to clarify our understanding of several interesting issues regarding the SLO, i.e. what type of institutional logics are usually opposed around specific development projects? How can institutional complexity in context of project development be managed from a community or organizational point of view? In context of co-management of development projects, how is the complexity of hybrid organizing managed? Moreover, how is the paradox of developing natural resources in highly sensitive environments discursively legitimated by organizations with the will of protecting the environment?

Legitimacy. Legitimacy has been a subject of interest for organizational theorists since at least the pioneering work of (M. Weber, 1922, 1968). Considered essential in the functioning of our societies, what has rapidly been called organizational legitimacy has thus become a key concept in organizational theory, in particular within neo-institutional theory (Bitektine, 2011). In designing legitimacy as an intangible resource for organizations (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), scholars have focused on the benefits of legitimacy for organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975; Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002) , the relationship between internal and external legitimacy (Drori & Honig, 2013), the maintenance of legitimacy in context of controversies (Patriotta et al., 2011), and ultimately the loss of legitimacy in case of controversies (Sine

& David, 2003). The definitional basis of legitimacy is highly debated in the literature. While legitimacy is usually defined as a “generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions” (Suchman, 1995, p. 574), this concept is akin to the definition of SLO. Recently, Suddaby et al. (2017) suggested that three ways of conceiving legitimacy are proposed by the literature: legitimacy as a thing (a property or resource), legitimacy as a process (the process of legitimation), and legitimacy as perception (legitimacy as a form of sociocognitive perception or evaluation). SLO scholars can certainly enrich our understanding of SLO drawing from the rich empirical and theoretical developments on legitimacy: how do legitimacy and SLO relate as concepts? How do different ways of conceiving legitimacy influence our understanding of corporate-stakeholder relationships and the SLO? What is the process of SLO maintenance, building and loss?

We believe that the biggest conceptual challenge for SLO scholars is to explain how this concept is different from legitimacy, and what legitimacy can bring to SLO, and vice-versa. While this is a topic for another research paper, here we sketch few thoughts that could pave the way for this endeavor.

From an empirical perspective, today’s world is a controversial one. Not a day passes without hearing about a controversy related to a major development project, whether it is a bridge, a building, a facility, a mining site or a hydroelectric dam. Those issues have mainly been addressed in project management literature and more technical literatures within the impact assessment, environmental studies and policy making. However, our understanding of those situations is still lacking in the organization and management theory literature. More specifically, the legitimacy literature has remained quite silent on controversies related to projects.

In fact, while socio-environmental controversies are highly organizational and related to legitimacy because they are related to the “endorsement of organizations by social actors” (Deephouse, 1996, p. 1025), the legitimacy literature has remained at levels of analysis which are way higher than that of a project, i.e. organizations, industries, organizational

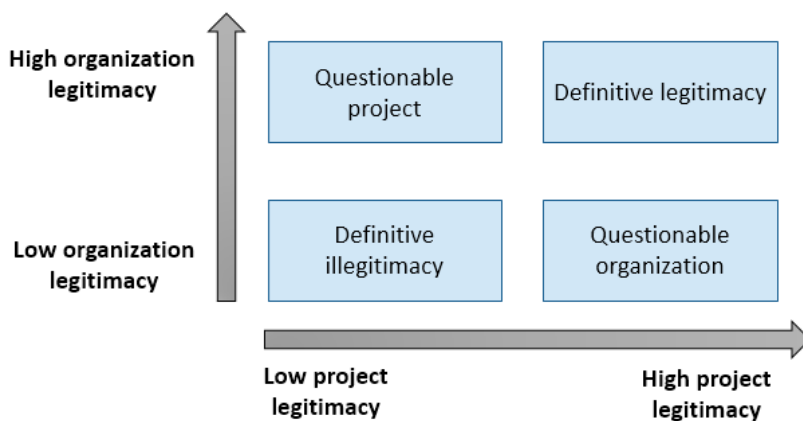
and institutional fields. For instance, the most recent comprehensive review on legitimacy (Suddaby et al., 2017) completely disregarded projects as being the topic of legitimation processes. Yet, we believe that projects, from a legitimacy perspective, are specific for three reasons.

1. First, they are temporary organizations which are temporally bounded. Temporary organizations base their day-to-day activities and operations on the idea that their existence comes to an end after fulfilling a specific pre-determined goal (Burke & Morley, 2016; Lindkvist, Söderlund, & Tell, 1998). Unlike organizations who compete for legitimacy to ensure their long-term survival, projects are mainly characterized by purposely fixed time frames which allow organizations, individuals and social actors to organize themselves around a specific target (Bakker, 2010).
2. Second, they are locally embedded in a specific territory. In fact, as Torre and Rallet (2005) pointed out, some firms operate in a “spatial lock-in” phenomenon, in reference to their dependence on a specific territory. In certain industries such as the natural resources and infrastructure development, once a site has been chosen, it is difficult for the firm to relocate. Thus, development projects are always embedded in a specific territory, unlike firms that can be in multiple locations simultaneously. This phenomenon perhaps explains why some major development projects are delayed for years, even decades, before being operated in the original desired territory (Houck, 2011).
3. Third, because of their local embeddedness, the audiences that negotiate the SLO with the firm are mainly local communities. Many studies have highlighted that local communities consider themselves legitimate to contest projects but also to benefit from them because of the negative impacts that they undergo at the social, cultural and environmental levels (Delannon et al., 2016; Gagliardi, 2016; C. Marquis & Battilana, 2009; K. Moffat & A. Zhang, 2014).

Considering these three specificities of projects, one should highlight that projects do not exist without formal organizations. In fact, projects are exclusively organized, run and

managed by organizations (Hobday, 2000; Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). Building on this argument, we argue that the legitimacy of a given project is different from the legitimacy of the organization which promotes the project (the focus of the literature). However, these two legitimation processes can be simultaneous, convergent or divergent, which could lead to four scenarios where the levels of social acceptance of a project and of the organization differ. Theorizing the SLO as a form of local legitimacy recognizes that a legitimate organization doesn't necessarily mean that its projects will be legitimate, and vice-versa. Figure VI below highlights these scenarios as follows:

Figure VI – Four scenarios of the project legitimacy



1. **Questionable project:** represented by a high level of organizational legitimacy combined with a low level of project legitimacy. In this case, the organization must mainly focus on legitimizing the project with relevant stakeholders.
2. **Questionable organization:** contrary to the previous scenario, here, the project itself is considered as legitimate by stakeholders, whereas the organization that promotes the project is considered illegitimate. In this case, the focus of the organization is to cope with the negative impact of its illegitimacy over the project.
3. **Definitive illegitimacy:** when both the project and the organization that promotes the project are considered illegitimate, we consider this scenario as being definitive illegitimacy, about the low probability of having the project realized. In this case, the issue is both to legitimize the promoter and the project itself.

4. **Definitive legitimacy:** contrary to the previous scenario, when both the project and the organization are considered legitimate, we argue that this scenario is “definitive legitimacy”, which highly increases the probability that the project can operate without major social contestations.

All in all, this reflection sketch highlights the necessity for SLO scholars to engage deeper conversations with legitimacy scholars. On one hand, SLO scholars have been conducting research on interesting phenomena – locally embedded and temporary finite – which could enrich our understanding of legitimacy. On the other hand, legitimacy scholars have built an astonishing body of knowledge (Suddaby et al., 2017) which could also deepen our understanding of the SLO.

1.6.2 Improve the Quality of Qualitative Research

After more than two decades of debate in the SLO literature, our study reveals substantial weaknesses which question the validity and trustworthiness of many research results of the SLO field (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this section, we address this void by developing guidelines for improving presentations of qualitative research in the SLO field. More specifically, we suggest four actionable recommendations that represent a synthesis of observations we have woven into our analysis. Combining these four points, we believe, leads to better qualitative research in the field of SLO and community-relations. Clearly, they do not guarantee success as researchers must also contribute with their individual talents and insights. But, we believe that attending to these areas will improve the character of qualitative research in the field.

Improve the quality and quantity of data. Quoting Bansal and Corley: “It is critical, then, that qualitative researchers offer detailed accounts of their data sources and analysis.” (2012, p. 510). Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for establishing "trustworthiness" of qualitative studies (namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability) ensuring validity of the study's data and methods are unfortunately rarely met within the SLO literature.

First, credibility can be defined by the ability of a research to represent adequately multiple constructions of reality. It can be assured by several means: a reasonably prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation of data, data triangulation and sufficient quantity and quality of data. In studying SLO cases which are often controversial, it is particularly important that scholars ensure triangulation by collecting data on the same phenomena from at least two or three sources (archives, semi-structured interviews and participation observations) which can later be compared for consistency. Moreover, triangulation can also be ensured by analyzing data using a variety of methods as suggested by Langley (1999), i.e. temporal bracketing, historical analysis, grounded theory, visual mapping and quantification. This can help ensure consistency and reliability of emergent analytical insights. Second, transferability refers to the study's ability to show that the findings can be useful for understanding other cases. It can be mainly guaranteed by means of replication and the use of thick descriptions of the phenomenon studied (Patton, 2002). Third, data triangulation as described earlier help to ensure dependability, i.e. the reliability of qualitative data. Finally, the above three criteria in combination should help to guarantee the confirmability of the study results, i.e. the study's objectivity in a qualitative valuation.

Develop theoretical anchoring. Too often, SLO researchers have either not engaged important research questions or have failed to theorize those questions adequately. Qualitative inquiries, we said, must move beyond descriptions. Researchers must be theoretically informed to be sensitive to subtleties of meaning embedded in the data and context. Thus, SLO researchers must conduct their studies with a clear research question and must reflect on how existing theories bear on that research question; this can be viewed as an iterative process between theory and data. Maintaining the theoretical sensitivity allows researchers to develop their research questions in productive directions while multiplying the various possible explanations and interpretations. As discussed earlier, several established theories could help scholars connect SLO phenomena with existing knowledge.

Diversify research designs. We believe that SLO researchers should more account of the context of the phenomena studied. Case studies are a good step for this, but the SLO literature seems to neglect multi-case studies. Yet, multiple case studies can be used in most situations in preference to single case studies to achieve more robust results. An additional rationale for adopting multi-case study is that thick description of the interactions between firms and local stakeholders can be made using a case study compiling rich archival data and interviews to “deliberately [...] cover contextual conditions” (Yin, 1994, p. 13). J. A. Martin and Eisenhardt (2010, p. 268) argue that “multiple cases are likely to yield more generalizable, robust, parsimonious theory than single cases” (p. 268). There are, however, a few situations where the multiple case study is not applicable per definition: in the case of an extreme and unique case, the critical case, and the revelatory case. Dyer and Wilkins (1991, p. 613) have also demonstrated that single case studies could lead to powerful, robust and strong theories without losing the essence of case study research. In all, because SLO issues are very contextual, thick descriptions and broad contextual conditions through multi-case studies can enrich our understanding of SLO processes.

Long-term vs short term temporal perspectives. Our study provides clear evidence for the need for further research on SLO in particularizing longitudinal studies. Most studies focus on either static or short-term processes of corporate-company relations. In fact, much of the insights provided by current literature applies to short-term situations, but, in our opinion, it is much less suitable for predicting the changing contexts and relationships between several actors in the long run. We therefore invite researchers to conduct studies on the long-term evolution of corporate-community relations and SLO. For instance, legacy-issues may cumulate and influence the future relations between a company and its local stakeholders (Baba & Raufflet, 2014). The empirical work we invite researchers to conduct herein is based on longitudinal data, as would any process research shedding light on the way phenomena evolve over time (Langley, Smallman, Tsoukas, & Ven, 2013).

1.6.3 Use Quantitative and Mixed-Methods Research to Deepen Understanding

Second, we suggest that researchers on the SLO should rely more on quantitative methods to deepen our understanding of these phenomena as quantitative research design can be useful to better understand causalities and relationships between variables. Quantitative research in the field of SLO can rely on statistics to generalize findings, to conceptualize a complex phenomenon with selected variables, test theories or hypothesis and reduce subjectivity. The strengths of the quantitative method are numerous: (1) precisely specify independent and dependent variables, (2) achieve high levels of reliability of gathered data due to controlled observations, surveys or other form of data collection tool, (3) conduct longitudinal measures, (4) test theories or hypothesis, (5) looks at relationships between variables and can establish cause and effect in highly controlled circumstances, (6) often reduces and restructures a complex issue or phenomena to a limited number of variables.

The positivist paradigm that guides the quantitative research design assumes that social reality has an objective ontological structure that guides social actors' behaviors (Burrell & Morgan, 1979b). Quantitative research involves measuring events and performing the statistical analysis of a body of numerical data. The main concerns of the quantitative paradigm are that measurement is reliable, valid, and generalizable in its clear prediction of cause and effect. Being deductive, quantitative research is based upon formulating the research hypotheses and verifying them empirically on a specific set of data.

We suggest three specific considerations that are worth paying special attention to give the current discussions in SLO literature and the difficulty in arriving at cumulative and reproducible findings.

Table XVII - Considerations regarding quantitative empirical studies

Considerations	Explanation
Sampling	Researchers should be clear and specific regarding their sample and its shortcomings. Moreover, low response rates should be avoided as much as possible as they do not guarantee representativeness.
Data collection	Data collection tools must be rigorous and transparent. For instance, collecting data through the phone or sending out blind questionnaires is not coherent with the sensitive issues of SLO.
Context	Researchers should take special care to include as many dimensions of context as possible: types of organizations, types of local stakeholders, previous projects on the territory, nature of the project, etc. By being rigorous and thorough in this aspect of the research will lead to a better understanding of the SLO process.

That said, while quantitative and qualitative research approaches each have their strengths and weaknesses, they can be extremely effective in combination with one another. In fact, mixed methods research has developed rapidly in these last few years, emerging as a recognized and distinct research methodology (Denscombe, 2008). Many mixed methods studies have greatly contributed to advance our research topics in management and shown the added-value of such a methodological perspective. The overall purpose of mixed methods studies is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems and complex phenomena than either approach alone.

According to Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989), mixed methods research provides three important rationales and advantages. First, *complementarity* allows researchers to elaborate or clarify the results from one method with the findings and results provided by the other method. Second, *development* enables researchers to use the results of one method to deepen the use of the other method. In this case, researchers can use qualitative research to identify the factors that affect the areas under investigation, then use that information to develop quantitative research that assesses how these factors are interrelated. Third, *expansion* enables researchers to push the boundaries of their research by using different methods for different inquiry components.

1.7 Discussion and conclusion

1.7.1 *Looking back at the SLO literature*

This article offered a systematic review of the SLO literature. Overall, we have shown an increasing body of knowledge which is rather fragmented. In this last sub-section of the article, our aim is to propose an effort of integration of this literature which could guide future research. More specifically, we focus this integration sketch around four dimensions: the definition of the SLO, the process and scope of the SLO, the “object” of the SLO (what is being debated), and the audiences evaluating the SLO.

The definition of the SLO. As we have shown throughout this study, the SLO concept is defined in many ways and no definition seems to be unanimous. This is coherent with the overall fragmentation of this field of research. Moreover, beyond the multiplication of SLO definitions, many other constructs – such as social acceptance, social acceptability and ‘not in my backyard’ – are sometimes defined in the same manner as SLO. This raises an important question over the usefulness of the concept and its relationship with other constructs in the literature.

Because broad definitions usually suffer from vagueness which reduces the utility of the concept, we will offer an enumerative definition of the SLO concept. As defined by Bitektine (2011, p. 153) “an enumerative definition of a concept formulates its meaning by enumerating the objects or phenomena that fall under the definition of the concept in question.” In this vein, enumerative definitions are useful when listing the different components of the concept is more informative than providing other types of definitions (W. K. Wilson, 1997). The enumerative definition of the SLO that we offer delineates a set of variables and phenomena captured in the literature. The enumerative definition of the SLO (1) delineates the scope of the concept as an on-going process of acceptance, (2) identifies what is being evaluated, (3) describes who is the evaluating audience, (4) highlights the empirical contexts in which the SLO applies, (5) and defines who is the evaluated stakeholder. The definition is summarized in the table below.

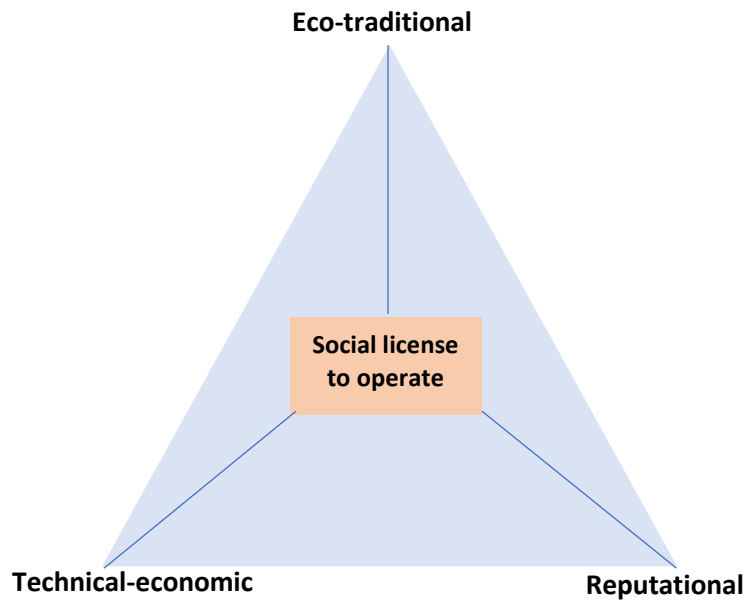
Table XVIII - The enumerative definition of the social license to operate

<i>Scope</i>	The concept of social license to operate refers to the ongoing process of acceptance...
<i>What</i>	... concerning a project, a sector/industry or an innovation...
<i>By whom</i>	... by local communities which perceive themselves as legitimate stakeholders because of the effects they face...
<i>Where</i>	... usually within contexts of projects development around natural resources exploitation, infrastructure development and facility siting...
<i>Who</i>	... either promoted by public companies, private companies or hybrid organizations.

The process and scope of the SLO. Defining the process and the scope of the SLO is a tough endeavor. As discussed throughout this systematic literature review, scholars have identified different variables and determinants of the SLO evaluation process (Prno, 2013; Prno & Slocombe, 2014; M. Voyer, W. Gladstone, & H. Goodall, 2015). Moreover, different SLO processes have been theorized by scholars (Robert G. Boutilier & Thomson, 2011; Voyer, Gollan, Barclay, & Gladstone, 2015). But there is not yet an integrative model of all these variables. We argue that the SLO is an evaluation process through which three main pillars are evaluated by audiences: eco-traditional, technical-economic and reputational. The actual importance given to each pillar varies from one project to another depending on its impacts, but also from one audience to another, depending on their priorities, values and perceptions.

1. **Eco-traditional:** deals with issues related to the impacts of the project at the social, environmental and health levels.
2. **Technical-economic:** refers to issues related to the technical specifications of the project and their ability to meet requirements, as well as the economic benefits of the project for local communities.
3. **Reputational:** refers to the perception of the audience about the organization that promotes the project (is the organization trustworthy?), but also to the collective interest of the audience as well as the originality of the project and its level of inspiration.

Figure VII - Three pillars of the SLO⁷



As discussed previously, the weight of each pillar in the SLO evaluation process by audiences will vary. In fact, some communities are more concerned by environmental issues, when others are more likely concerned by the economic benefits of a given project. Overall, the empirical studies in the literature seem to put forward a certain number of questions on which audiences rely to assess each pillar. Table XIX below summarizes these questions which are related to the three pillars.

Table XIX – Pillars and basis of evaluation of the SLO

SLO pillars	Basis of evaluation	Challenges and questions asked by audiences
Reputational	Inspiration	Is this project original and inspiring in its current form?
	Trustworthiness	Individuals: are those individuals who are negotiating with us/offering the project legitimate and respectable?
		Organizational: is the promoter of the project legitimate?

⁷ I am grateful to Richard Déry for his valuable suggestions!

	Collective interest	Does the project consider our collective interest?
Eco-traditional	Traditions	Does this project respect our personal values and traditions?
	Environment	Does this project respect and protect our environment and ecosystem?
	Health	Does this project protect our health?
Economic-technical	Regulations	Does the project meet technical and scientific norms and standards?
	Economic benefits	Does this project provide win-win economic and financial outcomes to our community?

The “object” of the SLO. As we argued previously, the SLO originally emerged to discuss issues related to mining projects. Parallel to the institutionalization of this concept, scholars broadened its scope to industries, innovations, practices and legislations. The SLO literature thus deals with different “objects” of the SLO as discussed hitherto. That said, projects anchored in a given territory remain the most studied “object” of the SLO, in accordance with the very emergence of this concept.

The audiences evaluating the SLO. One importance question in the literature on SLO is who the audiences are evaluating and consenting the SLO. While several audiences have been documented in the literature, local communities are by far the most studied audience in the SLO literature, mainly because they are the most affected and involved stakeholder in relation to major development projects, which remains the most studied “object” of the SLO. In some cases, these audiences build strategic alliances with broader stakeholders like environmentalist groups and citizens from other regions. What the literature is rather silent about is “when” an SLO can be acquiesced by audiences. For example, is the SLO acquiesced when 51% of members agree to the project? There seems to be three trends in the literature. The first case is when audiences are few – local communities, for instance – and are organized around one main interest. Internal processes in these communities (such as referendums) allow them to decide and voice their interest. In this case, the SLO evaluation process seems straight forward and unanimous. Second, in cases where audiences are few, internal processes can be undemocratic. In this case, elites sometimes speak for their communities despite a minority of community members in favor of a project. The third scenario is when the evaluating audiences are numerous, i.e. local

communities and citizens across a country. In this specific case, the “when” the SLO is granted becomes less obvious, but it seems that the epicenter of decision-making still concerns the most directly affected audiences, i.e. local communities.

1.8 Conclusion

Throughout this research, we argued that despite interesting recent academic developments on SLO, we are so far missing a compelling map of the intellectual SLO terrain, exploring conceptualizations, definitions, theory anchoring, methodologies and epistemologies. The emerging field of SLO is fragmented, complex and heterogeneous in terms of theoretical perspectives, methods and conceptualizations, providing only partial or even confusing advice for practitioners and scholars. Although publications on SLO are increasing, none of these has systematically built an overview that integrates all the field of SLO to support both practitioners and researchers.

After two decades of research on a great variety of SLO, we believe that it was about time to take stock of what we know and provide a roadmap for future enquiries. More specifically, such an endeavor seems relevant, timely and necessary. Thus, this paper aimed to provide a comprehensive review and critique of a diverse range of contemporary literature that informs our understanding of the SLO. The review is undertaken to highlight the importance of this emerging area of interest, to sort the literature and to consolidate the field by providing a collective starting point for future research.

In this paper, we provide the first comprehensive review of the SLO literature. We analyzed 247 articles published in 131 over the period 1985-2015. Together, these articles can be considered representative of the present knowledge about SLO. Our review of 247 sources has shown that while SLO have become a strategic concern for firms, it is also an increasingly studied phenomenon across the management, engineering, project management, public policy, economic and political sciences literatures. There has been brilliant progress around SLO, and this paper outlined some of the many fine contributions. Moreover, this systematic review indicates that SLO has created its own literature and that it is gaining an increasing reputation as a legitimate academic field.

The commonalities across these disciplines suggest that it is time for more systematic and rigorous empirical and theoretical study of SLO.

This review illustrates the diversity of definitions, empirical settings, epistemological positions and research foci in which it is being examined. Based on the retrospection, the results of the analyses have pointed to numerous inconsistencies, knowledge gaps and methodological struggles that still impede the understanding of SLO. Major weaknesses include a lack of theoretical grounding, problems in the methodological rigor and consisting gaps in conceptualizations and definitions of SLO. From these analyses, we charted out promising opportunities for future research, which may contribute substantially to the development of the field. It is our hope that this review will stimulate additional research in this important area. Among these areas for future research, we argue that scholars need to (1) connect SLO to theory and (2) improve the quality of qualitative research.

More specifically, this study generated new insights at several levels. First, on an epistemological level, we clarify the epistemological status of the SLO literature. SLO, as we said, emerged in a predominantly managerial context and has spread since then in various areas of knowledge including management. This systematic review made it possible to map and compare the epistemological knowledge projects of this literature.

Second, on a methodological level, we suggest an overview and assessment of the methodologies adopted in the SLO corpus. Specifically, we evaluate the quality and rigor of the methodologies adopted within this corpus based on the precepts considered as legitimate in the field (Lincoln & Guba, 1994; Yin, 1994). In doing so, we aim to provide a pathway to further enrich our understanding of corporate-community relations and SLO challenges through complementary and rigorous qualitative and quantitative based methodologies.

Third, the interdisciplinary scope of this literature review generates perspectives that bridge management with other areas of knowledge such as environmental management, energy policy, project management, territorial development, engineering, innovation and

technology. These disciplines are close to the concept of SLO without or with very few explicit references to the theory of legitimacy, yet central in organizational theory. In doing so, we link the literature on the SLO to existing theories in organizational theories — such as the legitimacy — while showing how these two literatures can be mutually enriching. Precisely because organizations are embedded in geographic communities and that SLO is mainly interested with geographically — or locally — grounded issues, we believe that this literature can help to redirect theoretical and empirical attention of legitimacy theory back to understanding the importance of local influences and determinants.

1.9 Limitations

Although we conducted a systematic review, an absence of publication bias cannot be guaranteed, as this review was limited to peer-reviewed journal articles written in English. Moreover, the diversity of perspectives and fields used to study SLO resulted in a multitude of outcome conceptualizations that we had not anticipated, and we used rather broad outcome concepts in our databases search. Consequently, our initial search did not identify all relevant articles. An extensive reference check that identified many additional relevant articles resolved this limitation. Moreover, while many published papers in the *International Journal of Management Reviews* suggest reviewing literatures strictly in high-quality journals in the domain of business and management because established influential journals tend to shape the theoretical and empirical work in a field by setting new horizons for future research within their frame of reference (Furrer, Thomas, & Goussevskaia, 2008, p. 8), such a measure would have eliminated a major part of our articles identified. Our premise is that papers published around SLO will tend to be published in better ranked journals as the field continues its structuration.

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Chapitre 2

Community agency, capacity building and corporate-community relations: lessons from Eeyou Istchee⁸

Résumé

While corporate-community relations are today acknowledged by practitioners and international associations as crucial management issues, the internal processes of local communities remain under-studied. In fact, little is known about the processes through which local communities gain agency and engage in self-empowerment processes, and scholars have mainly studied corporate-community relations from the perspective of companies. Relying on a 45-year longitudinal case study of Eeyou Istchee, the Cree Nation located in the James Bay area of northern Quebec, Canada, our study offers two contributions to the literature. First, it offers a typology of community-based organizations based on their functions and their role across the scope of corporate-community relations: our typology describes strategic, implementation, representation, and joint organizations. Second, this study provides a conceptual framework for understanding how communities build agency.

Key words: capacity building; community agency; community-based organizations; community-corporate relations; local communities; sustainable development.

⁸ Cet article est co-écrit avec Emmanuel Raufflet, pour une soumission au Journal of Business Ethics. Cet article a été présenté au Congrès de l'Academy of Management en août 2016.

2.1 Introduction

In 1971, approximately 4,500 Cree people lived in five separate communities spread out over 170,000 square miles in the northern region of James Bay in the province of Quebec, Canada. The Cree learned through the local radio station that a major hydropower complex was to be built on their historical lands by Hydro-Québec, a government utility corporation. At the time, the Cree had no formal political institutions and did not consider themselves united together governmentally (Salisbury, 1986). Few considered the Cree to be a single community or people (Carlson, 2008; Salisbury, 1986).

In 2012, the Grand Council of the Crees – created in August 1974 – signed a historic agreement with the province of Quebec that established their own regional government. Cree-run organizations manage education, health and socio-economic development. Cree-run institutions define and enforce their own regional authority. Their capacities make it possible for the Eeyou People, the Cree Nation of Quebec, to manage relations with developers, such as extractive companies, on equal footing.

The Cree recognize that these processes of community capacity building and nation-formation were made possible by the interactions between them and Hydro-Québec. Philip Awashish, a Cree Elder and first negotiator of the Grand Council of the Crees, explains: “Thanks to Hydro-Québec, we [the Cree] are what we are today. Continuous struggle with Hydro-Québec over access to natural resources since 1970 allowed us to develop our capabilities.”

Over four decades, the Cree have gained agency (see Papillon & Rodon, 2016; Salée & Lévesque, 2010) through their relationship with Hydro-Québec, and this agency affects their relationship with Hydro-Québec as well as with other companies and governments. Community agency is defined as a community’s ability to determine and manage their aspirations. Capacities are often defined on the individual level (Nussbaum, 2003, 2011; Robeyns, 2005; Sen, 2004), and organizations contribute to bringing capacities from the level of the individual to the level of the community.

In this vein, this article aims to address these interrelated research questions: what are the processes by which local communities gain agency? How may corporate-community relations contribute to building community agency? In so doing, this article contributes to research on corporate-community relations (CCR). Although research on CCR has expanded over the last decade (Bowen et al., 2010; Imbun, 2007; Rowe, Nowak, Quaddus, & Naude, 2013) and has improved our understanding of the engagement of community from a corporate perspective, there has been little research on intra-community processes, particularly on community-based organizations⁹ (CBOs hereinafter), community capacity building and the influence of both on CCR.

Overall, CCR literature has tended to focus on three areas. The first area generally takes the perspective of companies and has investigated the antecedents of community engagement as well as the key success factors for companies for “successful” community relations (Bowen et al., 2010; Kapelus, 2002; Zandvliet & Anderson, 2009). The second area is concerned with the identification and mapping of forms corporate community engagement (see Bowen, Newenham-Kahindi, & Herremans, 2008; Bowen et al., 2010; Delannon et al., 2016). The third area of research on CCR has focused on the impacts of these relations and of development more generally on local communities (Banerjee, 2000; Bruijn & Whiteman, 2010; Whiteman, 2004). These studies have built on critical and anthropological perspectives, including postcolonial studies, which view these relations as a new form of unequal colonial relations (Banerjee, 2008; Whiteman & Mamen, 2002).

Despite its valuable contributions, this literature has not entirely overcome a few limitations. First, this literature tends to focus on internal company motives and processes, on the relationship between the two and on the alleged economic “benefits” for or effects on communities, as seen from the perspective of firms. Second, this literature has overlooked intra-community processes. Yet CBOs are widely recognized as essential to

⁹We define community-based organizations as community-driven arrangements that coordinate collective action and decisions at a local level (Fletcher, 2003; Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998; M. G. Wilson, Lavis, & Guta, 2012). As North (1990, p. 6) argues, they “provide a relatively predictable structure for everyday social, economic and political life”. We use the term local institutions as synonym for community-based organizations (CBOs).

local communities (Carman, 2007; Kreuter et al., 2000; Rich, Giles, & Stern, 2001), and one might argue that they contribute to changing relations and to forming solid relationships with local stakeholders, i.e. governments, firms, other organizations, etc.

To examine intra-community processes and analyze the emergence and development of CBOs, we report on a 45-year longitudinal case study from James Bay in northern Quebec, Canada. The case of the relations between Hydro-Québec and the Cree First Nation in this area provides a relevant context in which to examine the process of CBO development, as the Cree institution and its development as a CBO is widely recognized as spectacular (Carlson, 2008). As our study shows, the experiences of Hydro-Québec and the Cree First Nation suggest that building sustainable relations can also contribute to the construction of institutions and organizations on both sides. Our study thus adds to the work of Muthuri, Chapple, and Moon (2009), who have mentioned the crucial role of CBOs in building sustainable CCR. More specifically, our insights make two contributions to discussions of CCR. First, we analyze and conceptualize a four-stage process of CBO development that allows local communities to develop empowering structures: emergence, expansion, empowerment and lastly, refocusing and consolidation. Second, we define and build a typology of CBOs, based on their functions for local communities and their role in the scope of CCR. The four types of CBOs are strategic, implementation, representation and joint institutions. These two contributions allow us to discuss the influence of CBOs in structuring long term CCR.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. First, we outline and review the literature on CCR. Second, we describe our longitudinal case design and introduce the case context and methods. Third, we present our findings, which outline the nature of the institutional changes that allowed the Cree First Nation to build capacities through CBO development and consolidation and the processes by which this occurred. We then develop our model for the emergence and consolidation of CBOs and elaborate on the contributions of our study for researchers, practitioners, local communities and policy makers. Lastly, we outline boundary conditions and offer suggestions for future research.

2.2 Corporate-community relations: a literature review

CCR, defined here as the forms of engagement between companies and the local communities in which they operate, have become a salient issue for local communities, business management, governments and civil society (Calvano, 2008; Imbun, 2007; Jenkins & Yakovleva, 2006; Maignan & Ralston, 2002). In line with Muthuri et al. (2009), we understand local communities to be composed of individuals and groups that share a territory, share interests and engage in collective action.

Although Freeman (2005) has argued for the importance of local communities as strategic stakeholders for corporations, research in business ethics and corporate social responsibility (CSR), despite its recent flourishing (Garriga & Melé, 2004), has long disregarded the relations between businesses and local communities (Freeman, Harrison, & Wicks, 2007). This gap in the field of CSR has given rise to the “problem of community” (Dunham, Freeman, & Liedtka, 2006), which refers to the need to further explore local communities as crucial but under-studied stakeholders and to remedy definitional and conceptual shortcomings in CSR discussions of community. Dunham et al. describe the “problem of community” as “wanting ‘community’ to do some conceptual work and wanting corporations to be held accountable for their actions vis-à-vis actual communities; but not specifying exactly who or what they are, so that we could know whether or not we are successful” (2006, p. 26). This state of affairs deprives us of a deeper understanding of community-centered processes, organizing and organizations. In all, this neglect of the local community as an object of investigation was particularly criticized by Freeman et al. (2007) for preventing scholars from making useful insights about the importance of the local community in managing stakeholder relations.

As a research area in the field of CSR, CCR is not new but has burgeoned over the last decade (Alinsky, 1962; Garriga & Melé, 2004; Hanson, 1988). Recent literature reviews have mapped the CCR literature (Bowen et al., 2010) as well as the literature surrounding the social license to operate (Raufflet et al., 2013). A convincing effort to integrate this research was recently undertaken by Bowen et al. (2010) in their systematic literature review of CCR that mapped and identified 206 articles published in 11 management

journals over the 1994-2007 period. This research led to the identification of a continuum of three corporate community engagement strategies based on the intensity of their engagement with the community: transactional, transitional and transformational strategies. Moreover, several special issues were recently published on CCR (see *Community Development Journal*, 2013, on extractive industries; *Social Epistemology: A Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Policy*, 2014, on the social license to operate; and *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2016, on the ethics of mining). This collection of special issues offers reflections on a broad range of emerging CCR and community development challenges surrounding economic development and the management of natural resources in different settings worldwide.

Table XX - Three main research areas in the CCR literature

Research focus area	Research focus	Key messages	Illustrations
Firms: antecedents of community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Organizational motivations – Organizational practices – Organizational arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Instrumental (reducing risks, obtaining a social license to operate), moral (distributive justice: shared benefits and costs) – Transactional CCR generate conflicts; firms could benefit from engaging in transformational engagement strategy on the basis of mutual trust; there may be significant gaps between the corporate strategy of responsiveness to stakeholders and local practices of subsidiaries. – Five important internal dimensions differentiate firms in their CCR engagement strategy: (1) financial resources, (2) human resources, (3) competencies, (4) status, and (5) measurement tools. 	Delannon et al. (2016); Gray and Stites (2013); Hall et al. (2015); Kemp and Owen (2013); Lacey and Lamont (2014); Muthuri et al. (2009); Prno and Slocombe (2012)
Forms of community engagement: Firms' relationships with local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tangible and intangible costs related to conflicts with local communities – “Business case” for community engagement – Mapping organizational practices with respect to community relations – Evolution of CCR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Non-technical risks (i.e. conflict and sabotage) challenge many major projects; firms suffer numerous delays due to local conflicts; loss of legitimacy. – The rise of local corporate-community conflicts surrounding development projects represents a trend rather than an exceptional event; it is in the firm's interest to proactively manage CCR. – Continuum of CCR from transactional to transitional and to transformational strategies of engagement. There is a fourth engagement 	Boehm (2005); Bowen et al. (2010); Davis and Franks (2011); Delannon, Bénard, Verreault, and Raufflet (2011); Humphreys (2000); Imbun (2007); C. Marquis and Battilana (2009); Newenham-Kahindi (2011); Rowe et al. (2013); Zandvliet and Anderson (2009)

		<p>strategy, the integrational strategy, which is an inherently transverse strategy of engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The social license to operate is the result of long-term CCR development; the ethics of top management is an important factor in determining the success of CCR; when effectively co-managed with public authorities, CCR can make important contributions to local development in developing countries; in some cases, firms' community development practices replace de facto governments instead of consolidating the actions of these. 	
Local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cultural and spiritual impact of development on Aboriginal lands – Corporate rhetoric around the primacy of development and its impact on Indigenous communities – Forms of community resistance and community perceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The economic development in territories where Indigenous peoples live has resulted in a series of losses for Indigenous peoples: loss of control over resources, emotional and spiritual loss. – Opposition of resistance and colonial discourse around mining projects; CSR discourse at the community level tends to legitimize the interests of dominant corporations. – Groups of actors at the local level have different perceptions of the quality of CCR. 	<p>Banerjee (2000, 2003, 2008); Calvano (2008); Castro and Nielsen (2001); Comaroff (1985); Jenkins (2004); Kapelus (2002); Whiteman (2004, 2009); Whiteman and Mamen (2002)</p>

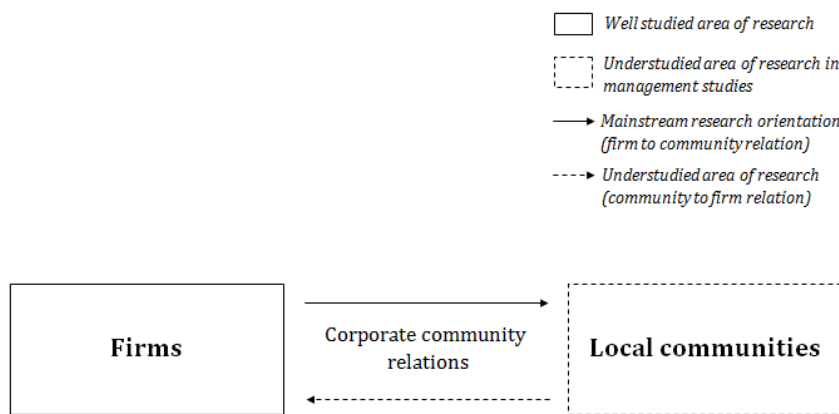
The field of CCR has focused on three main areas (refer to Table XX above for a summary of the literature). The first area concerns the antecedents of community engagement – including corporate motivations, practices and organizational arrangements – that support community engagement. Overall, this stream of literature recognizes that the proper management of community relations is crucial for organizations (Bowen et al., 2010; Kapelus, 2002; Zandvliet & Anderson, 2009). In fact, conflict prevention with local communities is an important motivator for organizations to engage in CCR (Davis & Franks, 2014; Humphreys, 2005; Whiteman, 2009). Moreover, in a recent systematic literature review of multi-stakeholder partnerships, Gray and Stites (2013) identified four generic corporate motives for collaboration : 1) legitimacy-oriented motives, 2) competency-oriented motives, 3) resource-oriented motives and 4) society-oriented motives. As for the practices of community engagement, several studies have proposed upstream or initial consultation stages and suggested strategies and tactics to connect with communities in different moments and stages of business activities (Hall et al., 2015; Hamann, 2014; Lacey & Lamont, 2014). Previous research has identified and mapped practices of CCR ranging from philanthropic and discretionary activities (charitable donations, building local infrastructure, employee volunteering and information sessions) to dialogue-based practices (stakeholder dialogues, public consultations and town hall meetings) and joint processes (joint project management and joint decision-making committees) (Boehm, 2005; Delannon et al., 2016; López-Navarro, Tortosa-Edo, & Llorens-Monzonís, 2013; Muthuri et al., 2009; Rashidpour, 2014; Rowe et al., 2013).

As for the organizational arrangements and internal processes that support CCR, scholars have highlighted the challenges companies face such as managing structures, elaborating strategies and integrating the community relations function within their operations and value chain (Kemp & Owen, 2013; Kemp, Owen, & Graaff, 2012). Detailed studies of CCR have identified a gap between corporate discourse and implementation. In a nutshell, this research highlights that “while community relations are viewed by companies as core to business, they are not yet part of core business” (Kemp & Owen, 2013). In this vein, Davis and Franks (2014) have recently shown that most companies still perceive these challenges to be an external issue that can be neither prevented nor managed. Based on

an extensive research project focusing on CCR in 17 companies operating in environmentally-sensitive industries within Canada, Delannon et al. (2016, p. 17) point toward the quest for a integrational strategy, defined as “a company’s ability to deliberately embrace flexibility by adapting to the variety of its local stakeholders’ expectations.” This study underscores the importance of organizational arrangements in accounting for the strategies of community engagement adopted by firms.

The second research area identifies and maps forms of CCR (see Bowen et al., 2008, 2010). It complements the first company-centered area to the extent that it focuses on CCR itself. Strategies of CCR are defined as “the pattern of activities implemented by firms to work collaboratively with and through groups of people to address issues affecting the social well-being of those people” (Bowen et al., 2010, p. 297). Several typologies of forms of engagement have been elaborated (Bowen et al., 2010; Delannon et al., 2016). Based on a systematic literature review, Bowen et al. (2010) have underlined the existence of a continuum of corporate-community relations from transactional to transitional to transformational strategies of engagement. In all, this second area of research on the forms of CCR has contributed to improving our understanding of relations by moving the research from a more firm-centered approach to more open-ended ones. These two research areas are mapped below (see Figure VIII).

Figure VIII - Mapping research on corporate-community relations



This third stream of research on CCR has focused on the impacts of these relations on communities. These studies have built on critical and anthropological perspectives. Researchers have looked at how collective action and mobilization enable local communities to influence organizations (Calvano, 2008; Hoffman, 1999; Imbun, 2007; King, 2008). They have also drawn on postcolonial discursive theories and theories of power to understand these relations, often presented as the renewal of colonial relationships based on oppression and domination (Banerjee, 2000, 2008, 2011; Kraemer, Whiteman, & Banerjee, 2013).

Other studies have focused on long-standing struggles between multinational corporations and local communities, most notably in resource extraction industries in Indigenous contexts (Banerjee, 2003; Bruijn & Whiteman, 2010; Holley & Mitcham, 2016; Whiteman, 2009). Within this stream of research, many studies have looked at community mobilization and resistance around issues of control over land and natural resources (Calvano, 2008; Costanza, 2016; Jenkins, 2004; Nash, 1979; Whiteman & Mamen, 2002). Overall, this research area has tended to be deterministic and views communities as “victims” of corporate activities. In fact, some authors argue that local communities are institutionally destined to lose when facing corporations because of their limited resources (Calvano, 2008; Newell, 2005). Several other anthropological studies have examined the impact of economic development on the spirituality and traditional way of life of Indigenous communities. These detailed ethnographic studies have highlighted that the tremendous amount of economic development that has taken place on Indigenous territories contrasts with Indigenous peoples’ loss of control over resources and their emotional and spiritual loss (Whiteman, 2004).

Despite its richness, this body of research faces several limitations. While detailed examinations of communities from an anthropological perspective have tended to be naturalistic and focus on the experiences of individuals or families (see Whiteman, 2004), they offer a very limited understanding of the internal processes of local communities regarding capacity building. This literature has tended to examine and comprehend the flow of influence and power in a unidirectional way – namely from firm to community –

especially in the evolution of long-term relations between companies and local communities.

In contrast to these three CCR research areas, research on community and international development has highlighted the role of CBOs and capacity building in long-term corporate strategies to engage local communities (Carey & Braunack-Mayer, 2009; Jabbar & Abelson, 2011; Rich et al., 2001). Marsh (2003, p. 27) has argued for the role of “local communities as full partners in development planning and implementation” (2003, p. 27), if communities are provided opportunities to access adequate capacity building. CBOs are the foundations that enable local communities to coordinate action and make joint decisions, to voice and enforce their interests, to influence decisions made at higher levels and to hold policy makers accountable (Leach et al., 1999; Ostrom, 1990). Furthermore, CBOs shape local environments by structuring environmental risks and volatility, creating frameworks in which outcomes of collective action unfold and facilitating the local implementation of national institutional policies (Marwell, 2004). In addition, CBOs are key players in the achievement of local development. Rashidpour (2014, p. 11) argues that “the challenge is to facilitate and institutionalize a process through which rural communities themselves would evolve local organizations to satisfy their own local needs.” Yet, these processes of CBO-building have received limited attention in CCR literature.

Collected together, the literature reviewed above leads to the central research question driving our study: how do local communities gain agency through their relations with firms?

2.3 Research methods

2.3.1 Research Strategy

The objective of this empirical study was to understand the processes of emergence and development of CBOs. To gain as much benefit as possible from the rich and detailed qualitative data, an inductive analysis approach, as described by Patton (1990, p. 306), was employed. We were originally inspired by the lack of longitudinal studies dealing

with the processes of emergence and development of CBOs. In this vein, we conducted a longitudinal case study that covers a 45-year period, from 1970 to 2015. Case studies have been demonstrated to be useful for researchers seeking to study phenomena within their contexts (Yin, 2003). This methodology was selected on the basis of the exploratory nature of this study and the need to account for the processual and longitudinal aspect of the institutionalization process.

2.3.2 Case selection and context

The case of the relations between Hydro-Québec and the Cree First Nation provides a relevant context to examine the process of CBO development (Carlson, 2008; Salisbury, 1986). Three main reasons guided our choice of the Eeyou Istchee as our case study. First, the James Bay hydroelectric project offers several unique criteria on which to build an analysis: (a) it is an extreme case that provides a context exhibiting a particularly strong manifestation of a phenomenon (Patton, 2002), (b) the case illustrates the challenges of CCR and the process of local institution-building and strengthening in the long term, (c) it constitutes a particularly relevant longitudinal process as the relationship between Hydro-Québec and the Cree First Nation has ranged from conflictual to harmonious. Second, as we argued earlier, the transformation of the Cree First Nation since the announcement of the James Bay project in terms of emergence of CBOs is noteworthy because of its rarity within Indigenous contexts, its longevity and history of resistance. Third, the lack of long-term studies examining the evolution of CCR deprives us of insightful research avenues (Baba & Raufflet, 2014); this study aims to contribute to overcoming this limitation.

2.3.3 Data collection

To ensure the trustworthiness of this qualitative historical research (Lincoln & Guba, 1995), data sources were triangulated. Data was collected between 2011 and 2013, and both primary and secondary data were collected for the period of study. The data collection proceeded in an iterative way: insights that emerged from early stages of data collection directed the next round of data collection, which led to the improvement of

questions used during semi-structured interviews until saturation (Patton, 2002). Furthermore, following the principles of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), the authors entered the field with very few theoretical formulations in mind. Data collection was approached with a broad view about the emergence and development of CBOs to avoid fixed thinking about which concepts and theoretical frameworks might be suitable to study this phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Primary data. The primary data consisted of 70 semi-structured interviews following an interview guide designed according to recommendations of qualitative research (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). In-depth interviews were conducted with Hydro-Québec community-relations department managers, Quebec government senior officials, a lawyer for the Grand Council of the Crees and an employee of the Cree Regional Authority, as well as various historians, sociologists and political scientists who had previously conducted research on the case of the James Bay Cree and who had interviewed people directly involved in the process. These interviews were conducted either in French or English and lasted between 45 and 180 minutes. Because of the controversial nature of the case, empirical data and interviewee interpretations were cautiously compared by assessing their narrative and temporal compatibility.

Secondary data. This study also involved analyzing various types of secondary data sources, including written materials such as books, case studies, articles, theses, annual reports, newspapers, national assembly minutes and archival letters and speeches, as well as internal documents from Hydro-Québec, the Grand Council of the Crees and the Cree government. Internet searches and website analyses were also used to identify the stakeholders and the events of the James Bay project and the Great Whale hydroelectric project and controversy. From the Internet, data originally published between the years 1970 and 2015 were collected. The documentation of the James Bay project was traced in a structured way, and the following keywords and variants were used: “Great Whale,” “Great Whale Project,” “Great Whale Controversy,” “James Bay project,” “James Bay Controversy,” and “Eeyou Istchee.” In some cases, relevant web pages were accessed directly, including those of Hydro-Québec’s annual reports. In total,

over a hundred documents were analyzed to triangulate and validate the data, accounting for approximately three thousand pages. The documents provided background information about Quebec's energy policy, Hydro-Québec's strategy, political and social contextual information and documents tracing actors' discourse throughout the process.

2.3.4 Data analysis approach

Processual data have several important characteristics that make their analysis sensitive (Langley, 1999). To address this difficulty, the data was organized and analyzed through a temporal bracketing strategy (Giddens, 1984; Langley, 1999). Data analysis was done in four stages and researcher notes and transcripts of all interviews were used to develop the case and better analyze the data.

First, data was analyzed through an inductive approach. Although data collection and analysis are presented in two distinct sections, both activities occurred simultaneously and overlapped (Strauss & Corbin, 1997), as is usually the case in grounded theory. For instance, early interviews guided the development of new versions of the interview guide, and the analysis of these guided the objectives and emphases of later meetings and interviews. Following the principles of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), the first author entered the field with very few theoretical formulations in mind. Both authors discussed the interview transcriptions, field notes and archival materials to form a common perspective on emergent themes and enrich our understanding. Empirical data and interviewee interpretations were cautiously compared by assessing their narrative and temporal compatibility.

Second, after reaching a common agreement on emergent themes and an overall picture of the phenomena, each author organized the data chronologically, based on major events (Ven & Poole, 2005). The chronologies were compared and discussed until a synthesis was reached. In accordance with our temporal bracketing strategy, the data were separated into four distinct periods that emerged from coding the data. Empirical material was organized in chronological order to reflect the history of Hydro-Québec and the Cree Nation from 1970 to 2015, including various controversies and the process of rebuilding

relationships. These phases were based on actual historical events during the evolution of the relations between both actors and follow a logical sequence based on the nature of the relationships these actors maintained. As Langley (1999) points out, dividing the data into different temporal phases offers a convenient framework for categorizing data in terms of events, relations and patterns. In accordance with our temporal bracketing strategy, the data were separated into four distinct periods that emerged from coding the data. The criteria used to distinguish phases was that of the nature of the relationship between the Cree Nation, Hydro-Quebec and the Government. The qualitative assessment of the nature of relations was achieved through the qualitative assessment by actors themselves, but also what was revealed by secondary data. For example, when a controversy was documented by the media and actors, it was known that the relationship was negative. At the same time, just after a historic agreement, it was also known that relations had improved following the controversy. Table XXI below shows the four phases, as well as the four natures of relationships. We distinguished between: negative (phase 1), better but inconsistent (phase 2), negative, with a willingness to improve relations from both parties (phase 3), and harmonious/constructive (phase 4).

Third, after chronologies were established, all data was organized according to the chronology, and short descriptions of each phase were written. In phase 3, the first step was made towards theorization. During this round, common themes emerging from the data were compared. For example, the types of local CBOs from each phase were inductively categorized, as were the results of relationships between actors. Through discussions and comparisons between the authors, categories, structures, patterns and causal relations of each phase were refined with respect to CBO emergence (Patton, 2002). Here, the primary objective was to understand what events occasioned what behavior in local communities in terms of CBOs. In this third step, the analysis of the data across phases was also completed, by comparing the categories of each phase and the original data and looking for the major patterns and themes that characterized the case study. Afterwards, the coding methods elaborated by Miles and Huberman (1994) were followed to generate preliminary categories by closely reviewing interview transcripts and other textual documentation for each period. Relevant descriptive accounts were generated in the form of selected quotes for each category.

The fourth and last step of the data analysis involved identifying processes of CBO emergence. By ensuring constant interaction between data collection and data analysis, concrete patterns and causal relations were situated within our analytical categories; this enabled a process of emergence and development of CBOs to be elaborated for each phase. Then, the four process models were compared with the original interview transcripts, textual documentation and categories to develop a general conceptual framework for the whole period analyzed (1970-2015). After rounds of iteration between theory and data, a theoretical framework was inductively constructed. This theoretical framework offers a comprehensive view of the process of emergence and development of CBOs.

Table XXI - Contextual overview of the case

	Phase 1 (1970-1974)	Phase 2 (1975-1988)	Phase 3 (1989-2000)	Phase 4 (2001-2015)
Main events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Announcement of the James Bay hydroelectric project (“La Grande”) - Major controversy involving the Cree First Nation, Hydro-Québec and the federal and provincial governments - First lawsuit settled in favor of the Cree First Nation in 1973 - Signature of an agreement in principle to settle issues in 1974 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signature of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) in 1975 to settle issues - Tensions regarding the implementation of the JBNQA - Signature with specific agreements between the Cree First Nation and Hydro-Québec to settle ongoing issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Announcement of the Great Whale project (Phase 2) - Major controversy involving the Cree First Nation, Hydro-Québec and both governments (federal and provincial) - Cancellation of the Great Whale project by the Premier of Quebec after a major controversy in 1994 - Attempt to reconstruct relationships after 1995 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signature of the historic agreement (La Paix des Braves) in 2002 settling previous legal conflicts - Signature of a 2004 agreement between the Cree and Hydro-Québec for a new relationship based on trust, cooperation and collaboration - Signature of a 2007 agreement between the Cree and the federal government for increased economic power and community development - Signature of a 2012 agreement between the Cree and the province of Quebec for the creation of the James Bay-Eeyou Istchee municipality, conferring increased municipal power.
Nature of relationship	Negative	Better but inconsistent	Negative, but with a willingness to improve relations from both parties	Harmonious and constructive

New CBOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Grand Council of the Crees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cree School Board – Cree Board of Compensation – Cree Regional Authority – Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay – Cree Regional Economic Enterprises Company 	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cree Development Corporation – Cree Mineral Exploration Board – Cree Nation Governance Working Group – Niskamoon Corporation – Dispute Resolution Committee – Monitoring Committee
Developed capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Organizational capacities (coordination of different communities) – Financial capacities (ability to manage local funds) – Legal capacities (organizing legal lawsuits) – Relational capacities (alliance building with other stakeholders) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Capacity to craft and improve CBOs – Sector-specific capacities (health, education and social services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mobilization and negotiation capacities – Publication relations and lobbying capacities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Managerial and organizational capacities (dealing with complex structures) – Entrepreneurial capacities (development of local entrepreneurship)

Table XXII - Empirical data

Phase	Illustrative empirical material
<p>Phase 1 (1970-1974)</p>	<p>Crees experience with the James Bay project. “When the project was announced, we heard about it on the local radio. Back then, Cree communities had very few contacts between them. Lack of roads and infrastructures made it difficult to travel and our chiefs rarely met as we didn’t have a regional integration under one same organization. Organizing ourselves was key, and I believe this is one of our strengths – unifying our people.” (Interview with Phillip Awashish, elder and negotiator of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement)</p> <p>Cree leadership first historic meeting in 1971. “After months of uncertainty and lack of clear information a number of the Cree leaders met in Mistassini, thanks to the financial aid from the Arctic Institute of North America.” (Salisbury, 1986, p. 54)</p> <p>Crees experience with local community-based organizations. “We started from nowhere and had to learn everything. When we created all these local institutions, we didn't know how to deal with these big structures which were strange to our culture and way of life [...] but with time and adaptation, we developed specific skills and knowledge to deal with these institutions [...]” (Interview, Cree government high official)</p> <p>Unification of the Crees through their first community-based organization. “The Crees wanted to unify themselves under a political structure that would allow them to negotiate and work for their interests: they did so under the Grand Council of the Cree, the first political structure that the Cree had known. The Crees had to separate from the Indians of Quebec Association to create their own institution.” (Interview, community relations manager at Hydro-Québec)</p>
<p>Phase 2 (1975-1988)</p>	<p>Getting accustomed to a new way of life. “We somehow didn't really have the choice but to get used to our new environment and way of living.” Interview, John Paul Murdoch, Cree Nation Government official)</p> <p>Implementation issues inherent to the agreement. “One obvious thing is that the JBNQ was negotiated so fast that it was not perfect: in fact, it omitted the implementation chapter.” (Interview, Martin Papillon, political scientist)</p> <p>New institutional arrangements. “The Cree insisted and obtained control over local and regional governments, the creation of their own health and school boards, measures for economic and community development, special regimes for police and justice and environmental protection.” (Interview with previous Quebec high official and mediator of the 2012 agreement between Crees and Quebec)</p>

	<p>Emergence of local organizations following the agreement. “An important impact of the JBNQA was all the structures we had to create to deal with all the new legislations for health, school, education, environmental protection, economic development and community development. Many organizations were created progressively between 1975 and 1985 to manage all these things.” (Interview, Cree government high official)</p> <p>Issues related to local organizations. “Our people had a lot of issues in the beginning. We were not used to run organizations. We never really worked full-time in an office, do administrative paperwork, deal with accounting and stuff like that. It was a long learning process for us.” (Interview, Phillip Awashish, elder, negotiator and signatory of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement)</p>
<p>Phase 3 (1989-2000)</p>	<p>The Great Whale controversy. “Late 1990s, we [the Cree] decided to change our approach. The change of leadership at the head of the Grand Council of the Cree also favored the transition from an offensive to a collaborative approach with Hydro-Quebec and the government. [...]” (Interview, Cree government high official)</p> <p>Community-based organizations at the center of the controversy. “What is ironic is that the Crees used all the structures they had created with the funding coming from the JBNQA and used them to attack Great Whale and get it cancelled. The institutional infrastructure of the Crees helped them lead the international media war.” (Interview, Martin Papillon, political scientist)</p> <p>Cree institutions in the 1990s. “We did not really engage in thinking about our institutions during the 1990s. I think that all our people were busy fighting Great Whale and organizing themselves. However, the institutions created before Great Whale were massively used to defend our people rights against the project.” (Interview, community member and activist in Nemaska)</p> <p>Funding of the Crees campaign of the 1990s. “No doubt that the Crees used Quebec’s money and the federal government’s money of 1975 to fight against Great Whale. In many circumstances, the fight was not only against Great Whale but also Quebec as a whole.” (Interview with Jacques Parizeau, former Premier of Quebec)</p> <p>Empowerment of the Crees in the 1990s. “We could say that the 1990s were a period of empowerment for the Crees and for our organizations which were gaining legitimacy and visibility around the world.” (Interview, Cree government high official)</p>
<p>Phase 4 (2001-2015)</p>	<p>Acceptance and cooperation. “The Cree and the government of Quebec signed a major historical agreement in February 2002, la Paix des Braves. [...] This Agreement is recognized by the United Nations as a model.” (Interview, Bernard Landry, former Quebec Premier)</p>

Agreement between Hydro-Quebec and the Crees. “In 2004, the Crees and Hydro-Quebec signed their own ‘Paix des Braves’, ensuring a new relationship between the two parties. It was then decided that all working groups and agreement committees would be merged under one same organization: Niskamoon, a joint organization between the two parties.” (Interview, community relations officer at Hydro-Québec)

The role of Niskamoon in ensuring constructive relationships between the Crees and Hydro-Quebec. “Niskamoon is the fundamental piece of the social acceptability of Hydro-Quebec’s projects. It is through Niskamoon that we make sure that agreements are well implemented, and that local communities and land users benefit from the project. We also make sure through Niskamoon that impacted land users enhance their traditional practice.” (Interview with Environment Director, Niskamoon)

Institutional infrastructure of the Crees. “Throughout the years, the Crees created several institutions to deal with specific arrangements and legislations. They started with the Grand Council of the Crees, and more recently they created the Cree Nation Government to deal with local governance through the 2012 self-governance agreement with Quebec. But my belief is that this process has created complexity. There are far too many organizations, agreements and legislations, and it is difficult to track everything. This is the current challenge.” (Interview with scientific advisor, Grand Council of the Crees)

2.4 Findings: lessons from Eeyou Istchee

2.4.1 Phase 1 – Announcement of the James Bay Project, development of the controversy and the emergence of strategic CBOs (1970–1974)

On April 30, 1971, Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa announced the James Bay Project (later called “La Grande” or The Great Complex), a hydroelectric-power development. The project was to be developed in three phases: 1) The development of La Grande River, 2) the development of the Great Whale River, and 3) the development of the Nottaway, Broadback, and Rupert rivers (T. Martin, 2001). The Cree realized that their traditional lifestyle would be hugely impacted as a result of their environment’s transformation. In a feasibility study conducted on the project, there were no consultations with the Cree. In the words of Ted Moses, former Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees, “the James Bay Project La Grande was undertaken without our consent, without consultation, without environmental impact studies, without taking into consideration in any way that it was being built on land where people lived, where our people got their food.”

The Cree began to claim their rights on their territory (Savard, 2010). They quickly organized themselves and held several meetings to plan their future; and “the first meeting of the Cree as a regional, political people took place at Mistassini Post on June 28, 1971.” (Carlson, 2008, p. 209), As planned, the provincial government launched the construction phase as early as 1972 without really considering the issues raised by the Crees (Carlson, 2008, p. 209). In response, the Cree quickly appealed to the powers of justice to terminate the project. A few months later, on November 15, 1973, the first legal victory went in favor of the Crees when Judge Albert Malouf forced an immediate suspension of the project.

On August 8, 1974, several chiefs held another meeting and decided to create the Grand Council of the Crees to unify the Cree communities and voice their interests during negotiations with Hydro-Québec and the government. Since its foundation, the Grand Council has been composed of the elected chiefs of each of the eight bands and a second representative elected by each band.

Before the creation of the Grand Council, the James Bay territory (called “Eeyou Istchee” by the Cree) was ruled by a traditional political structure that was organized according to their traditional lifestyle. The Cree’s land was divided into areas of manageable size, each of which was managed by a tallyman. Carlson (2008, p. 209) asserts the following:

Connected by bonds of friendship and family among hunters, the Cree had never before considered themselves bound together governmentally. There had been no need for this, and neither of the governments to the south really thought of the Cree as a single people, except in the broadest of terms. (p. 209)

The creation of the Grand Council unified all of the Cree community towards a common goal: the right to dignity and to have a voice in the future of their territory. Philip Awashish, negotiator for the Crees confirmed, “the chiefs had never met before; this was the first time we met together and we are thankful to Hydro-Québec for this!”

The negotiations between representatives of the government of Quebec, the government of Canada and the Cree led to the James Bay Agreement, which was signed in November 15, 1974, after more than a year of negotiations (Carlson, 2008). This agreement sought to make easier the collaboration between the Crees, Hydro-Quebec and the provincial government. In fact, the agreement ensured a significant role to the Crees in decision-making related to the development of the Eeyou Istchee territory. In exchange, the Crees had to abandon their traditional rights on a big part of their territory.

Emergence of strategic CBOs as advocacy (1970–1974)

It was in response to an external threat that the Cree decided to mobilize, unite and create their first strategic institution, the Grand Council of the Crees, in 1974. Being the Cree’s first regional government and the first political body in the James Bay region, this first local institution had important goals. Externally, the Grand Council had several offices in Ottawa and Montréal and was in charge of coordinating alliances with political support groups, biologists, anthropologists and legal advisors. Internally, the Grand Council of the Crees unified six Cree communities of the James Bay region under the same political

structure in order to represent their interests and voices during negotiations with Hydro-Québec and the provincial and federal governments.

Our analysis thus suggests two important elements. The first is that CBOs may emerge in response to threats and in contexts of mobilization and negotiation. In fact, initial institutionalization in local communities may come from the need of these communities to defend their interests in times of conflict in which representation and negotiation are important. The second element is that companies can play unintentional roles in the institutionalization of local communities. As our data suggest, the creation of the Grand Council of the Crees was not planned by either Hydro-Québec or the Cree. This CBO was created in response to a threat to the Cree and as a strategy for the Cree Nation to defend their interests (financial and accountability motives) and coordinate their activities towards autonomy. Such institutions foster intra-community cohesion and corporate-community dialogues.

2.4.2 Phase 2 – James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and efforts of coexistence (1975–1988)

Following the agreement in principle of 1974, a major agreement was signed and which significantly influenced relations between the Crees, Hydro-Quebec and the government of Quebec: The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA), signed with the Cree and Inuit on November 11, 1975. This agreement is considered as being historic as it was the first major comprehensive land claims agreement in Canada and was signed by seven actors: the Government of Canada, the Government of Quebec, the Cree, the Inuit, Hydro-Québec, the James Bay Development Corporation (SDBJ, *Société de développement de la Baie James*), and the James Bay Energy Corporation (SEBJ, *Société d'énergie de la Baie James*). This agreement was based on two principles: (1) to give a chance to all Quebecers to benefit from their province's natural resources, and (2) to ensure the political, social, cultural and economic development of Cree and Inuit peoples, as this was essential for the development of the territory. Overall, this arrangement ensured a new kind of cooperation between the Cree Nation, the government of Quebec and Hydro-Québec.

With this agreement, the Grand Council of the Crees received substantial financial resources to organize and enable the economic and social development of their community. A proliferation of implementation agencies took place under the aegis of the Grand Council of the Crees. This allowed the creation of the Cree Board of Compensation and the Cree School Board in 1975, the Cree Regional Authority and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay in 1978 and finally, the Cree Regional Economic Enterprises Company in 1982. Each of these CBOs had a specific mandate, summarized in the table below.

This period was not, however, entirely free of conflict. The Cree found that the government of Quebec and Hydro-Québec were not completely fulfilling their obligations and commitments. The implementation of the James Bay Agreement was quite controversial, and the relations between the Cree, Hydro-Québec and the government deteriorated and brought the provincial government to court for several disputes. According to the Grand Council's Director of Federal Relations, Brian Craik, "there was an ongoing fight with Quebec and Canada for adequate funding" of several CBOs (2004). He states that while "provisions in the agreement for economic and social development were to have gone ahead hand in hand," the reality was that "instead, the Cree, who represent between 30 and 75 per cent of the population in different parts of the region, had less than 5 per cent of the jobs in development and...a 40 per cent unemployment rate."

Between 1978 and 1986, Hydro-Québec signed several agreements to meet the expectations of the Cree. The government also undertook consultations with Cree leaders to discuss coordination matters and find solutions to these implementation issues, especially in regard to social program funding.

Multiplication of community-based organizations (1975–1988)

This period is characterized by three major elements: (1) the multiplication of implementation CBOs following the emergence of the initial strategic CBOs, (2) the

adaptation and questioning of these CBOs, and (3) the strengthening and reinforcement of these CBOs.

This second phase suggests that one central CBO may promote the development of other CBOs that will complement and support it. Indeed, a strategic CBO may enable the emergence of other underlying local, implementation-type CBOs in charge of enforcing and implementing the mission defined by the strategic CBO in specific areas, such as health or education. This proliferation of CBOs generated a period of uncertainty and institutional complexity among the Cree. The first complication was related to the day-to-day management of these structures. The Cree did not have the human resources and skills necessary for the proper management of the CBOs. The second complication was related to the culture of the Cree; before the creation of these organizations and formal structures, the Eeyou people relied on oral and informal structures. Additionally, while these CBOs depend on federal institutions such as ministries (e.g., for funding), there was also a need for coordination between them; this coordination was not very fluid at first. This adaptation phase was followed by a phase of reinforcement and strengthening. The Cree wished to bolster and adjust their CBOs following an initial period of adaptation. At this stage, the flaws and weaknesses of these CBOs were recognized, analyzed and mainly addressed through new administrative processes established through several agreements with Hydro-Québec and the government of Quebec. These agreements provided the Cree with more autonomy in the management of their CBOs as well as with increased funding.

2.4.3 Phase 3 – Second phase of the Hydro Project and international controversy (1989–2000)

In the spring of 1989, the Premier of Quebec, Robert Bourassa, announced the Great Whale Project (the second phase of La Grande), from which hydropower would be exported to New England States, especially Vermont and New York. Elaborated without consulting the Crees nor obtaining their consent, this second phase was publicly criticized by the Crees as it would, once again, negatively impact their traditional land and way of life. Two months after the project was announced, in May 1989, the Cree filed their first lawsuit against Hydro-Québec with the federal and provincial justices to block the project.

They also led a campaign in 1990 to mobilize public opinion and sway elected U.S. officials; their campaign was based on the lack of prior consultation with the Cree, the absence of their consent, the absence of environmental impact studies on the Great Whale Project and, ultimately, the non-compliance of the Quebec government with its engagements under the JBNQA.

Beyond blocking the Great Whale project, through this dispute the Cree also hoped to renegotiate the 1975 agreement, which they claimed to have signed under pressure (Diamond, 1990). Relying on the support of a public relations firm, the Cree engaged in an international media campaign aiming to raise awareness about the environmental and human rights issues surrounding the project. This stakeholder awareness campaign against Hydro-Québec aimed potential buyers of the energy produced by this hydro-project, namely New England states such as Vermont and New York. In doing so, the Cree internationalized the Great Whale issue by traveling to New York in a traditional boat called Odeyak. During this trip which began in March 1990, Cree leaders could arrive to the United Nations in New York on Earth Day, on April 22, 1990. They were invited to take the stand at several events throughout New England under the intense coverage of the media. This campaign generated a very favorable context to the Crees as they hoped to gain the support of environmentalists and progressive Americans to help them to obtain the endorsement of U.S. politicians (Dupuis, 2001). The campaign attracted Robert Kennedy Jr., who decided not only to visit the Crees but also to support them in mobilizing other American politicians against the electricity supply contract between New England states and Hydro-Quebec.

This campaign had a major impact and affected the image of Hydro-Québec on the international scene. It contributed to the March 1994 decision of the New York Power Authority (NYPA) to cancel its hydroelectric contract with Hydro-Québec, a contract amounting to 17 billion dollars (Seguin, 1994). The cancellation of the contract challenged the economic feasibility of the project and played a key role in reversing the power relationship between the Crees, Hydro-Québec and the government. On November

18, 1994, then Quebec Premier Jacques Parizeau announced that the Great Whale project would be suspended until further notice.

Renegotiation: community-based organizations to balance the power relationship (1989–2000)

Two main elements characterize this third phase: (1) a new controversy and perceived threat by the Cree allowed them to mobilize again quickly thanks to their CBOs and lead an unprecedented offensive; (2) this offensive and mobilization brought a shift in the power relationship, allowing actors to negotiate otherwise.

The mobilization at this stage was driven by many established CBOs that emerged during the previous phases. In fact, actors mobilized themselves around a controversy to further negotiate in favor of their interests. To do so, strong CBOs created in previous phases were mobilized. CBOs initially supported by the company and the government were in fact mobilized to counter the plans of these same actors.

Furthermore, the media campaign against Hydro-Quebec's project led through the Crees' political and administrative CBOs reshaped the power balance between the actors. In doing so, the Cree had the legitimacy to voice their interests and requirements in terms of wealth sharing, socio-economic development, implementation of agreements, resolution of past unsettled tensions and funding. The shift in the power dynamic allowed the Cree to negotiate on an equal footing as their international media campaign had increased their legitimacy and influence.

2.4.4 Phase 4 – Towards a sustainable and constructive partnership (2001–2013)

From the late 1990s up to the early 2000s, relations between the Quebec government and the Cree reached the highest degree of deterioration. On the Cree side, socio-economic conditions were very difficult as they were “lacking community centers, housing and jobs” and had a 70% rate of unemployment (John Paul Murdoch, legal counselor at the Grand Council of the Crees). On Hydro-Québec's side, there was a strong will to carry out new hydropower projects in the North to meet electricity demands. Upon his arrival

at the head of the government, the Premier of Quebec, Bernard Landry, prioritized this issue:

I wanted to settle the conflict and [to ensure that] that the Cree substantially improve their standard of living. I also wanted Quebec to manage its natural resources, hydroelectricity, forestry and mining. Not in a selfish way because our interest is theirs and vice-versa. (Bernard Landry Interview)

Ted Moses, Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees, was also willing to cooperate with the Quebec government and Hydro-Québec to rebuild their relationship and ensure the development and sustainability of the Cree.

On February 7, 2002, Quebec Premier Bernard Landry and Ted Moses signed the Paix des Braves Agreement, which reshaped relations between the Cree, Hydro-Québec, and the provincial government. In their respective inaugural speeches, Bernard Landry and Ted Moses stressed the historic nature of this agreement as a first for Canada and the rest of the world. The Paix des Braves is a comprehensive agreement which improved several controversial chapters of the JBNQA and included an important section on the implementation of the agreement, which was missing in the JBNQA. By signing this agreement, the Cree waived all legal proceedings against the government of Québec and Hydro-Québec. It also gave great power management and autonomy to Cree communities and provided a common ground for the development of the Eastmain and Rupert Rivers (a project of about \$5 billion), while providing \$3.5 billion in compensation to the Cree over 50 years. This new relationship reinforced the political, economic and social relations between Hydro-Québec, the government of Quebec and the Cree. Additionally, the Paix des Braves agreement was an out-of-court agreement to settle a dispute. It explicitly recognized the nation-to-nation relationship between the two actors, provided for greater self-determination for the Cree by allowing them to take charge of their economic and community development and provided an adapted forestry regime and a program of wildlife management.

The new relationship, based on transparency and cooperation, along with the financial resources granted to the Cree, allowed the Cree to organize and enabled the economic and

social development of the community and a strengthening of their CBOs. It is in this context that a second proliferation of CBOs underlying the Grand Council of the Crees took place. This period saw the creation of the Cree Development Corporation in 2002, the Cree Mineral Exploration Board in 2004, the Cree Nation Governance Working Group in 2008, the Niskamoon Corporation and the Dispute Resolution Committee in 2004 and what we can call the Cree government in 2012. This last is the most recent Cree CBO to emerge and deserves particular attention in terms of its institutionalization, as this was the first time in the history of Quebec that the Cree achieved such a level of cooperation from James Bay residents.

Community-based organizations as tools of partnership, development, empowerment and autonomy (2001–2013)

This fourth phase was the outcome of the three first phases. It was characterized by three elements: (1) the new power relationship shaped in the previous stage allowed actors to settle their conflicts through two major agreements that had a direct impact on Cree CBOs; (2) this new relationship based on collaboration and transparency again resulted in a proliferation of CBOs; (3) and this new relationship, thanks to the historic agreements signed, enabled the strengthening and empowerment of previous organizations.

The new relationship between Hydro-Québec and the Cree in this phase allowed them to break the deadlock and initiate an unprecedented process of dialogue and consultation. Especially favored by strong leadership on both sides, the new nature of their interactions allowed the actors to settle their disputes through two agreements that re-launched the process of institutionalization. Indeed, these new agreements helped establish new CBOs.

Finally, our data suggest that the two previous periods of negotiation and confrontation, during phases 1 and 3, allowed actors to identify aspects of the organizations they wished to jointly develop and to take measures to ensure that the CBOs were sustainable and effective. These measures were taken throughout this fourth phase to ensure that CBOs did not reproduce the same mistakes committed in previous phases, especially those regarding implementation. A learning process had clearly taken place. Furthermore, the

controversy that occurred during phase 3 was constructive as it enabled the Cree to renegotiate a new relationship and institutional architecture corresponding to their aspirations and needs.

2.5 Discussion and conclusion

Current literature on CCR, as said, provides few insights about the processes by which local communities gain agency and engage in self-empowerment. Relying on a 45-year longitudinal case study in the James Bay area of northern Quebec, Canada, our study aims to highlight the significance of directing scholars' attention towards local community processes, beyond firm-centered research, as it may be easier to establish and nurture constructive relations over the long term with structured and organized local communities.

Based on this empirical research, the contributions of this paper are twofold. First, it offers a typology of CBOs, based on their functions for local communities and their role in the scope of CCR: the four types of CBOs are strategic, implementation, representation, and joint organizations. Second, this paper provides a conceptual framework for understanding how CBOs contribute to building community agency.

2.5.1 A typology of community-based organizations enabling community agency

Our study suggests that four main types of CBOs have emerged: strategic, implementation, representation and joint organizations. These CBOs collaborate closely together, and their missions and objectives are interconnected.

First, strategic CBOs are responsible for the broad strategic orientations of the local community, the allocation of budgets and strategic planning. They are important because they allow CBOs to convey a vision for the local community and its future. These CBOs are in a way the elected government that represents the interests of the community beyond specific development projects. Strategic CBOs can be considered as the political bodies that represent local communities. They can be active in politically asserting the rights of

the local communities they serve but also in guiding the community's overall strategy and vision in terms of political, cultural, social, economic and institutional activities.

Second, implementation CBOs are crucial since they are responsible for implementing the strategic orientations of strategic CBOs. These implementation CBOs work in specific sectors to achieve the mission and objectives issued by strategic CBOs, i.e. in relation to health, education, social services and community development. Implementation CBOs have the potential to promote and sustain health, education and social development and to stimulate local development through entrepreneurship. They are directly accountable to strategic CBOs, whether that be financially or in terms of activities and operations.

Third, representation CBOs are responsible for specific operational and representation activities such as conflict resolution, discussions with local project proponents, support of local entrepreneurs and local economic development. Some of these representation CBOs aim at increasing the participation of the local community in local economic development. Others represent the interface between the local community and potential investors, such as the Cree Mineral Exploration Board, which acts as an intermediary between the industry and the local community to resolve matters of natural resource exploitation and local benefits sharing. Some representation CBOs are also in charge of the local community's economic structure. Their mission ranges from funding new business initiatives to managing the local economic ventures of the community.

Fourth, joint CBOs deal with the daily management of tensions and challenges related to agreements between project proponents and local communities. These organizations are characterized by their hybrid nature and are managed both by members of Hydro-Québec and the Cree. Joint CBOs are crucial to successful CCR, as they allow actors to maintain established relations and discussions over local issues such as job creation, social acceptance of projects and impact assessments, among others. These joint CBOs help to formalize agreements between firms and local communities. However, agreements are not an end in themselves. They are a means to translate principles shared by both partners into suitable actions that provide mutually beneficial development opportunities.

Joint local CBOs are important as they enable constant relationships between the Cree and their stakeholders. An example is the Niskamoon Corporation, a non-profit organization. Niskamoon Corporation is a joint Cree–Hydro-Québec regional organization that manages impact-benefit funds on behalf of James Bay Cree communities. It mainly manages funds derived from agreements signed between the Cree and Hydro-Québec over the years. This organization aims to ensure the smooth conduct of socio-economic development projects and maintenance of harmonious relations between the two actors. It is the fundamental pillar on which the quality of relations is based.

Table XXIII - A typology of community-based organizations enabling community agency

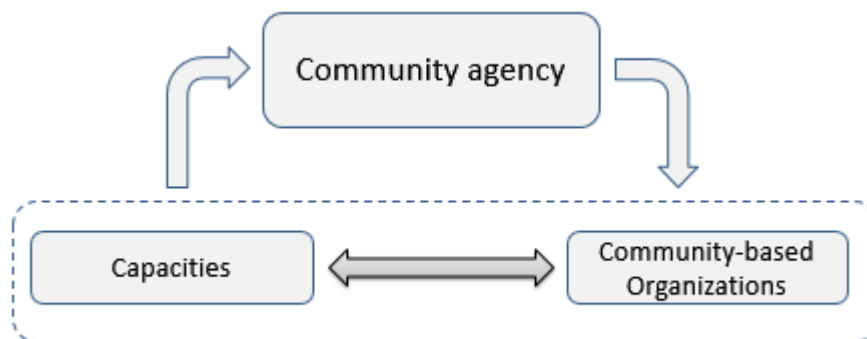
Type	Role	Illustrations
Strategic CBOs	Responsible for the broad strategy of the local community, the allocation of budgets and strategic planning for the Cree Nation.	Grand Council of the Crees (1974) Cree government (2012)
Implementation CBOs	These organizations are paramount; they bridge and connect strategic and implementation CBOs (operational). These organizations work in specific sectors to achieve the mission and objectives issued by the strategic CBOs.	Cree School Board (1975) Cree Board of Compensation (1975) Cree Regional Authority (1978) Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (1978) Cree Regional Economic Enterprises Company (1982)
Representation CBOs	Responsible for specific operational activities such as conflict resolution, discussions with project proponents and support of local entrepreneurship.	Cree Development Corporation (2002 and 2014) The Cree Mineral Exploration Board (2002) Cree Nation Governance Working Group (2008)

Joint CBOs	Deals with the daily management of challenges related to the agreements between Hydro-Québec and the Cree. These CBOs are characterized by their hybrid nature, jointly managed by members of Hydro-Québec and the Cree.	Niskamoon Corporation (2004) Dispute Resolution Committee (2002) Monitoring Committee (2004)
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2.5.2 Understanding the construction of community agency

While conflicts hold a dominant position within the CCR literature (Banerjee, 2003; Castro & Nielsen, 2001; Jenkins, 2004), few studies manage to explain how these relationships can evolve other than by perpetuating the sources and dynamics of conflict between firms and local communities. Our study deepens our understanding of how CCR can break the vicious circle of conflict by taking a close look at the process by which local communities gain agency. For instance, we argue that community agency, attained through a process of development of autonomous and efficient local CBOs, can be a way out of this vicious circle.

Figure IX - Local community-based organizations and community agency



We view this process of community agency development as a rather iterative process through which local CBOs and capacities are mutually reinforced.

The first stage involved the emergence of a strategic CBO. The main factor that led to its emergence was the will to defend the community’s interests. This step was crucial because

this local community had consisted of several separate villages. In fact, the initial strategic CBO brought together local villages that hitherto had few political and communicational ties between them. It was based on this first strategic CBO that CBO development continued. This initial step generated local capacities including the organizational capacities to coordinate different communities, legal and lobbying capacities through organizing and managing legal lawsuits, financial capacities and relational capacities through alliance building with other stakeholders at the local and national levels.

Building on these local capacities, particularly financial capacities, local communities could reinforce their institutional architecture through a multiplication of CBOs. In this case, this expansion resulted from a strengthening of the Cree's financial resources and legitimacy. This enabled the James Bay Cree to create new CBOs to manage services such as education and health for their communities; these services had been previously managed by the federal government. These CBOs were mainly focused on the implementation of specific missions around health, education and social services. Through these implementation CBOs, new local capacities were created including the capacity to craft and improve CBOs as well as sector-specific management capacities

Community agency is therefore closely linked to local capacities, which themselves enable and are the result of CBO emergence and development. However, community agency can also be developed through mobilization, lobbying, negotiation and public relations capacities. These capacities are crucial in forging autonomous CBOs. The Cree achieved this through a media offensive that aimed at shifting the power relationship in their favor. It is also a result of the managerial experience that they had achieved previously.

A final step in the process of a community gaining agency is that of refocusing and consolidating local CBOs. When positive and constructive relationships enable corporate-community trust and collaboration, local communities can mobilize the experience they have gained in the management of their CBOs to strengthen existing local CBOs. This strengthening took three distinct forms: (1) hybridization of already established CBOs to make them more efficient, (2) the creation of new joint CBOs with Hydro-Québec, and

(3) the dissolution of CBOs deemed obsolete and ineffective. In doing so, the community agency process was fed by new CBOs and new local capacities, i.e. managerial and organizational capacities (dealing with complex organizations and structures) as well as entrepreneurial capacities (development of local entrepreneurship).

2.5.3 Implications for practice and policy makers

This study provides three main implications for practitioners and policymakers in the field of CCR: (1) firms need to set aside approaches based on paternalism and philanthropy in favor of approaches based on the co-management and development of local capacities, (2) the process of development of local CBOs and capacities benefits both parties, and (3) “marginalized” stakeholders should be treated as legitimate actors that can help stabilize CCR through strong CBOs and capacities.

First, the findings of this study suggest that that “successful” CCR should result, from the perspective of First Nations communities, in the empowerment, capacity building and emancipation of First Nations as distinct and strong entities. This will provide an enabling context for all members of their community. This finding differs from three frequently advanced arguments regarding “successful” CCR; these arguments are based on general process precepts, material outcomes and philanthropic approaches. While “general precepts” focus on conflict prevention mechanisms or approaches to build “harmonious” or “win-win” corporate-community relations, the long experience of the relations between Hydro-Québec and the Cree suggests that conflict, if addressed properly, can contribute to shaping more solid partnerships and a more mature relationship. Moreover, while several authors focus on material outcomes as the result of successful CCR, this experience suggests that less tangible outcomes are also highly desirable. These outcomes take the form of capacity building, learning and innovation, as well as more generally the emancipation of First Nations through CCR, benefitting both companies – which then operate in a less volatile environment – and communities – that can make better informed decisions about their future. Finally, while several tenets of CCR focus on philanthropic approaches as a means for companies to build successful relations with communities, our study suggests that project promoters should engage in a transformational community

engagement strategy by supporting the local community in their process of capacity building (Bowen et al., 2010; Delannon et al., 2016).

Second, this local environment structuring process offers two advantages in the context of CCR since local community organizations often play important advocacy roles to strengthen local capacities and improve local conditions. CBOs thus allow communities to better organize themselves, to develop a vision and to work together for its implementation. In our case, members from both entities agree that, to a certain extent, their relationship has been beneficial for both parties. On the one hand, the state utility has adapted and learned from their interactions with the Cree Nation. On the other hand, the Cree's relationship with Hydro-Québec has contributed to their forging a national identity from nine distant communities and to shaping the organizational infrastructure of this emerging First Nation.

This study's final implication for practitioners and policy makers concerns stakeholder management. Our analysis suggests that small or marginalized groups – depicted by the stakeholder management literature as dormant stakeholders – should not be underestimated. Instead, they should be treated as legitimate and powerful actors that can help stabilize CCR through strong CBOs and capacities.

In all, our argument is that companies have the potential to contribute to building autonomous CBOs. Incentives for firms to engage in such a process may be many but reducing volatility in CCR as well as within communities (conflict, frequent changes in leadership) could be the most interesting benefit for the firm. Local communities themselves also benefit from these CBOs, from reducing uncertainty to creating vision and ensuring long-term planning. This contribution pertains to the CCR literature, which frequently reifies communities and views them as cohesive wholes, which is often not the case, and which tends to consider CCR as a short-term strategy. In this sense, the development of the relationship between Hydro-Québec and the Cree First Nation has also encompassed and prompted a process of Cree empowerment.

2.5.4 Directions for future research

Our research paves the way for two avenues of further research. The first is related to methodological implications and calls for longitudinal and historical research. In response to frequent criticisms of CSR regarding the lack of rigor in assessing empirical studies (Margolis & Walsh, 2003; McWilliams, Siegel, & Wright, 2006) as well as to calls for more empirical studies in the field of CCR (Bowen et al., 2010), we encourage rigorous longitudinal case studies to deepen our understanding of local communities' internal processes and their influence on the long-term evolution of CCR. A second avenue of research could define and refine the nexus of CCR, CBOs and community capacity building. Within this stream of research, further studies could conduct comparative analyses of the emergence and development of CBOs across time and space. In a way, the institutionalization process is an elusive and intangible phenomenon. It broadly consists of a long process and may fluctuate locally (Rodrik, 2000). Differences are to be expected between developing countries and developed countries, between aboriginal and non-aboriginal populations, according to the existing literature on CSR and culture (see Chapple & Moon, 2005; Matten & Moon, 2008). Moreover, scholars in this second avenue of research could also investigate to what extent local institutional challenges may lead to processes of learning inside business organizations, inside communities, as well as at the interface between the two.

2.5.5 Limitations

While the single case study method was chosen to enable an in-depth analysis in our inductive research (Dyer & Wilkins, 1991), one should be very conscious about the methodological constraints that may obstruct the generalizability of our findings. We have examined a specific case of a public firm involved with a First Nations group during a specific period when Indigenous rights received special attention from international organizations, including the United Nations, and when sustainable development was becoming a crucial concern after the Brundtland Commission in 1987. However, we remain optimistic about the transferability of these findings to other cases (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Indeed, while we cannot be certain that other local communities would act

similarly, our knowledge of other controversial CCR is consistent with our findings. For instance, the major controversial corporate-community cases of Rio Tinto Alcan with the Haisla First Nation and the Cheslatta Carrier Nation (1940-2014 in British Columbia, Canada) and of Rio Tinto and its local communities in Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean (1920-2000 in Quebec, Canada) have resulted in the emergence of strong CBOs and led to a more stable and structured environment.

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Chapitre 3

Challenging Stakeholder Saliency: Lessons from Dormant Local Stakeholders¹⁰

Résumé

In the past decades, stakeholder theory has contributed substantially to our understanding of organizations by stressing the importance of the environment. Stakeholders affect and are affected by organizations' daily operations and decisions. They have varied and often contradictory interests, making it essential for managers and organizations to know who they are as well as their attributes. Consequently, Mitchell et al. (1997) developed the stakeholder salience theory to help managers and organizations identify the power of certain stakeholders and their salience to the organization. With a few exceptions, the mainstream stakeholder salience theory is in many ways still static and short-term oriented. The aim of this paper is to revisit certain taken-for-granted assertions regarding the role of marginalized stakeholders, or "dormant" stakeholders, in stakeholder salience theory, and to propose new avenues for reflection to improve our understanding of stakeholder salience and corporate-community relations.

Key words: stakeholder salience; stakeholders; stakeholder theory; local communities.

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3.1 Introduction

In the past decades, stakeholder theory has greatly contributed to our understanding of organizations and the importance of the environment in the day-to-day management practice (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Hannan & Freeman, 1984; Neville et al., 2011). Stakeholder theory argues that stakeholders affect and are affected by organizations and that daily organizational operations and decisions need to take stakeholders and their interests into account. Stakeholders have varied and often conflicting interests, making it necessary for managers and organizations to know who they are as well as their attributes and how to prioritize them. Consequently, Mitchell et al. (1997) have developed the stakeholder salience framework to help managers and organizations to identify who counts, when they count, and why, and to make strategic decisions accordingly. However, this framework of stakeholder salience has been criticized for being largely static, short-term-oriented, and firm-centered (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002; Neville & Menguc, 2006; Pasquero, 2008)¹¹.

This research builds on these critiques and, based on an empirical puzzle of stakeholder management, aims to provide an alternative perspective to the stakeholder salience framework. In assessing the three main shortcomings of the stakeholder salience framework and suggesting how these weaknesses could be overcome in further research, our objective is to argue for a more inclusive, comprehensive, and interconnected stakeholder salience approach. We build these arguments based on an empirical puzzle of business–company relations. We aim to do so by relying on a 45-year longitudinal case study in the James Bay area of northern Quebec, Canada (1971–2015). This case looks at a major hydroelectric project around which major controversies erupted between a state utility, a government, and the Cree First Nation. We suggest that this empirical puzzle highlights three limitations of the framework that are not new and have already been raised (see Neville et al., 2011).

¹¹ Pasquero's critiques have generally focused on the broader stakeholder theory but our understanding is that his critics encompass the stakeholder salience framework.

In April 1988, Robert Bourassa, Premier of Quebec, Canada, announced the launch of the second phase of the Great Whale Project, a hydroelectric project on Cree land, in Northern Quebec (Diamond, 1990; Savard, 2013). This project aimed to create 40,000 jobs and was based on a contract for the supply of power to New York State through a 17-billion-dollar contract. The 15,000 Crees felt they had not been duly consulted on this project (Houck, 2011). In 1988, when Premier Bourassa made the decision to go forward with the project, the Cree of Quebec had the attributes of a dormant stakeholder. As a largely poor, numerically limited group of nine distant villages with an overall population of 15,000 — against 7 million Quebecers — located in remote communities in Northern Quebec, they had limited power before the Premier of Quebec and State Utility Hydro-Quebec. In addition, the Premier was launching the second phase of this project based on the James Bay Agreement signed 17 years earlier by the two parties; the legality and legitimacy (creating jobs) of the project was on the side of the Quebec government in public opinion. Last, the urgency of the claims of the Crees (of preserving their natural environment intact) paled in comparison with the strategic nature of the energy production and supply project for both Quebec and New York State. In 1994, Premier Gerard Parizeau suspended this development project. The suspension concluded international media, legal, and public relation campaigns managed by the Cree Nation of Quebec worldwide and contributed to the cancellation of the contract with New York State (Savard, 2010).

What happened? How did dormant stakeholders manage to derail the project, challenge decision makers, and reconfigure the field? How did David win over Goliath? While the stakeholder salience framework would suggest that the Premier made the right decision in identifying who really matters among his stakeholders, how did the Crees manage to have this strategic mega-project cancelled? What are the implications from this empirical puzzle for our understanding of stakeholder salience?

On a theoretical level, the question is how to explain that small or marginalized groups — depicted by the stakeholder management salience framework as dormant stakeholders — can win and challenge organizational objectives. Stakeholder management theory (Mitchell et al., 1997) indicates the need for companies and managers to prioritize salient stakeholders over dormant stakeholders. This model can be applied in short-term

situations, but, in our opinion, it is much less suitable for predicting the changing contexts and relationships between several actors. This shows that stakeholders should not be considered as static actors or external claims makers. On the contrary, stakeholders must be placed at the heart of a firm's strategic managerial process as stakeholder management is not limited to classifying stakeholders by priority (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002). Rather, these authors argue that it concerns how an organization can achieve its objectives, identify the issues that deserve its attention, and with whom should it negotiate.

To revisit the mainstream stakeholder salience framework, we argue that combining a negotiated-order perspective with stakeholder thinking can be useful (e.g. Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002). The negotiated-order theory argues that any social order must be continuously reinvented through the work of the social actors involved within broader structural environments (Strauss, 1993). While the negotiated-order perspective has been widely used in organization studies to investigate intra- and inter-organizational processes and dynamics (O'Toole & O'Toole, 1981), only a few studies have relied on this perspective to address the dynamics of firm–stakeholder relations and the construction of long term corporate-community relations (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002; Gond & Matten, 2007). Overall, we draw three main contributions as propositions for further research from the literature on stakeholder management. First, we suggest that stakeholder salience framework should be positioned in time and space to account for the history of past relations, i.e. “relational legacies” (Baba & Raufflet, 2014). Second, stakeholder salience should move away from the static and scattered view of stakeholders. Third, we argue that scholars should shift the focus from stakeholders themselves to an expectations-based approach (i.e. Bouglet & Joffre, 2015). Relations between stakeholders are thus understood dynamically, while considering the numerous claims of stakeholders and their evolving urgency according to societal context and discourse. We show how an expectations-based approach within a negotiated-order perspective can deepen our understanding of stakeholder salience and offer a greater practical significance to this framework.

This chapter is divided into four parts. In the first section, we present a theoretical background and identify limitations of the stakeholder salience framework. In the second,

we introduce the methods of the case study on which the chapter is built. The third section develops the analysis of the case. In the fourth and final section, we discuss our conclusions and contributions to stakeholder management literature.

3.2 Theoretical background

Since the publishing of Freeman (1984) seminal work on stakeholder management, the notion of the stakeholder has gained an increasing popularity in academic, professional, media, and government publications (Friedman & Miles, 2002). Due to a “heightened ethical sensitivity, increasing competition, and a hyperactive media” (Harrison & Freeman, 1999, p. 479), stakeholder management has become an increasingly important practice in organizations. In fact, while stakeholder management has become a significant tool and approach in strategic management thinking, it has also been applied to a large number of fields, including project management (Bourne & Walker, 2005; Elias et al., 2004), marketing (De Bussy et al., 2003), information technology (Pouloudi & Whitley, 1997), environmental management (Starik & Rands, 1995), and corporate social responsibility (Clarkson, 1995; Hillman & Keim, 2001). Overall, the stakeholder approach suggests that organizations must consider the legitimate interests of those groups and individuals who are affected by or can affect the firm’s activities (Donaldson & Preston, 1995).

As interest in stakeholder theory has increased, so too has the amount of meanings of what a stakeholder is (Friedman & Miles, 2002). These disparate views were synthesized by Jones (1995), who argues that stakeholder theory refers to three main approaches: descriptive (what happens?), normative (what should happen or what do managers need to do?), and instrumental (what are managers trying to achieve?). Given the lack of consensus of what stakeholders are, this chapter does not aim to clarify the issue or focus on it (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Harrison & Freeman, 1999). Rather, we have adopted Freeman (1984, p. 46) widely cited and accepted instrumental definition that states that a stakeholder is “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives.” Freeman’s definition of a stakeholder offers a very wide field of possibilities as to who is a stakeholder.

This wide definition of what a stakeholder is challenges managers who must make decisions on who should be prioritized. To clarify what stakeholders are or should be, Mitchell et al. (1997) provided one of the most substantial contributions in the development of stakeholder research with their stakeholder identification and salience theoretical framework, or “the degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholder claims” (Mitchell et al., 1997, p. 854). These authors argued that stakeholder theory lacked robust models of stakeholder identification and prioritization. They suggested that stakeholders may be identified through their possession of one or more of the following three attributes: power, legitimacy, and urgency. Power refers to the ability of a stakeholder to influence the firm’s survival based on access to relevant resources. Legitimacy refers “to socially accepted and expected structures or behaviors” (Mitchell et al., 1997, p. 866). Finally, urgency refers to the importance of a claim (criticality) and the degree to which management is allowed a delay in attending stakeholders’ claims before the relationship is perceived as unacceptable (time sensitivity).

Mitchell et al. (1997) went further by arguing that these attributes correspond to the fundamentals of managerial prioritization of stakeholders. In that sense, stakeholders will become increasingly salient as they accumulate the combination of these three attributes. In other words, the stakeholder salience theory attempts to clarify the ambiguity of what Freeman (1994) calls “the principle of who and what really counts.” Given the numerous potentially competing stakeholder groups, this theory was suggested as being valuable in prioritizing managerial attention. The idea was that managers are constantly balancing the claims of stakeholders against those of other stakeholders, including shareholders (Berman, Wicks, Kotha, & Jones, 1999). Understanding who the companies’ stakeholders are avoids wasting resources on stakeholders who have no real legitimate interest or no power to influence the firm. Mitchell et al. (1997) article has been cited over 8,000 times, making it one of the most influential frameworks in stakeholder salience and theory.

Since then, correctly identifying the organization’s stakeholders and accurately prioritizing their claims have become key processes in the successful management of organizations. Several empirical pieces have tested the aforementioned framework (Agle, Mitchell, & Sonnenfeld, 1999; Eesley & Lenox, 2006; Knox & Gruar, 2007; Parent &

Deephouse, 2007) examined how managers identified and prioritized stakeholders, and their research “supported the positive relationship between number of attributes and salience” (p. 18). More recently, J. Weber and Marley (2012) analyzed Global 100’s corporate social responsibility and sustainability reports drawing on the stakeholder salience framework. Their main contribution was the emergence of the natural environment as a “definitive” organizational stakeholder, possessing all three dimensions of salience: power, legitimacy, and urgency.

At the same time, stakeholder salience as theorized by Mitchell and colleagues has received significant criticism in the past decade, and several studies have attempted to revise this theory (Agle et al., 1999; Driscoll & Starik, 2004; Eesley & Lenox, 2006; Henriques & Sadosky, 1999; Jawahar & McLaughlin, 2001; Neville & Menguc, 2006; Parent & Deephouse, 2007; Pfarrer, Decelles, Smith, & Taylor, 2008). Building on several studies on this topic (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002; Neville et al., 2011; Neville & Menguc, 2006; Pasquero, 2008), three main shortcomings can be identified. The first relates to the static nature of stakeholder management prescriptions. Models of stakeholder salience analysis are good at composing pictures, but they are usually not as good at capturing business-stakeholder processes and the temporal dynamics of these processes in the long term. This critique is not new as few authors have insisted on the importance of considering the multilateral construction of the relationships between the organization and its stakeholders (e.g. Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002; Berman et al., 1999; Frooman, 1999). For instance, Kochan and Rubinstein (2000) have shown that the relationship between the firm and its stakeholders may change, sometimes very quickly, thus varying stakeholders’ salience. Despite these calls, stakeholder theory is still not well equipped to account for the dynamics of multi-stakeholder interaction over the long term. Consequently, a more dynamic and processual understanding of stakeholder salience is essential.

The second shortcoming of stakeholder theory relates to the disconnected view of stakeholders. Mainstream stakeholder salience frameworks generally promote the view that stakeholders are to be managed separately as discrete entities in a rather instrumental approach. This idea is based on an implicit assumption that stakeholders constitute homogeneous groups (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002; Neville et al., 2011; J. Weber &

Marley, 2012). For instance, Frooman (1999) argues that the scope of most stakeholder salience frameworks is reduced to the extent that they consider stakeholders to be isolated entities. This argument echoes Kochan and Rubinstein (2000) criticism of the static nature of most of stakeholder literature. According to them, stakeholder theory does not sufficiently consider the relationships between stakeholders. This is quite unfortunate, considering the fact that links between stakeholders are numerous and self-reinforcing (Phillips, 2003) and also have an important impact on structuring the environment (Fassin, 2009).

The third issue concerns the instrumental nature of the stakeholder salience principle. The stakeholder management model asserts that stakeholders are to be managed in order for organizational objectives to be promoted. In fact, mainstream stakeholder theory suggests that to achieve success, an organization must identify, classify, and rank its stakeholders by priority so that their demands can be fulfilled (Mitchell et al., 1997). This management approach can in some cases be based on a “divide and rule” modus operandi that supposedly contributes to strengthening the firm’s ability to reach its objectives. The Crees brought division between the parties linked in the power supply contract (with the government of Quebec, State Utility Hydro Quebec, and the Quebec business community on the one side and the government of New York State, public opinion of New York State, and decision makers and opinion leaders on the other side), arguing that this project was proceeding without due consultation or environmental review. This experience suggests that this “divide and rule” approach may lead to volatile relations that are counterproductive to the functioning of a domain. Building on Beaulieu and Pasquero (2002, p. 56), we argue that this recommendation is still “anchored in the old pressure-response reactive paradigm,” which sees the organization as being dominated by its external environment. In that sense, stakeholder management is more of “a process of mutual contribution rather than one of unilateral accommodation” (p. 56).

3.3 Case Study: Context and Method

3.3.1 Design, Case Selection and Data

To illustrate our arguments about dormant stakeholders, we report on a 45-year longitudinal case study of a major hydroelectric project in James Bay, Northern Quebec, Canada. We conducted a longitudinal case study between 1971 and 2015 that has been demonstrated to be useful for researchers seeking to study phenomena within their contexts (Yin, 2003). This methodology is also adapted with the exploratory nature of the study and the need to account for longitudinal process studies dealing with dormant stakeholders. The James Bay hydroelectric project was selected because it offers several unique criteria on which to build our analysis. First, it is an extreme case that provides a context exhibiting a particularly strong manifestation of a phenomenon (Patton, 2002). In fact, this hydroelectric project was described as one of the eight environmental controversies that changed the world (Houck, 2011), i.e., citizens challenging corporate practices and policies to change not only the way the environment is defended but the way that public interest is recognized. Second, the long-term nature of the case is interesting because it outlines the long-term evolution of corporate-dormant stakeholders.

3.3.2 Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data were collected for the study period. The primary data consisted of semi-structured interviews following an interview guide designed according to recommendations of qualitative research (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). Twenty-eight in-depth interviews were conducted with Hydro-Québec community-relations department managers, Québec government senior officials, the lawyer for the Grand Council of the Cree, an employee of the Cree Regional Authority, and various historians, sociologists, and political scientists who conducted research on our case in which they interviewed people directly involved in the process. All the people we encountered were directly involved in the controversy and the process of rebuilding relationships. The data collection proceeded in an iterative manner.

3.3.3. Data analysis

Our data analysis process was threefold. First, we relied on a strategy of temporal bracketing to identify coherent phases for our analysis (Langley, 1999). Since we are interested in how marginalized actors can improve their salience, we identified phases according to the level of salience of the Crees. Put otherwise, we looked for different phases allowing us to observe different levels of salience. As we defined salience through Mitchell et al. (1997) framework relying on power, legitimacy and urgency, we mainly relied on our primary and secondary data to assess these attributes' levels. Elements such as Hydro-Quebec's and the Government's attention given to the Crees, their ability to change and influence, the media coverage and the support of various legitimate and powerful stakeholders were used as proxy to identify the varying levels of salience. In so doing, we identified three phases. During the first phase, the Crees were considered as marginal groups with low power, legitimacy and urgency. During the second phase, Crees were able to increase their salience by improving their power, legitimacy and the urgency of their claims. Last, the third face saw the Crees become salient stakeholders as their strategizing activities allowed them to improve their attributes according to our theoretical framework. The second step of data analysis led us to analyze the actions of the Crees and position them in their broader social context. During this second stage of analysis, we have documented Cree activities (legal lawsuits, media activities, claims, etc.) and tried to position these actions in a social context of the time: for example, what was happening at the same time in Canadian society? The third and final step consisted of an analysis of how these activities influenced the attributes uncovered during the first stage of our analysis. Here, we have particularly sought to understand how certain actions led to a shift of power or legitimacy. For example, when the Crees were able to negotiate a major agreement in 1975 following a lawsuit victory while the government refused to negotiate a few years ago, we argued that the Crees' legitimacy and power attributes were increased by the agreement of 1975. All in all, table XXIII highlights our data analysis stages.

3.3.4 Transferability and Generalization

A realistic question often arises regarding the transferability of case study findings, including research adopting ground theory. While the single case study method was

chosen to enable an in-depth analysis in our inductive research to develop a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between organizations and dormant stakeholders, one should be conscious about limitations due to methodological constraints that may possibly obstruct the generalizability of the study (Dyer & Wilkins, 1991). Our case represents a specific case of a public firm involved with an indigenous nation during a specific period in which indigenous rights globally received special attention from international instances such as the United Nations and where sustainable development became a crucial concern after the Burtland Commission in 1987. However, we remain optimistic regarding the transferability of these findings in other cases (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Indeed, our knowledge of other controversial corporate-dormant stakeholders is consistent with our findings. For instance, two major controversial corporate-community cases, (1) Rio Tinto Alcan with the Haisla First National and the Cheslatta Carrier Nation between 1940 and 2014 in British Columbia, Canada (Baba & Raufflet, 2014) and (2) Rio Tinto and its local communities in Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean between 1920 and 2000 in Quebec, Canada (Labelle & Pasquero, 2006), put forth the importance of integrating dormant stakeholders as critical stakeholders.

In fact, as a stakeholder group, communities whose geographical location puts them directly in the path of industrial activities can be particularly vulnerable to adverse impacts. However, the same vulnerable communities can also be highly powerful stakeholders. Communities impacted by local activities are increasingly using individual and collective voices to express, in the form of protests, blockades, the media, and other means, their grievances about what they consider to be an inequitable distribution of wealth and environmental consequences. These strategic tactics, known as “weapons of the weak,” aim to provide maximum visibility with limited resources (Calvano, 2008). As an illustrative example, in the last five years in Canada alone, Aboriginal community resistance has stalled or stopped billions of dollars’ worth of development in the extractive sectors, including the Mackenzie Valley pipeline construction, the “Ring of Fire” mines, and the Northern Gateway Pipeline (Crowley & Coates, 2013).

All in all, due to the remote nature of project locations, local communities are not only community stakeholders but are also a project’s workforce, an integral part of the supply

chain, and, in many instances, due to revenue-sharing arrangements, shareholders. For these reasons, the relationship between the energy industry and local communities represents a unique context in which to unpack issues related to stakeholder conflict and collaboration and will be the focus of this chapter. However, irrespective of the focus on the Aboriginal context here, this recent and increasing upward trend in stakeholder power is clearly not confined to Aboriginal stakeholders. Increased access to technology, the growing proliferation of social media tools, and a wider acceptance of the view of the corporation as a trustee of resources for society at large all contribute to stakeholder power's profound impact on corporate strategy (Lacey & Lamont, 2014; Prno & Slocombe, 2012). Furthermore, despite the chapter's focus on the hydroelectric industry, many of the insights are arguably generalizable to many other contexts that involve a resource-based community partnership, such as energy, forestry, and water (Raufflet et al., 2013). For instance, our narrative of David defeating Goliath is not unique and has been documented in several other cases worldwide (Houck, 2011).

3.4 Case Study: Hydro-Québec and the Crees

We now proceed to present our case study, which is structured chronologically into three episodes. We will present and analyze these three episodes that mark turning points in the long-term evolution of relations between Hydro-Quebec and the Cree First Nation. Table XXIII in the next page highlights the evolution of the stakeholder salience attributes.

Table XXIV - Evolution of salience attributes

	Level of legitimacy attributes ¹² 13			Influencing variables	Influence on level of legitimacy attributes
	U	I	L	Actor	
Phase 1 (1970–1975)	Low	Low	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The creation of an institutional structure in order to legally oppose the project (Grand Council of the Cree) → Alliance with the resourceful Indian Association of Quebec → Numerous lawsuits launched by the Cree to halt Hydro-Quebec's hydroelectric development project 	According to Mitchell et al.'s (1997) framework, the Cree had none of the three attributes when Hydro-Quebec announced its hydroelectric project in 1970. As a First Nation with no territorial rights or formal political recognition, the Cree were considered a dormant stakeholder. Gradually, however, the Cree mobilized resources and allies to change the stakeholder landscape to their advantage. The cumulated effects of the Cree's actions and the social and institutional contexts allowed the Cree to enhance their attributes of urgency, influence, and legitimacy.
				<p style="text-align: center;">Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The <i>Calder</i> judgement in British Columbia in favour of First Nations' ancestral land rights (1970) → Judge Malouf's strongly worded verdict in favor of the Cree, which also ordered Hydro-Quebec to stop all work (1973) 	

¹² U = Urgency, I = Influence, L = Legitimacy

¹³ This table shows the levels of the attributes per phase. Our intention is not to offer a static view of these attributes. Rather, we argue that these attributes are evolving gradually to the levels of the next phase.

Phase 2 (1976–1989)	Medium	Medium	Medium	<p style="text-align: center;">Actor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Creation of an institutional structure to counter the project (Grand Council of the Cree) → Proliferation of local institutions through the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement that increased the Cree organizational and institutional capacity → Social and institutional pressure through lawsuits and public speeches criticizing the lack of implementation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement <p style="text-align: center;">Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Cree territory has come under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, an aboriginal land claim settlement signed in 1975 → Sustainable development movement at the international level that put forward aboriginal land rights → Canada established a new Constitution in 1982, which explicitly recognized First Nations' rights → First major environmental crisis in Québec, which gave rise to an important societal debate over Hydro-Quebec's hydroelectric facilities management (1984) → Quebec voted in 1985 on a motion for recognition of First Nations' rights within Quebec 	<p>As a result of the previous period, the Cree increased their urgency, influence, and legitimacy attributes. In fact, they have been able to increase their urgency level by positioning themselves as a major threat that could compromise Hydro-Quebec's projects. The Cree influence also increased since they now had their own formal political institutions, public relations, and full-time lawyers, in addition to close working relationships with the media and environmentalists. Furthermore, the agreement that was signed during the previous phase provided the Cree with legal protection that in turn increased their legitimacy. The environmental and territorial claims of the Cree, which were ignored in the 1970s, thus became legitimate during this phase, particularly because of the favorable contextual conditions and Cree actions.</p>

Phase 3 (1990–2016)	High	High	High	<p style="text-align: center;">Actor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → National and international media campaign led by the Cree to raise awareness among civil society and Hydro-Quebec’s key stakeholders → Association with international legitimate environmentalists, such as Robert Kennedy, Jr. → Numerous lawsuits that challenged every chapter of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement signed in 1975. The Cree were suing both the provincial (Quebec) and federal (Canada) governments for billion dollars of compensation. <p style="text-align: center;">Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Quebec’s sovereignty debate, which the Cree had questioned as they put forward their wish to remain within Canada (institutional pressures in the early 1990s) → The deregulation of the electricity market, which gave rise to the spot market (mid 1990s) → The rise of the sustainable development discourse that led a United Nations Human Rights committee to position itself in favour of the possibility that First Nations could obtain a veto right against major development projects on their ancestral lands (1992) → Second major environmental crisis in Québec that raised an important debate over Quebec’s energy strategy (1996) 	<p>During this phase, the Cree relied on previous experiences and achievements to take actions that would enable them to strengthen their attributes. During this particular phase, the Cree positioned themselves as a crucial stakeholder with high urgency, influence, and legitimacy attributes, particularly because of the socio-political context, which is very favourable to their actions. Furthermore, the offensive led by the Cree through their political and administrative institutions reshaped the power balance between stakeholders. In fact, due to international political and media support and their strategy for awareness among stakeholders of Hydro-Québec, the Cree were able to strengthen their attributes as a crucial stakeholder. All in all, as the Cree were considered to be marginal actors and a dormant stakeholder in 1970, they gradually undertook actions while either creating or relying on favourable conditions in regards to their claims.</p>
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Table XXV – Empirical data

Phase	Illustrative empirical material
<p>Phase 1 (1970-1975)</p>	<p>Importance of aboriginal issues within Quebec Premier’s cabinet. “Disons les choses candidement : les questions autochtones n’intéressaient personne au cabinet du premier ministre au début des années 1970. L’injonction que la nation crie obtint du Juge Malouf le 15 novembre 1973 nous prit par surprise. Elle eut un effet double : interrompre les travaux à la Baie-James et réveiller certains d’entre nous.” (Pris de l’ancien conseiller du Premier ministre Rober Bourassa, Trudel, 2015, p. 71).</p> <p>Initial legal offensive. “We had never signed any treaty and as far as we were concerned we still owned the land. [...] In order to protect our way of life, we went to Court to attempt to stop the Project.” (Address by Chief Billy Diamond to the Institute for Canadian Studies, 1990)</p> <p>Negotiations. “Before our legal offensive, Bourassa refused to meet with us and negotiate an agreement! Few days after their first juridical loss, we received a first offer. We understood that we were scaring them.” (Interview, Phillip Awashish, elder, negotiator and signatory of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement)</p> <p>Cree-Government relationships after legal victory of the Crees. “We didn't hear the other party tell us that we had no rights. We started to hear: What else do you want to discuss? What else can we do?” (Billy diamond, Cree Grand Chief, taken from Cree documentary, Episode 1 “Together We Stand Firm”)</p> <p>Context of negotiations. “Our elders signed under duress the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement was in November 1975; it was the first major comprehensive land claims agreement in northern Canada, heralding in a new era in aboriginal land claims.” (Interview, John Paul Murdoch, Cree Nation Government official)</p>
<p>Phase 2 (1976-1989)</p>	<p>Cree and Hydro-Quebec agreements following the JBNQA. “In response to the Cree criticism, we signed several agreements with the Cree between 1976 and 1988 to minimize the impact of project.” (Interview, community relations officer at Hydro-Québec)</p> <p>Legal lawsuit. “The actions of Hydro-Quebec provoked a much angrier reaction from the Cree who vowed to fight the Great Whale project on all fronts. [...] In May 1989, a lawsuit was launched by the Cree challenging Quebec’s right to exclude the federal government from an environmental review of the project.” (Morrison & Nitsch, 1993, p. 7, <i>Hydro-Quebec and the Great Whale Project</i>)</p>

	<p>Entry of the Crees in the international scene. “Early 1980s, the Grand Council of the Crees decided to enter international forums such as the United Nations. We did so to promote Aboriginal rights worldwide, but also to hold Quebec and Canada accountable for their engagements.” (Interview, Phillip Awashish, elder, negotiator and signatory of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement)</p> <p>Issues related to the implementation of the JBNQA. “My people, the Crees of James Bay, signed a treaty only 16 years ago with Canada...but that treaty has become a shameful reminder of Canada's duplicity and ingratitude. That treaty has shown how greed triumphs over respect for the law, how politics supersedes constitutional responsibility. Our treaty has become infamous as Canada's first modern broken treaty.” (Grand Council of the Crees archives, Monchalin, p. 242)</p>
<p>Phase 3 (1990- 2016)</p>	<p>Political partnership. “During the 1990s, the Cree allied with the largest public relations firm at the time, with major Canadian lawyers and environmental groups such as Green Peace.” (Interview, community relations officer at Hydro-Québec)</p> <p>Internationalization of the conflict. “In New York City, two highly organized groups calling themselves the ‘James Bay Defense Coalition’ and ‘project’ were created to encourage New Yorkers to begin letter-writing campaigns to elected municipal officials. Other groups were formed including ‘No Thank Q Hydro-Quebec,’ which claimed to have been instrumental in blocking an additional \$4.1 billion power sale to Maine.” (Morrison & Nitsch, 1993, p. 7-8, <i>Hydro-Quebec and the Great Whale Project</i>)</p> <p>Cree leadership voicing their self-governance claims. “The James Bay Crees and other Aboriginal peoples in Canada are not seeking to secede from Canada. However, they are seeking clear and unequivocal confirmation of their right to self-determination. Faced with the unilateral declaration of independence by Quebec, Aboriginal peoples seek to exercise their right to choose to remain in Canada.” (Grand Council of the Crees archives, 1995, p. 62)</p> <p>Public relations approach. “The Cree engaged in one of the most intense international campaign to hit Hydro-Québec's reputation and Quebec's image. The objective was to draw governments' and potential buyers' attention to cancel the project.” (Interview, previous vice-minister of Natural Resources, Quebec)</p> <p>Legal offensive. “At the same time, the Cree also launched an important lawsuit against the government of Quebec to stop the forest industry from exploiting large tracts of the James Bay territory during the 1990s.” (Interview, community relations manager at Hydro-Québec)</p>

3.4.1 Episode 1: (1970) The Announcement of One of the World's Largest Hydroelectric Systems in James Bay, Northern Quebec, Canada

On April 30, 1971, Premier Bourassa announced the hydropower James Bay project, also called the Great Complex. This hydroelectric project was designed in three phases: (1) the development of the Great River, (2) the development of the Great Whale River, and (3) the development of Nottaway, Broadback, and Rupert over four decades (T. Martin, 2001). Roughly 2000 members of the Cree First Nation occupied that territory. The Cree learned through the local radio station that their environment would be transformed and that their way of life would not be the same. In the feasibility study of the project, no consultation was conducted.

The James Bay Project La Grande, was undertaken without our consent, without consultation, without environmental impact studies, without taking into consideration in any way that it was being built on land where people lived, where our people got their food. (Ted Moses, former Chief of the Cree¹⁴)

As initially planned, “the province unceremoniously, and without any hesitation about whether they had the legal right to do so” (Carlson, 2008, p. 209) began the first phase of construction in 1972. In doing so, the government of Quebec may have perceived that the Cree were a dormant stakeholder because they had no power, limited legitimacy, and their claims were not urgent. In response, the Cree quickly organized themselves and had several meetings to plan their future legal claims to their rights on the territory (Savard, 2010). According to Carlson (2008, p. 209), “the first meeting of the Cree as a regional, political people took place at Mistassini Post on June 28, 1971.” As the author states, this first meeting was important for the mobilization of the Cree and the presence of the Indians of Quebec Association (IQA), which had declared its support to the Cree and had provided financial resources for the Cree to meet. Moreover, the IQA offered its support and assistance to the Cree to fight Hydro-Québec and the provincial government (Carlson, 2008). When the controversy erupted, the Cree had almost no legitimacy; indigenous rights at the time were far from being as inclusive as those of today. Thus, this minor and resourceless actor realized that it needed to increase its legitimacy and influence, which

¹⁴ Grand Council of the Crees (2001). Address by Grand Chief Dr. Ted Moses: The 11th of November is a Cree Holiday. Retrieved from <http://www.gcc.ca/archive/article.php?id=197>.

led to important work in the Cree developing alliances and increasing political ties with other legitimate actors.

During this period, the context of Aboriginal claims in Canada became more favorable to the Cree. In fact, in British Columbia, the famous Calder decision was made in 1973; for the first time in the history of Canada, the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed the existence of Aboriginal title as a concept in Canadian common law, which meant that the Cree's request was legitimate. Moreover, another important legal victory was won by the Cree a few months later when Judge Albert Malouf imposed an immediate suspension of work. However, a few days later, Quebec's court of appeal reversed Judge Malouf's decision because it considered that the interests of millions of Quebecers took precedence over the interests of few thousand Crees.

In this context of legal proceedings and ongoing deteriorated relations, Hydro-Québec, the government of Quebec, and the Cree quickly realized that the deadlock was not favorable. In fact, the government and Hydro-Québec were losing legitimacy, and their project was facing major cost increases caused by delays and sabotage; meanwhile, the Cree's rivers were being dammed, and the infrastructure was expanding rapidly without benefiting the Cree. Thus, on August 8, 1974, several chiefs met again and decided to form the Grand Council of the Cree to represent their interests during negotiations with Hydro-Québec and the government. The negotiations between representatives of the government of Quebec, the government of Canada, and the Cree quickly began, and after more than a year of negotiations, the James Bay agreement in principle was signed on November 15, 1974 (Carlson, 2008).

The agreement in principle of 1974 led to a tripartite agreement that significantly influenced future relations between the government of Québec, Hydro-Québec, and the Cree: the Convention of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) signed by the Cree and Inuit in 1975. It was historic, as it represented the first major comprehensive land claims agreement in Canada. By signing the agreement in principle, the Cree were insured at that time to obtain from the governments of Quebec and Canada the assurance to hold a significant role, to which the Cree aspired in the dynamics of the

management and development of the *Eeyou Istchee* territory, against formally abandoning their rights on the territory. In addition to settling native land claims and providing financial compensation, the agreements also “*defined aboriginal rights and established regimes for future relations between Aboriginal peoples and non-aboriginals in the region and among local, regional, provincial and federal governments*” (Makivik Corporation, 2013).

This episode illustrates that neglecting stakeholders perceived by decision makers as dormant stakeholders (as they do not have power, urgency, or legitimacy) may lead to failures and changes in the stakeholder landscape because stakeholders have the agency to mobilize resources and allies to change the stakeholder landscape to their advantage.

3.4.2 Episode 2: (1978) Deterioration of Relations Following a Lack of Implementation of Commitments

Following the establishment of the first institution that facilitated the negotiation of the agreement of the JBNQA, the Grand Council of the Cree received with this agreement substantial financial resources to organize and allow economic and social development of the Cree First Nation. However, this period was not entirely free of conflict. The implementation of the JBNQA was the subject of controversy, and the relations between the Cree, Hydro-Québec, and the government therefore deteriorated and led the provincial government to court for several disputes. According to the Cree Director of Federal Relations Brian Craik, “there was an ongoing fight with Quebec and Canada for adequate funding” of several institutions. He further states that while “provisions in the agreement for economic and social development were to have gone ahead hand in hand,” the reality was that “instead, the Cree, who represent between 30 and 75 per cent of the population in different parts of the region, had less than 5 per cent of the jobs in development and had a 40 per cent unemployment rate.” (Craik, 2004, p. 169)

However, faithful to their new way of managing relations with the Cree, Hydro-Québec decided to sign several agreements to meet the expectations of the Cree (the Convention of Chisasibi in 1978, the Convention of Sakami Lake in 1979, the Convention La Grande in 1986, and the Convention of Mercury in 1986). The government also held discussions

with Cree leaders to ensure better coordination between government institutions and the Cree, particularly with respect to approvals and the transfer of monetary funds. Overall, there was a better follow-up performed by the government and more support, and the transfer of funds was shortened to allow the continuous operation of institutions. However, the Cree leadership was not necessarily satisfied with the application of the 1975 agreement.

With respect to the overall James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, we have had fifteen years of constant struggle to try to force the governments to respect their commitments. If I had known in 1975 that what I know now about the way solemn commitments become twisted and interpreted, I would have refused to sign the Agreement! I would have gone to the Supreme Court and we would have found other ways to block the Project — in the Courts and on the ground. (Chief of Grand Council of Crees, Billy Diamond)¹⁵

3.4.3 Episode 3: (1989) A Major Crisis around the Second Phase of the James Bay Hydroelectric Project

In Spring 1989, the Prime Minister of Québec announced the second phase of the James Bay project called the Great Whale Project. This project's hydropower would, for the most part, be exported to the United States. This project that had been elaborated without consultation or the consent of the Cree was strongly denounced by the latter because it would have profoundly altered their land and way of life. In May 1989, the Cree conducted their first lawsuit against Hydro-Québec and requested that the federal and provincial justices block the project. They also undertook a campaign in 1990 to mobilize public opinion and elected US officials around the lack of prior consultation and consent of the Cree, the lack of environmental impact studies of the Great Whale Project, and, ultimately, of the non-compliance of the Québec government commitments under the 1975 agreement. These actions decreased the legitimacy of the Hydro-Québec and the government.

We survived the first flood — barely [La Grande]. Our fish is now contaminated with deadly methyl mercury, great rivers are now dry, the once abundant sturgeon are gone, the geese and ducks are fewer, our trap lines are under

¹⁵ Diamond, B. (1990). [Address by chief Billy Diamond to the Institute for Canadian Studies, Oslo, Norway, August 1990].

water, and our trees have been turned into newspaper and garbage. How long do people think they can act like this and still live on this Earth? (Matthew Coon Come, Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees during the Joint Review Hearings for Great Whale, January 1992)

Beyond the *Great Whale Project*, the Cree hoped to renegotiate the agreement they claimed to have signed under duress (Diamond, 1990). By using the expertise of the largest public relations firm at the time, Hill and Knowlton, the Cree led an international mobilization campaign. As part of a stakeholder awareness strategy regarding Hydro-Québec and especially potential buyers, the Cree decided to internationalize the conflict by undertaking a trip in a traditional boat called an Odeyak. This trip began in March 1990 and allowed multiple Cree leaders to visit the headquarters of the United Nations in New York on Earth Day, April 22, 1990. The Cree were invited to speak at several American universities; a national craze occurred quickly, and many environmental groups began to support the cause of the Cree. This campaign created a great stir, and the Cree hoped to ensure the support of environmentalists and progressive Americans, support that would serve them in obtaining the endorsement of American politicians to these sensitive issues (Dupuis, 2001). It particularly resonated with Robert Kennedy, Jr., who visited the Cree and supported them in mobilizing other American politicians to promote the cancellation of the electricity supply contract. It became evident that this campaign had a major impact.

In Vermont, Senator Elizabeth Ready and Burlington Mayor Peter Clavell led a campaign on their own against energy imports from Quebec. In addition, in early March 1992, the governor of the State of New York, Mario Cuomo, announced that he recommended the cancellation of the electricity contract between the New York Power Authority (NYPA) and Hydro-Quebec as a result of the New York collapse in demand and Hydro-Québec's uncompetitive price, as well as ultimately to avoid that the contract would allow a devastating project to emerge, the Great Whale Project (Lemco, 1994). This media campaign put Hydro-Quebec on the international scene and affected not only the project and its developer, Hydro-Québec but also Quebec as a whole, which made the top news in international media (Savard, 2010, p. 328).

This campaign contributed to the NYPA's decision to cancel the contract with Hydro-Québec to supply hydro-electricity amounting to 17 billion dollars on March 29, 1994 (Séguin, Gibbon, & Fraser, 1994). This was a blow to Hydro-Québec, as the cancellation of the contract put in doubt the economic viability of the project. The offensive of the Cree generated a reversal of the power relationship between Hydro-Québec and the government on one side and the Cree on the other side in 1994. Discussions related to hydroelectric projects that were hitherto dominated by politicians shifted gradually in favor of the Cree. Two months after taking office, Jacques Parizeau, Quebec Premier, announced in November 18, 1994, that the Great Whale Project would be suspended until further notice, given the economic risk and public pressure, claiming that it was not necessary to meet the energy needs of Quebec.

I have always been skeptical about this project. Economically, it was risky. Politically, it was risky. Finally, on a social level, the evolution of the situation has also shown that it was risky. That's why I decided to postpone indefinitely this project. (Jacques Parizeau, former Quebec Prime Minister)

Following the cancellation of the project, the Cree continued to launch an unprecedented series of lawsuits. In addition, they continued with the international campaigns.

The Cree were giving lectures all around the world: from the United States to Europe, including the United Nations. Their objective was quite simple, and they have reached it: attract media and worldwide attention. (Jacques Parizeau, former Premier)

3.5 Discussion

The purpose of this chapter has been to study the dynamic relationships between an organization and its dormant stakeholders over the long term from a stakeholder salience perspective. The Hydro-Québec and Cree case demonstrates the narrow vision of the mainstream stakeholder salience framework. Overall, we draw three main contributions as propositions for further research on stakeholder salience management.

Proposition 1: Positioning Stakeholder Saliency Thinking in Time and Space: History of Past Relations

Our chapter reveals one decisive factor that needs further study in the analysis of stakeholder relationships: relational legacies. Baba and Raufflet (2014) define the notion of relational legacy as a set of liabilities in the relations between stakeholders that sediment over time, lead to locked relations, and negatively impact present and future relations. We show that relational legacies have a direct impact on the evolving relationship between an organization and its stakeholders. The accumulation of stress can be a sufficiently large relational legacy for the future deterioration of relations between a company and its stakeholders. Relational legacies have the potential to obstruct the realization of corporate objectives as well as the objectives of local stakeholders. These unresolved issues sediment over time and lead to the formation of intractable problems and challenges that have the potential to disrupt or halt business activities.

Our study shows that Hydro-Quebec operated legally in its relations with the Cree First Nation in the first two periods in the 1970s and 1980s; however, these forms of relations led to the creation of a traumatic situation for the then-weakest stakeholder, as well as to the sedimentation of unresolved issues in the relations between the company and the nation, which culminated in a relational legacy. Whereas Mitchell et al. (1997) stakeholder saliency model represents a static framework but would be useful for analyzing stakeholder relations at some point, the concept of relational legacy could strengthen the guidance offered on the transition from dormant to salient stakeholders. For example, by analyzing how the firm handled previous tensions with its stakeholders, the model of stakeholder saliency would better convey how the power and legitimacy of dormant stakeholders increased or decreased over time.

Our understanding of stakeholder saliency, when complemented with a negotiated-order theory, can easily consider time and space. Negotiated order is a sociological approach developed within the tradition of symbolic interactionism originally theorized in healthcare empirical environments (Day & Day, 1977; Strauss, 1978). This approach aims to address the link between interaction and structure, specifying that any social organization is the result of continuous interaction between social actors. According to

Strauss (1978), negotiations refer to the processes which allow social actors to interact and establish arrangements, considered as being limited in time within this theoretical lens. These negotiations are linked to two important variables which address the link between social interactions and social structures. First, the negotiation context relates to specific structural properties that directly influence the negotiations, i.e. power relationships, number of stakeholders, perceived alternatives, etc. Second, Strauss (1978) argues that the structural context refers to the overall context in which negotiations and social interactions occur, i.e. institutional framework, national context, location, etc. All in all, the negotiated-order theory argues that any social order is “continually negotiated through communicative actions and that this process is influenced by existing structural arrangements that are themselves the result of earlier negotiations” (Heracleous & Marshak, 2004, p. 1294). Hence, a negotiated order is the result of cumulative negotiations which will influence subsequent negotiations and relations (Labelle & Pasquero, 2006; Strauss, 1978). The historical nature of the negotiated-order perspective is particularly useful to understand firm–stakeholder relations when the legacies of previous experiences play an important role in shaping corporate–community relations (Banerjee, 2000, 2003; Muthuri et al., 2009; Whiteman, 2009). In this vein, positioning stakeholder salience in time and space could be achieved through the lens of the negotiated-order perspective (Strauss, 1978).

Proposition 2: Moving Away from the Static View of Stakeholders through a Negotiated-Order Perspective

Stakeholder salience thinking, we said, must be understood in the context of stakeholder interactions and not as homogenous and independent entities (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002; Neville & Menguc, 2006). The dominant stakeholder salience framework argues that stakeholders are to be managed as separate entities with separate claims: managers ought to rank and prioritize who matters most. Yet, our analysis shows that the interrelations between stakeholders are paramount and influence the outcome of any issue. Our case shows that while a single stakeholder can carry one specific issue, this does not prevent this stakeholder from being supported and empowered by other stakeholders who themselves support other parallel issues. For instance, between 1988 and 1994, the Cree

of Quebec managed to build alliances with environmental and activist groups including Greenpeace, powerful Aboriginal associations such as the IQA, and Robert Kennedy, Jr., president of the Natural Resources Council. Their alliances gave them access to influence and the ability to influence the cancellation of the power supply contract. Building on this example, we argue that stakeholder heterogeneity is a more realistic assumption than homogeneity for both theory and practice.

Few studies deal with the relationships between stakeholders. Evan and Freeman (1990) define the environment as a series of multilateral agreements among stakeholders. Similarly, Rowley (1997) uses the social network approach to argue that according to their proximity, stakeholders more or less influence organizations. Mitchell et al. (1997) suggest that coalitions between stakeholders might form and strategize. Nutt and Backoff (1993) recognize the existence of coalitions between stakeholders within the public sector, whereas Perrott (1996) argues that certain types of stakeholders are more likely than others to form coalitions. However, these studies remain relatively static and do not show how coalitions are formed, developed, and reinforced through time.

Our case also shows that stakeholders can strategize and combine resources – usually limited individually – to increase their legitimacy and power. These inter-stakeholder relations and collaborations influence power and agency distribution in the field and might transform dormant stakeholders into salient ones (Neville et al., 2011; Neville & Menguc, 2006). The analysis of the legal and sociopolitical variables that influence the degree of legitimacy of stakeholders could contribute to the enrichment of the stakeholder salience thinking. Future researchers interested in stakeholder management should include changes in the legal and value-related contexts in their analysis. The careful investigation of these contextual variables that impact the degree of stakeholder salience could contribute to enriching our understanding of dormant stakeholders and would bring relevant elements of context into the scope of analysis (Baba & Raufflet, 2014).

Embedding stakeholder salience thinking within a negotiated-order perspective can also enable a more dynamic and processual understanding of business-stakeholder relations. In fact, when coupled, this framework can offer a more dynamic and realistic vision of

the interplay between stakeholders as Beaulieu and Pasquero (2002) have shown in their study of a Canadian professional corporation over five decades. The negotiated-order perspective has implications and is particularly suitable for understanding firm–stakeholder relations for two reasons. First, the negotiated-order perspective adds a dynamic dimension that is absent in mainstream stakeholder salience frameworks. By emphasizing the flexible nature of organizations and the shifting interactions between stakeholders, the negotiated-order perspective discards the simplistic view of organizations as passive and rigid systems constrained by institutional pressures and demands (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002). Second, whereas Mitchell et al. (1997) do not argue how the power attributes of stakeholders evolve over time, the negotiated-order perspective reveals how firm–stakeholder negotiations unfold when stakeholders share an unequal power relationship “to define the situation in which the interactions that comprise the negotiated order take place” (Hallett, 2003, p. 133).

Proposition 3: Shifting the Focus from Stakeholders Themselves to an Expectations-Based Approach

In 1988, the Cree of Quebec had the attributes of a dormant stakeholder according to Mitchell et al.’s framework. As a largely poor, numerically limited group of nine distant villages with an overall population of 15,000 located in remote communities in Northern Quebec, they had limited power in front of the Premier of Quebec and State Utility Hydro-Quebec. The Premier was launching the second phase of this project based on the James Bay Agreement signed 17 years earlier by the two parties; the legality and legitimacy (creating jobs) of the project was on the side of the Quebec government in public opinion. Last, the urgency of the claims of the Cree (keeping their natural environment intact) paled in comparison with the strategic nature of the energy production and supply project for both Quebec and New York State. However, this actor was able to crucially impact the project promoted by Hydro-Quebec and challenge its organizational legitimacy. Although Mitchell et al. (1997) argue that stakeholder salience attributes can evolve, they offer little explanation regarding this evolution. Moreover, several studies that seek to apply this framework to empirical settings also perpetuate the static nature of the framework.

In reality, the attributes of legitimacy and urgency are limited. Jonker and Foster (2002) argue that it is necessary to consider several other dimensions to understand the different attributes. They argue that only considering stakeholders in the salience analysis is not enough and must be completed by both an analysis of the issue and the negotiation processes between stakeholders. For these reasons, the mainstream stakeholder salience framework cannot predict the scenario we have just explained. One way to make this framework more useful and practical could be to adopt an expectations-based approach that shifts the analysis focus from the stakeholder to their needs and expectations (e.g., Bouglet & Joffre, 2015)

This insight can be achieved through the association of stakeholder salience and a negotiated-order perspective because the latter focuses on several overlooked elements by mainstream stakeholder salience framework such as social actors' claims as well as tacit arrangements and disagreements. These variables have a great influence on social interaction processes (Strauss, 1978). While mainstream stakeholder salience framework focuses only on stakeholders, one can only understand the process of social order negotiations between multiple stakeholders by effectively understanding it in relation to the meanings, perceptions, and expectations of stakeholders (Basu et al., 1999).

Mitchell et al. (1997) consider stakeholders as a unit of analysis. However, because the different claims of one same stakeholder may have different attributes, it becomes difficult to precisely assess the legitimacy and urgency attributes of a stakeholder (Nutt & Backoff, 1993). In fact, it can be assumed that the characteristics of legitimacy and urgency do not refer to stakeholders themselves but to their expectations. Thus, various expectations of the same stakeholder may be more or less legitimate and more or less urgent according to the context. For these reasons, grouping stakeholders' attributes does not allow judgment of the intensity of the latter's influence because attributes vary from one claim to another. Therefore, it may seem useless to limit stakeholder salience frameworks to the nature of stakeholders while stakeholders have multiple and isolated claims and needs, but this challenge can only be addressed if the unit of analysis is stakeholders' expectations and claims instead of the stakeholders themselves (e.g. Bouglet & Joffre, 2015).

Our case shows, for instance, how the context of sustainable development of the 1980s has influenced the urgency and legitimacy of the Crees' claims and expectations directed towards the protection of the environment and their natural habitat, whereas 25 years ago, the social context offered to a significantly lesser extent issues of sustainable development. Stakeholders' expectations refer to a particular claim on which one or several stakeholders expect to obtain satisfaction. What is suggested here is the assignation of legitimacy and urgency attributes to the claims of the actors rather than the actors themselves. Thus, needs and claims may be legitimate, urgent, or carried by a powerful stakeholder. Nutt and Backoff (1993) have already conducted a study focusing on stakeholders' claims. Seeking to resolve the issue related to the existence of conflicting expectations within public organizations, they argue in terms of stakes. However, they do not consider the plurality of a stakeholder's expectations, but this clarification is important insofar as it is the main source of ambiguity in attributing legitimacy and urgency to stakeholders. For instance, we have seen through our case study how Crees were able to legitimize various expectations throughout the 1970-2015 period and how particular expectations were more or less legitimate depending on the context.

3.6 Conclusion

Scenarios of David defeating Goliath, as we have said, are a trend rather than an exception. In the current context of increasing socio-economic-environmental controversies and growing demand for greater involvement of civil society in decision making related to projects, legislations, activities, and so on, these challenges become an important management issue for firms and policy makers (Delannon et al., 2016). As highlighted by Pasquero (2008, p. 27), issues related to the business and society interface raise new theoretical challenges for management research because they introduce an unusual type of uncertainty "whose nature is not only economic and managerial, but also socio-technical." Firms thus are confronted with unique situations characterized by pluralism, complexity, and the multiplicity of interdependent stakeholders (Pasquero, 2008). Our chapter shows that stakeholder salience framework is a good but incomplete start to capturing these issues. All in all, stakeholder salience frameworks can be better analyzed through theoretical lenses based on the integration of various rationalities beyond the

organization-centric perspective (e.g., Pasquero, 2008). Recognizing and mapping pluralism with appropriate theoretical lenses regarding competing rationalities or social orders makes it possible to deepen our understanding of corporate–stakeholder interactions and, more specifically, that of dormant stakeholders’ strategizing process and underlying dynamics enabling them to assert their interests facing more powerful and legitimate stakeholders.

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Contributions et conclusion générale

Comme explicité en introduction, cette thèse est le fruit d'une recherche qualitative exploratoire. Le point de départ de cette recherche était mon souhait de mieux comprendre les relations entreprises-communautés et le processus de reconstruction des relations entre une entreprise et des communautés locales à la suite d'une controverse. Ces problématiques de recherche sont, comme j'ai argué précédemment, de plus en plus importantes dans un contexte grandissant de controverses socio-économico-environnementales (Demuijnck & Fasterling, 2016). Nonobstant une croissance exponentielle des recherches académiques portant sur le concept d'acceptabilité sociale (voir Demuijnck & Fasterling, 2016; Fortin & Fournis, 2014), cette littérature reste majoritairement dominée par des questionnements plutôt pratiques que théoriques. Largement sous-théorisée et très peu ancrée dans les théories des organisations, la littérature sur l'acceptabilité sociale peine à proposer – en partie en raison de sa fragmentation disciplinaire et épistémologique – une compréhension holistique et agrégée des connaissances développées durant les dernières décennies. Pour ces raisons, j'ai mené cette thèse de manière exploratoire afin d'approfondir notre compréhension des enjeux entreprises-communautés locales dans une perspective d'acceptabilité sociale, c'est-à-dire de compromis entre les parties prenantes concernées.

Dans ce contexte, cette thèse propose d'approfondir notre compréhension des processus et dynamiques d'acceptabilité sociale à travers trois articles. Chaque article analyse une dimension spécifique de l'acceptabilité sociale, offrant ainsi des contributions spécifiques et multiples. L'objectif de cette conclusion générale est donc de proposer une synthèse générale sur les principales contributions pratiques et théoriques des différents articles, et d'esquisser les principales limites et pistes de recherche futures.

Retour sur les trois articles de la thèse

Je propose dans cette section un retour succinct sur ces trois articles avant d'en discuter ensuite les contributions théoriques et pratiques. Globalement, alors que l'acceptabilité

sociale des projets est souvent perçue et conceptualisée de manière statique, cette thèse propose d'ancrer – même si cela n'est pas explicite dans tous les articles – les relations entreprises-communautés dans une approche socio-constructionniste.

Le premier article propose une revue systématique de la littérature sur l'acceptabilité sociale. La contribution principale de cet article réside dans la synthèse qu'il propose des contextes théoriques, des approches méthodologiques, des postures épistémologiques, des concepts, des principales idées et des tensions/avenues de recherche sur l'acceptabilité sociale. Il s'agit d'une tentative de consolidation des connaissances autour de l'acceptabilité sociale qui propose une classification de la littérature selon la conception de l'acceptabilité sociale : en tant que produit, processus, relation de pouvoir ou vecteur d'exclusion et d'exploitation.

Le deuxième article s'est attelé à comprendre le processus à travers lequel des communautés locales parviennent à développer leur agence, et comment celle-ci influence leur relation avec les entreprises opérant dans leur environnement local. Cette recherche permet une meilleure compréhension des relations entreprises-communautés à travers l'analyse des processus et de la dynamique interne aux communautés locales. L'article suggère deux contributions : d'abord, il analyse et conceptualise un processus en quatre étapes d'émergence des institutions locales permettant aux communautés locales de développer des capacités locales. Ensuite, il définit et construit une typologie de ces institutions locales, en fonction de leurs fonctions pour les communautés locales et leur rôle dans le cadre des relations d'entreprise communautaire. Enfin, il identifie plusieurs capacités locales qui permettent aux communautés locales de développer leur agence.

Le troisième et dernier article mobilise le modèle de priorisation des parties prenantes de Mitchell et al. (1997) pour analyser la manière dont des communautés locales marginalisées dites parties prenantes dormante (avec peu d'urgence, de pouvoir et de légitimité) parviennent à défendre leurs intérêts face à des acteurs plus établis. Adoptant une approche méthodologique longitudinale, cet article remet en question la fiabilité du modèle de Mitchell et al. (1997). Plus précisément, cet article suggère trois propositions pour enrichir notre compréhension de la priorisation des parties prenantes :

(1) tenir compte du temps et de l'espace afin d'étudier l'évolution longitudinale des relations dans leur contexte, (2) dépasser la focalisation excessive sur les parties prenantes afin de tenir également compte de leurs intérêts changeants et plus ou moins légitimes en fonction du contexte social, (3) enfin, adopter une approche processuelle et dynamique pour comprendre la priorisation des parties prenantes et, plus généralement, la relation entre l'entreprise et ses parties prenantes.

Contributions à l'acceptabilité sociale et aux relations entreprises-communautés

Face à la montée grandissante des enjeux d'acceptabilité sociale, d'abord discutés dans la sphère des praticiens et des institutions mondiales, les universitaires se sont récemment penchés en grand nombre sur cette problématique (ex. Delannon et al., 2016; K. Moffat & A. R. Zhang, 2014; Rowe et al., 2013). De nombreuses recherches académiques ont ainsi vu le jour durant les dernières années. Elles ont contribué à notre compréhension des enjeux et processus d'acceptabilité sociale. Ces contributions ont de manière générale abordé quatre axes : (1) la conceptualisation de l'acceptabilité sociale à travers des définitions et typologies (Batellier, 2015; Fortin & Fournis, 2014; Fournis & Fortin, 2015), (2) les outils, stratégies et meilleures pratiques pour développer l'acceptabilité sociale, la plupart du temps dans une approche statique et firmo-centrée (Corcadden, Wile, & Yiridoe, 2012; Richert et al., 2015; M. Voyer, W. Gladstone, et al., 2015), (3) la théorisation de l'acceptabilité sociale dans une approche processuelle et dynamique (Baba, 2016; R. Parsons & Moffat, 2014; Rooney et al., 2014), (4) et la remise en question du concept d'acceptabilité sociale dans une perspective critique et humaniste (Gendron, 2014; Raufflet, 2014; Syn, 2014b). Cette thèse contribue ainsi à certains de ces axes de recherche et renforce notre compréhension de l'acceptabilité sociale. Quatre contributions principales méritent d'être discutées.

D'abord, cette thèse offre une perspective quelque peu originale à la littérature sur l'acceptabilité sociale en proposant une analyse centrée sur la communauté et l'interface entreprise-communauté. De nombreuses études sur l'acceptabilité sociale adoptent une perspective firmo-centrée, ne permettant pas nécessairement de tenir compte de

l'interface entreprises-communautés locales. Ce faisant, cette recherche contribue à avancer notre compréhension d'une dimension sous-explorée des relations entreprises-communautés à savoir le rôle du renforcement des capacités des communautés locales dans l'évolution à long terme des relations entreprises-communautés. En tenant compte des processus intra-communauté, cette thèse élargit ainsi notre horizon de compréhension sur les enjeux d'acceptabilité sociale.

Ensuite, cette thèse a également enrichi la perspective récente et émergente qui conçoit l'acceptabilité sociale en tant que processus au lieu d'un résultat tangible (voir Baba, 2016). Sur le plan épistémologique et théorique, cela amène à reconcevoir la nature de l'interface entreprise-communauté. De manière générale, les deux articles empiriques ont montré le caractère négocié et dynamique des relations entreprises-communautés locales : alors que le premier s'est intéressé au processus de développement de l'agence des communautés locales et de son influence sur les relations entreprises-communautés, le second a étudié un processus longitudinal de négociation entre une communauté locale et un promoteur de projets en contexte d'asymétrie de pouvoir, de légitimité et de ressources. Cette recherche répond ainsi à de récents chercheurs qui ont lancé plusieurs appels pour davantage d'études processuelles et longitudinales sur l'acceptabilité sociale (Baba & Raufflet, 2015; R. Parsons & Moffat, 2014; Syn, 2014b).

Enfin, sur le plan empirique, cette thèse apporte une contribution importante en proposant l'une des rares études sur l'acceptabilité sociale en analysant l'évolution de 45 années de relations entre une entreprise et une communauté locale. Le processus étudié étant passé à travers des phases contrastées d'acceptabilité sociale au fil des années nous permet également de théoriser tant la construction que la reconstruction des relations entre une entreprise et une communauté locale à la suite d'une controverse. Cette contribution est d'autant plus importante qu'elle nous permet d'analyser également la trajectoire d'acceptabilité sociale tout au long du cycle de vie d'un projet, proposant ainsi une originalité à la littérature.

Contributions à la pratique de management des relations avec les parties prenantes locales

Cette thèse propose également des implications pour la pratique du management des relations entreprises-communautés. Nous précisons trois contributions principales qui permettent d’esquisser les contours du champ d’action des entreprises qui souhaitent cultiver et développer des pratiques orientées vers des relations positives, durables et constructives avec les communautés locales. Plusieurs recherches montrent d’ailleurs que ces enjeux sont de premier ordre au Québec (Batellier & Sauvé, 2011; Fortin, Fournis, & Beaudry, 2013), et à travers le monde (Holley & Mitcham, 2016).

Dans un premier temps, l’acceptabilité sociale doit être saisie comme un processus à long terme et non un produit tangible. Cela a des implications pour les praticiens, qui doivent notamment adopter des pratiques dans une perspective holistique et à long terme, dépassant la simple idée de faire approuver les projets durant la phase de construction des projets. En effet, l’implication des communautés locales doit s’opérer tout au long du cycle de vie des projets, avec un accent particulier sur les retombées locales et les dispositifs de gestion permettant aux communautés locales et les entreprises de gérer au quotidien le compromis entre leurs différentes logiques institutionnelles. Ces actions nécessitent bien entendu des compétences et des ressources dédiées (voir Delannon et al., 2016).

Dans un deuxième temps, cette thèse fait écho à d’autres études récentes sur l’importance de ne pas négliger les parties prenantes locales dites « marginales » en raison de leur faible légitimité, pouvoir et ressources (Baba & Raufflet, 2015). Plusieurs études ont récemment montré que cette classification peut mener à d’importants échecs pour les entreprises car ce mode de pensée ne tient pas compte du caractère stratégique des alliances stratégiques que peuvent établir les parties prenantes dites « marginales ». Celles-ci peuvent également légitimer leurs revendications en puisant dans des discours sociétaux. En réalité, cette vision de la gestion des parties prenante est ancrée dans un ancien paradigme réactif, où l’entreprise doit gérer des menaces et contraintes externes (Beaulieu & Pasquero, 2002). Nous proposons une vision dynamique et constructive de la gestion des parties prenantes

où les entreprises et les communautés locales peuvent coconstruire ensemble un projet commun de développement axé sur le territoire (voir Fortin & Fournis, 2014; Fournis & Fortin, 2015).

Dans un troisième et dernier temps, cette thèse met en lumière l'importance pour les entreprises de tenir compte, voire de favoriser – dans la mesure du possible –, les processus intra-communautés de renforcement des capacités locales. En effet, la structuration du milieu local à travers des institutions locales est un processus favorable tant aux promoteurs qu'aux communautés locales puisqu'elle réduit la volatilité liée à la prise de décision, à la négociation avec les promoteurs et à la mise en œuvre des accords entre les promoteurs et les communautés. Cela contraste avec nombre de cas où les promoteurs de projets contribuent volontairement à la destruction de la cohésion sociale à travers une politique de « division » (Costanza, 2016; Whiteman & Mamen, 2002). Ainsi, cette thèse argue qu'il serait plus judicieux de favoriser des processus de renforcement des capacités locales.

Limites de cette étude et pistes de recherche futures

Comme nombre de recherches qualitatives en sciences sociales, les articles de cette thèse présentent plusieurs limites que j'esquisse ici comme des opportunités de recherches futures. La première limite, d'ordre méthodologique, concerne les deux articles empiriques. Cette thèse s'est focalisée sur l'étude d'un seul cas dit « extrême ». Si la nature longitudinale et multi-facette du cas est une richesse pour l'étude des processus d'acceptabilité sociale, et que les études longitudinales basées sur un cas extrême ont fait leurs preuves dans les recherches en management (Mair, Wolf, & Seelos, 2016; Smets, Morris, & Greenwood, 2012), il n'en demeure pas moins qu'un devis méthodologique multi-cas aurait pu proposer davantage de nuances dans l'effort de théorisation de notre objet de recherche (voir Eisenhardt, 1991; Graebner & Eisenhardt, 2007).

Une deuxième limite liée au devis méthodologique basé sur une étude de cas réduit le potentiel de généralisation des résultats issus de cette thèse. En effet, le cas d'Hydro-Québec et de la Nation Crie est relativement exceptionnel à plus d'un titre. D'abord, la

controverse a impliqué une société d'État – influencée par des considérations politiques –, et une communauté autochtone. Ensuite, le caractère hautement politisé de cette controverse, en raison de la nature des acteurs et du contexte socio-politique national (mouvement souverainiste québécois) et international (des droits environnementaux et des autochtones, discours de développement durable) entourant le projet de la Baie-James, a grandement influencé la trajectoire d'acceptabilité sociale. Ainsi, il serait utile que de futures recherches s'intéressent à des contextes empiriques variés en termes de types de projets et contextes sociaux, politiques, culturels et institutionnels.

Une troisième limite dans les articles empiriques porte sur l'unité d'analyse retenue. Les deux articles de cette thèse se sont intéressés respectivement à la relation entreprise-communauté du point de vue de la communauté et des processus intra-communauté. Il aurait été intéressant d'étudier le processus intra-entreprise en relation avec l'acceptabilité sociale et la gestion des relations entreprises-communautés : par exemple, quels ont été les moteurs de changement des pratiques chez Hydro-Québec ? De futures recherches pourraient mettre également en contraste trois unités d'analyse : les processus internes à la communauté, les processus internes à l'entreprise et l'évolution de l'interface entre la communauté et l'entreprise. Cette vision multi-perspectives nous permettrait notamment de comprendre les différentes facettes de l'acceptabilité sociale.

La quatrième et dernière limite est liée à la revue systématique de la littérature. Pour se conformer aux normes éditoriales de la revue visée pour cet article (*International Journal of Management Reviews*), ladite revue de littérature a volontairement écarté les articles publiés dans des revues en français. Pourtant, la communauté francophone a été assez engagée dans le développement de notre compréhension de l'acceptabilité sociale (voir Baba & Raufflet, 2015; Batellier, 2015, 2016; Fortin & Fournis, 2014; Fortin et al., 2013; Fournis & Fortin, 2015; Gendron, 2014). Cela dit, je suis confiant que le cadre conceptuel adopté pour cartographier la littérature englobe l'essence de la littérature francophone. Néanmoins, il serait utile que de futures recherches englobent de façon explicite la littérature francophone en vue de cartographier le champ de connaissances dans ce domaine.

Enfin, il convient de mentionner une piste de recherche qui me paraît intéressante sur le plan conceptuel, déjà exprimée dans la revue de littérature systématique (Article 3), mais qui mérite d'être soulevée de nouveau. Il s'agit de rapprocher l'acceptabilité sociale de la littérature de la légitimité. Alors que la légitimité a surtout été théorisée à l'échelle des organisations, pratiques, discours et industries (Suddaby et al., 2017; Vaara & Monin, 2010), les projets – au cœur de l'acceptabilité sociale – n'ont pas reçu d'attention dans cette littérature. Pourtant, l'idée d'acceptabilité sociale renvoie inévitablement à l'essence même de la légitimité, celle de « l'approbation de l'organisation par les acteurs sociaux » (Deephouse, 1996, p. 1025). Ainsi, il serait utile que de futures recherches conceptualisent l'acceptabilité sociale comme une forme de légitimité. Ce faisant, cette recherche pourrait offrir un regard nouveau sur une nouvelle forme de légitimité spécifique à des enjeux locaux entre l'entreprise et ses parties prenantes locales. En raison de l'ancrage territorial des projets, des controverses sociotechniques liées à ces projets et des parties prenantes en jeu, il est raisonnable de croire que l'acceptabilité sociale est une forme de légitimité jusque-là inexplorée, à savoir une légitimité locale dont l'unité d'analyse est le projet.

Réflexion rétrospective

En guise de conclusion, je souhaiterais proposer une réflexion rétrospective sur cette recherche doctorale. Mon objectif initial, je le rappelle, était de mieux comprendre l'acceptabilité sociale des projets, et principalement le processus de construction et de développement d'une acceptabilité sociale. C'est ainsi que j'ai adopté un format de thèse par articles. Chaque article proposait de comprendre une sous-dimension de l'acceptabilité sociale. Le premier chapitre proposait une revue systématique de la littérature sur le concept de « social license to operate ». Le deuxième chapitre soulevait l'importance des processus intra-communautaires, notamment d'organisations locales, dans la trajectoire d'acceptabilité sociale. Et, finalement, le troisième chapitre montre comment des acteurs marginalisés parviennent à renforcer leur légitimité et pouvoir, tout en s'imposant comme des parties prenantes importantes à considérer par les entreprises. Cette recherche doctorale avait pris pour point de départ les relations entre la Nation Crie et Hydro-Québec sur la période 1970 à 2015. Ce qui semblait être un cas d'acceptabilité sociale autour d'un projet de développement hydroélectrique, s'est rapidement présenté

comme un cas sur des processus sociaux et institutionnels en matière de droits autochtones et de revendications territoriales. Or, mon approche par articles ne permettait peut-être pas, rétrospectivement, de rendre compte de toute la richesse et complexité de ces processus sociaux et institutionnels. À tout le moins, il s'agit là de mon sentiment et c'est précisément autour de cette idée que je propose cette réflexion rétrospective. J'argue notamment que l'approche par articles, parce qu'elle impose des contraintes de forme et de focus, ne m'a pas permis de tenir compte de trois éléments sur lesquels je souhaiterais revenir présentement : d'abord, la position épistémologique du concept de *social license to operate*. Ensuite, la simplification implicite du cas d'Hydro-Québec et de la Nation Crie dans les chapitres 2 et 3. Enfin, les contours d'une vision holistique des processus entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie.

Le concept de « social license to operate » et sa position épistémologique dans le champ des connaissances.

Le premier chapitre de cette thèse – la revue systématique – s'est focalisée sur la recension des écrits portant sur le concept de « social license to operate ». Un pris pour acquis conceptuel a été fait en considérant que l'acceptabilité sociale, en langue française, renvoyait au concept anglophone de *social license to operate*. En réalité, des nuances peuvent être apportés sur trois plans. D'une part, le contexte d'émergence de la *social license to operate* est propre au secteur extractif et, plus largement, à celui des ressources naturelles (R. G. Boutilier, 2014). Cette métaphore suggère que les communautés locales possèdent la capacité de faire valoir leurs revendications en octroyant un « permis social » aux promoteurs, en contraste avec le « permis légal » octroyé par les autorités publiques (Raufflet et al., 2013). L'usage de ce concept a par la suite pris une tangente plus englobante en termes d'objets d'études : tout projet de développement susceptible d'engendrer des nuisances sociales ou environnementales était soumis à la *social license*. Plus récemment, ce concept a été mobilisé pour englober également des enjeux d'acceptabilité liés à des pratiques spécifiques voire à des innovations technologiques (Dowd & James, 2014; Kundu, Gupta, Mol, & Nasreen, 2016). D'autre part, le concept d'acceptabilité sociale – dans sa conception francophone – a une portée nettement plus importante que celui de *social license to operate* dans la mesure où la littérature sur

l'acceptabilité sociale ne s'intéresse pas qu'à des processus strictement organisationnels, encore moins dans le seul secteur des ressources naturelles, mais aussi à des problématiques sociales comme l'utilisation de pesticides, une nouvelle réglementation publique ou encore de systèmes technologiques (Batellier, 2016; Conseil patronal de l'environnement du Québec, 2012; Fortin et al., 2013; Fournier, 2009; Fournis & Fortin, 2015; Gendron, 2014). Autrement dit, le concept d'acceptabilité sociale – dans son utilisation dans la littérature francophone – semble être beaucoup plus proche d'une vision des parties prenantes basée sur la démocratie participative, où chaque partie prenante aurait un droit de parole sur les décisions politiques, sociales ou économiques qui pourraient les influencer (Gendron, 2014). En ce sens, ces deux concepts sont à distinguer. Il y a, cependant, un corpus dans la littérature francophone sur l'acceptabilité sociale qui se base sur la tradition de *social license to operate* (Fortin & Fournis, 2014; Madani, 2015). Cette littérature se base ainsi particulièrement sur les relations entreprises-parties prenantes dans des contextes de développement de projets, que ce soit d'infrastructures ou d'exploitation des ressources naturelles. Puisque la revue systématique du chapitre 1 a exclu délibérément la littérature francophone pour des motivations liées aux normes éditoriales de publication dans la revue visée, il conviendrait de mener de futures recherches sur les multiples usages du strict concept d'acceptabilité sociale et de *social license to operate* afin de mieux saisir les contours définitionnels et épistémologiques de ces concepts. À cette réflexion pourrait s'ajouter une autre sur les concepts de *social acceptance* et de *social acceptability* qui semblent être utilisés de manière interchangeable, principalement par des universitaires asiatiques et européens, et dans le contexte de transition énergétique et d'innovations technologiques (Kundu et al., 2016; Soma & Haggett, 2015; C. W. Sun et al., 2016).

Cette réflexion conceptuelle et définitionnelle mériterait également d'être ancrée dans une réflexion épistémologique plus large : est-ce que l'acceptabilité sociale est un champ de recherche, un champ de pratique ou un champ d'intérêt pour des universitaires et des praticiens ? Compte tenu du niveau de sous-théorisation important de cette littérature, il serait difficile de la présenter en tant que champ de recherche indépendant, tant les projets épistémologiques (comme indiqué dans le chapitre 1) sont surtout techniques, autrement

dit orientés vers la pratique et la transformation des techniques. En parallèle, l'acceptabilité sociale suscite un intérêt croissant dans le milieu de la recherche depuis quelques années. De plus en plus d'articles à saveur théorique et de numéros spéciaux sont publiés, et nous assistons peut-être justement à l'émergence d'un champ de recherche spécifique à une réalité organisationnelle et sociale émergente et propre aux projets à fort impact socio-environnemental : l'acceptabilité sociale de ces projets, principalement par les communautés locales, mais pas uniquement. Si un tel champ de recherche est en gestation, une question légitime peut être posée : qu'apporte le concept d'acceptabilité sociale ou de *social license to operate* de plus par rapport à un concept établi comme celui de légitimité ? En effet, ironiquement, plusieurs définitions de l'acceptabilité sociale renvoient à la notion de légitimité. Par exemple, Fortin et al. (2013, p. 15) proposent une définition de l'acceptabilité sociale comme suit : « l'acceptabilité sociale est définie comme un processus d'évaluation politique d'un projet mettant en interaction une pluralité d'acteurs impliqués à diverses échelles et à partir duquel se construisent progressivement des arrangements et des règles institutionnels reconnus légitimes, car cohérents avec la vision du territoire et le modèle de développement privilégiés par les acteurs concernés. » En fait, l'idée d'acceptabilité sociale renvoie inévitablement à l'essence même de la légitimité, celle de « l'approbation de l'organisation par les acteurs sociaux » [traduction libre] (Deephouse, 1996, p. 1025). Cependant, les universitaires n'ont pas offert de théorisations consistantes du concept d'acceptabilité sociale. Cela explique ainsi pourquoi, malgré leur proximité définitionnelle, les concepts d'acceptabilité sociale et de légitimité n'ont pas été davantage rapprochés et conceptualisés ensemble. À travers notre premier chapitre, nous avons argué que l'acceptabilité sociale gagnerait à être théorisée selon les avancées considérables que propose la littérature sur la légitimité. L'argument développé dans ce chapitre est que l'acceptabilité sociale serait une nouvelle forme de légitimité jusque-là inexplorée lorsqu'on parle de projets de développement : 1) une légitimité octroyée surtout par des parties prenantes locales qui se considèrent les plus légitimes pour négocier les frontières du projet en raison des impacts vécus; 2) le projet pourrait être considéré comme une organisation temporaire avec une durée dans le temps (Burke & Morley, 2016); 3) et le projet est géographiquement ancré sur un territoire, faisant ainsi en sorte que la problématique d'acceptabilité sociale peut avoir des horizons

spatiaux multiples (une échelle locale, qui peut également s'étendre à une échelle plus large comme le montrent les chapitres 2 et 3). Or, jusqu'à présent, la théorie sur la légitimité a surtout porté sur des pratiques, des organisations, des comportements, des industries et des champs institutionnels. Cela dit, les processus de légitimation des organisations temporaires n'ont pas été théorisés. Or, pour les raisons mentionnées précédemment, on pourrait suggérer que les organisations temporaires ont des caractéristiques qui appellent à une théorisation nouvelle. En ce sens, les récents développements sur la légitimité approfondiraient notre compréhension des enjeux d'acceptabilité sociale spécifique, donc, à des organisations temporaires (projets) à fort impact socio-environnemental.

La légitimité est un sujet d'intérêt pour les théoriciens des organisations depuis au moins les travaux pionniers de M. Weber (1922, 1968). Considérée comme étant essentielle dans le fonctionnement de nos sociétés, la légitimité a rapidement pénétré la sphère des théories des organisations (Bitektine, 2011; Meyer & Scott, 1983; Suchman, 1995). Ce qui a rapidement été appelé la légitimité organisationnelle est ainsi devenue un concept clé en théorie des organisations, et en particulier dans la théorie néo-institutionnelle. En concevant la légitimité en tant que ressource immatérielle des organisations, les universitaires se sont intéressés aux avantages que procure la légitimité pour les organisations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002), à l'acquisition de la légitimité à travers le discours et de nouvelles pratiques (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Suchman, 1995), à la relation entre légitimités interne et externe (Drori & Honig, 2013), au maintien de la légitimité en contexte de crise (Patriotta et al., 2011), et, finalement, à la perte de la légitimité en cas de controverses (Sine & David, 2003). Bien que la légitimité fasse l'objet de nombreuses recherches, il n'en demeure pas moins que sa définition et portée peuvent susciter l'ambiguïté (Suddaby et al., 2017). La base définitionnelle de la légitimité diffère selon les auteurs. En effet, la légitimité peut être le résultat du jugement des acteurs externes ou internes (Maurer, 1971; T. Parsons, 1960), de l'évaluation des actions organisationnelles (Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975; Pfeffer, 1981), ou encore de la perception et jugement de l'audience (Pollock & Rindova, 2003; Suchman, 1995).

La légitimité peut prendre deux formes : cognitive ou sociopolitique (Bitektine, 2011). D'une part, la principale source de légitimité cognitive relève de croyances largement répandues et d'hypothèses prises pour acquies (Scott, 2013). Lors d'un jugement de légitimité cognitive, l'organisation est classée comme appartenant à une forme d'organisation connue déterminée par un ensemble de caractéristiques organisationnelles tangibles (Hannan & Freeman, 1977; Suchman, 1995). L'effet de légitimation découle donc de la catégorisation cognitive d'une organisation comme étant semblable à d'autres sur certaines dimensions définies par l'évaluateur (Hannan & Freeman, 1987). La légitimation cognitive dépend ainsi en partie de l'histoire passée (Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990). D'autre part, la légitimité sociopolitique met l'accent sur le processus d'évaluation normative, le questionnement, la justification et l'acceptation de l'organisation et de ses pratiques (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994; Suchman, 1995). La légitimité sociopolitique sous-entend ainsi que la légitimité n'est octroyée à l'organisation qu'à la suite d'une évaluation normative favorable. Lors du jugement de légitimité sociopolitique, plusieurs caractéristiques organisationnelles (comme les conséquences de ses activités) sont observées, évaluées et comparées aux normes sociales. Ainsi, les évaluateurs décident si l'organisation est socialement acceptable. Le jugement de légitimité sociopolitique permet ainsi aux évaluateurs de décider s'ils encouragent les comportements d'une organisation ou si, au contraire, cette organisation doit être sanctionnée et invitée à modifier son mode de fonctionnement (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994; Kostova & Zaheer, 1999; Suchman, 1995).

En définitive, en se basant sur l'idée d'une légitimité de deux types (cognitive ou sociopolitique), on pourrait suggérer que ces avancées théoriques sont utiles pour la compréhension des trajectoires d'acceptabilité sociale. Des études récentes, par exemple, montrent que des processus d'acceptabilité sociale ne sont pas toujours basés sur des faits rationnels, mais plutôt sur des idées préconçues et sur des 'émotions' basées sur l'histoire passée (Baba & Raufflet, 2014; Melé & Armengou, 2016). Bien que ces idées semblent nouvelles dans la littérature sur l'acceptabilité sociale, la brève esquisse sur les développements récents en légitimité montre justement tout le potentiel de rapprocher le phénomène d'acceptabilité sociale de la théorie sur la légitimité.

Le cas d'Hydro-Québec et de la Nation Crie : une vision simplifiée et partielle

En raison du focus de chacun des articles, cette recherche doctorale a peut-être mis de l'avant une narrative trop simpliste sur le cas d'Hydro-Québec et de la Nation Crie. Cette simplicité est d'ailleurs notamment présente pour les processus internes à la Nation Crie. En effet, les chapitres deux et trois ont montré un processus linéaire, unifié et stable du point de vue de la Nation Crie. En réalité, les dynamiques sociales au sein de la Nation Crie sont plus processuelles et dynamiques que cela. En effet, au moins trois clarifications méritent d'être mises de l'avant : 1) la variété de projets politiques au sein du leadership et de la Nation Crie dans les années 1990s, 2) le défi du consensus pour la Paix des Braves en 2002, 3) la difficile cohabitation entre la modernité et la tradition au sein des communautés cries.

D'abord, si les chapitres deux et trois expliquent que la Nation Crie étaient contre le projet Grande-Baleine, il convient toutefois de préciser que cette réalité était plus contrastée au moment des faits. En effet, il y avait de fortes tensions parmi plusieurs communautés cries sur ce projet. Alors qu'une majorité de communautés était contre ce projet en raison de ses impacts sociaux et environnementaux et du non-règlement des enjeux de mise en œuvre de la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord Québécois, il n'en demeure pas moins que d'autres communautés – notamment celles qui avaient été impactées par le premier projet – argumentaient que le projet pouvait générer des retombées socio-économiques importantes, et qu'il était de la responsabilité des autres communautés de se « sacrifier » désormais. Suite à des discussions internes avec les différents chefs des communautés, le leadership du Grand Conseil des Cris a finalement statué contre le projet Grande-Baleine, mais cela n'a pas empêché certains chefs de remettre en question l'approche offensive du leadership du Grand Conseil des Cris contre les projets de développement. Certaines communautés souhaitaient notamment utiliser les projets de développement comme vecteur de développement social et des infrastructures, dans un contexte où les conditions de vie des Cris étaient difficiles.

Deuxièmement, le processus ayant mené à la *Paix des Braves* a suscité – et continue de susciter – de sérieuses interrogations parmi certains Cris. Le leadership cri – notamment

le Grand Chef Ted Moses – a négocié l’entente de principe de manière secrète. Convaincu que les négociations échoueraient si les médias apprenaient l’existence de négociations, Ted Moses a surpris toute la Nation Crie lorsqu’il a annoncé l’entente de principe en octobre 2001. Son annonce a généré d’importantes revendications sociales au sein des communautés cries. Bien que les neuf chefs des communautés cries aient approuvé l’entente de principe, et que le référendum organisé en ce sens ait généré une approbation à hauteur de 70% des votants, il n’en demeure pas moins que certains leaders cris de l’époque et membres de la communauté pensent que la stratégie de négociation a « vendu l’âme des Cris » pour de petites redevances financières. Le leadership ayant signé la *Paix des Braves* rétorque que la *Paix des Braves* a été négociée dans une relation de pouvoir favorable aux Cris, ce qui leur aurait permis d’obtenir la meilleure entente jamais obtenue par une Nation autochtone au Canada. Quoi qu’il en soit, la Paix des Braves n’a pas fait l’unanimité en 2002, et elle n’est pas plus consensuelle aujourd’hui, bien que le temps semble plutôt aller dans le sens d’une amélioration des conditions de vie socio-économiques des Cris.

Troisièmement, si les relations entre la Nation Crie et Hydro-Québec sont représentées dans les chapitres deux et trois comme étant « excellentes, positives et constructives », il convient toutefois de relativiser. En effet, les relations entre la Nation Crie et Hydro-Québec sont reconnues par le leadership de part et d’autre comme étant positives et constructives. Chiffres à l’appui, les acteurs montrent souvent la nature bénéfique de ces relations en matière de formation, d’emploi, d’infrastructures et de développement social (éducation, baisse des problématiques sociales comme l’alcoolisme, l’usage des drogues et les violences). Cela dit, les acteurs locaux (notamment les membres de certaines communautés, incluant les utilisateurs actifs du territoire traditionnel) sont dans certains cas moins satisfaits – non pas de leurs relations avec Hydro-Québec – mais des transformations territoriales générées par le projet hydroélectrique. Ces transformations ont grandement influencé la pratique traditionnelle des Cris, ce qui a endommagé leur spiritualité et identité autochtone (Whiteman, 2004). Par ailleurs, le développement à la Baie-James a ouvert l’accès à ce vaste territoire à l’ensemble du Québec et des Canadiens, ce qui a notamment résulté en des contacts beaucoup plus importants entre les Cris et les

allochtones, pour résultat un effet d'hybridation des valeurs crie. Alors que les Cris vivaient principalement dans la forêt il y a cinq décennies de cela en pratiquant leurs traditions et activités autochtones, la réalité est tout autre aujourd'hui. Un grand nombre de cris évoque avoir peu de temps à consacrer à la pratique traditionnelle en raison de leur nouveau style de vie basé sur le travail de bureau. Les aînés pointent également du doigt l'influence du processus de modernisation (travail et technologie) sur les habitudes des cris qui font de la Nation Crie une société moins collectiviste qu'auparavant et davantage disloquée. Enfin, d'aucuns mentionnent également la difficulté pour les nouvelles générations de gérer des valeurs parfois paradoxales entre modernité et traditions, soulevant ainsi des interrogations quant à la capacité des futures générations crie à perpétuer l'identité autochtone et les valeurs ancestrales¹⁶.

Une vision holistique des processus entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie

Enfin, un dernier élément important du cas entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie est l'encastrement de la relation entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie dans des processus sociaux et historiques plus larges. Bien que le chapitre trois soit plus explicite sur ce point par rapport au chapitre deux, j'aimerais ici revenir sur cet élément qui me semble important. Dans une recherche que je mène présentement sur le processus de légitimation et des stratégies employées par les Cris en ce sens, j'argumente que les Cris ont été en mesure de s'imposer comme une partie prenante importante dans la trajectoire d'acceptabilité sociale en légitimant leurs revendications territoriales et de droits autochtones. Ce processus de légitimation, en grande partie, peut se résumer en la capacité des Cris à mobiliser des discours cohérents avec les préoccupations sociétales. Ces préoccupations sociétales, flexibles en fonction du contexte, concernaient trois processus sociaux et historiques auxquels les Cris contribuaient mais, surtout, dans lesquels les Cris puisaient leurs arguments : 1) le mouvement des droits autochtones au Canada et à travers

¹⁶ Je mène présentement une recherche sur l'hybridité de la modernité et de la tradition chez les Cris en analysant comment les individus, les communautés et la nation crie (trois niveaux d'analyse) vivent, véhiculent et conçoivent cette hybridité.

le monde, 2) le mouvement souverainiste québécois, et 3) le mouvement de développement durable et la montée des préoccupations environnementales.

Le mouvement des droits autochtones au Canada et à travers le monde était naissant lorsque le projet de la Baie-James fût annoncé par Robert Bourassa. Bien que quelques initiatives parlementaires eussent eu lieu dans les années 1960s pour traiter « le problème indien », il a fallu attendre la controverse socio-environnementale des Cris et d'Hydro-Québec, et notamment le jugement Malouf de 1973 qui reconnaît pour la première fois des droits territoriaux aux autochtones, pour voir ce mouvement prendre une ampleur sans précédent au Canada. Les années 1980s et 1990s ont été des périodes clés de cette trajectoire sociale, qui a notamment permis aux Premières Nations de s'organiser, d'inscrire leurs droits dans la constitution canadienne, et d'obtenir un statut légitime au sein des institutions internationales comme les Nations Unies. Le mouvement souverainiste québécois était déjà en branle lorsque le gouvernement québécois organisa son premier référendum pour la souveraineté du Québec en 1980. En raison du retour du Parti Libéral, il a fallu attendre les années 1990s pour revoir le mouvement souverainiste québécois revenir au pouvoir, notamment durant la controverse de la Grande-Baleine. Conjugué à la montée des droits autochtones, le mouvement souverainiste a permis aux Cris de légitimer leurs revendications territoriales en faisant un postulat tout simple : si le Québec a le droit de se séparer du Canada, alors les Cris ont le droit de choisir avec quel pays ils veulent rester. Après avoir organisé un référendum, les Cris décidèrent à 96% de rester avec le Canada. Cette stratégie montre bien comment les Cris ont été habiles dans la mobilisation de trajectoires sociales plus larges pour revendiquer leurs droits. Enfin, les années 1980s et 1990s ont également été une période charnière pour la cristallisation des préoccupations environnementales à l'échelle mondiale et pour l'institutionnalisation du développement durable comme en témoigne le rapport Brundtland de 1987. Là encore, les Cris ont su rattacher leurs argumentations à cette trajectoire sociale, en occupant notamment un rôle important au sein des Nations Unies.

En définitive, en remettant dans son contexte social et historique le processus d'acceptabilité sociale entre les Cris et Hydro-Québec, et en tenant compte de la

complexité sociale de l'époque, on peut relire l'évolution des relations entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie selon une vision holistique qui permet de tenir compte de plusieurs trajectoires sociales, à même d'expliquer les arguments et stratégies mobilisés par les acteurs autour des controverses socio-environnementales successives.

Conclusion : l'acceptabilité sociale en tant que processus dynamique

En définitive, prise comme un ensemble en termes de contribution scientifique, cette thèse a mis en évidence que l'acceptabilité sociale des projets est plutôt un processus dynamique et en négociation permanente entre les acteurs sociaux qu'un produit tangible et statique. Je souhaiterais conclure cette thèse en insistant sur la nature dynamique et coconstruite de l'acceptabilité sociale, comme les deux articles empiriques de cette thèse ont pu le mettre de l'avant. Ces articles montrent que l'acceptabilité sociale ne peut être réellement comprise qu'à travers une perspective processuelle et dynamique avec une approche longitudinale. Cette vision a des implications importantes tant sur le plan théorique que pratique. Ainsi, mon souhait est que les réflexions issues de cette thèse stimulent davantage ce champ de recherche émergent et que nous développiions une compréhension plus fine et processuelle des relations entreprises-communautés et, plus généralement, de l'interface entreprise-société.

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Annexe méthodologique

Cette *Annexe* méthodologique offre des précisions sur l'approche méthodologique utilisée dans le cadre de cette thèse. Plus précisément, elle présente la nature des données collectées selon les sources primaires et secondaires, les répondants rencontrés et le déroulement des entrevues dans le temps, ainsi que les guides utilisés pour la réalisation des entrevues.

La nature des données collectées

Trois principales sources de données ont été utilisées dans le cadre de cette thèse : les archives, les entrevues, et les observations participantes et non-participantes. L'utilisation de ces données dans l'analyse est variée et complémentaire : les archives ont surtout permis d'esquisser une chronologie fiable des événements sur la période 1970 à 2015. Ainsi, les archives ont notamment été utiles pour comprendre le déroulement du projet de la Baie-James, des controverses et du processus de reconstruction des relations. Les archives ont également été utiles pour comprendre les intentions des acteurs, leurs stratégies et leurs résultats, de même que les processus intra et inter-organisationnels. Les entrevues semi-structurées ont surtout été utilisées pour collecter des données plus spécifiques sur certains événements, processus et moments. Une fois cette chronologie globale identifiée grâce aux archives, les entrevues ont notamment été utiles pour comprendre la perception rétrospective des acteurs, leurs émotions et leurs perspectives multiples sur les enjeux des relations entre la Nation Crie et Hydro-Québec des années 1970 à aujourd'hui. Il convient ici de différencier les entrevues réalisées avec les acteurs directement impliqués dans la controverse (Hydro-Québec, hauts fonctionnaires et Grand Conseil des Cris), des acteurs qui ont mené des recherches sur le sujet (historiens, anthropologues et sociologues). Enfin, les observations participantes et non-participantes ont été utiles pour orienter les recherches en termes de collecte d'archives et de questions à poser lors que des entrevues. Les observations ont également été l'occasion pour moi de « vivre » la réalité autochtone et les impacts des projets de développement sur leur territoire, et de m'entretenir avec des membres des communautés cries afin de mieux

comprendre les différentes constructions de l'évolution des relations entre Hydro-Québec et les Cris. Ce processus de collecte de données s'est déroulé de manière itérative tout au long de la période de recherche.

Archives (voir liste des références principales)

D'abord, les articles de presse ont été recensés de manière systématique très tôt dans le processus de recherche. L'objectif de cette activité était de pouvoir retracer une chronologie des événements. Une première recherche a été menée en 2013 dans les journaux québécois et canadiens à travers la base de données Eureka sur la période 1970-2013. Plusieurs mots-clés ont été utilisés afin de recenser les articles utiles : 'Baie-James', 'Cris', 'Nation Crie', 'Eeyou Istchee', 'Projet du siècle', 'Projet de la Baie-James', 'Projet Grande Baleine', 'Grand Conseil des Cris', 'Niskamoon' et 'Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord québécois', 'Paix des Braves'. Ensuite, une deuxième recension systématique de la presse a été réalisée en 2018 dans plusieurs bases de données sur la période 1940-2018 : Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, Eureka et Google Newspaper Archive. Plusieurs journaux québécois, canadiens et américains ont été considérés : La Presse, Le Devoir, La Gazette (Montréal), Le Droit, Le Soleil, Le Journal de Montréal, Globe and Mail, New York Post, National Post et The Nation (journal cri). Les mêmes mots-clés ont été utilisés. Au total, ce sont plus de 350 articles de presse qui ont été analysés (exemple : Claiborne, 1991; Deshaies, 1973a, 1973b; Dufour, 2001; Laurent & Waters, 1994; Nicholls, 1999; Séguin et al., 1994; The Montreal Gazette, 1994a, 1994b).

Ensuite, divers rapports ont été analysés (exemple : Diamond, 1990; Grand Council of the Crees, 1995a, 1995b, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2002d, 2013a, 2013b; Matthew Coon Come, 1997; Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones du Québec, 2004). Par exemple, plusieurs rapports d'Hydro-Québec ont été utilisés, notamment un rapport sur les apprentissages d'Hydro-Québec en matière de gestion environnementale et des relations avec les communautés. Ce rapport présente les pratiques d'Hydro-Québec en matière de gestion des relations avec les parties prenantes locales. De plus, un rapport d'Hydro-Québec qui résume l'ensemble des ententes conclues avec les Premières Nations depuis les années 1970s a été analysé afin de comprendre la nature des ententes et les

acteurs impliqués dans chacune de ces ententes. Ce rapport détaillait plusieurs dizaines d'ententes majeures signées avec les Cris et d'autres communautés autochtones québécoises. Par ailleurs, des archives du Grand Conseil des Cris ont été analysés. Certains ont été directement trouvés sur le site du Grand Conseil des Cris qui met à la disposition du grand public des documents d'archives tels que des rapports soumis par les autorités cris aux Nations Unies et à la Commission Royale sur les autochtones. D'autres archives du Grand Conseil des Cris ont été trouvées à l'Ambassade de la Nation Crie à Ottawa, auprès du service des archives. Ceux-ci incluaient des échanges entre le Grand Conseil des Cris et diverses parties prenantes (des ministres, hauts cadres d'Hydro-Québec, parties prenantes d'Hydro-Québec aux États-Unis). L'ensemble de ces rapports dépasse 5,000 pages.

De plus, des archives officielles du gouvernement ont été utilisées afin de comprendre l'évolution des enjeux autochtones au Canada durant la période étudiée. Plus précisément, des discussions et débats parlementaires ont été analysés à travers les archives de l'Assemblée Nationale du Québec et de la Chambre des Communes. Les outils électroniques de ces deux parlements m'ont permis de mener des recherches en utilisant les mots-clés « Indian » et « Aborigines », de même que « James Bay » et « Natural Resources ». Les débats analysés couvraient notamment la période conflictuelle des années 1970s, 1980s et 1990s. Plus d'une centaine d'heures de débats a été analysée grâce aux verbatim préparée par l'Assemblée Nationale du Québec et la Chambre des Communes. Par ailleurs, des documents officiels comme la Convention de la Baie James (1975), la Paix des Braves (2002), le Cree Naskapi Act (1984) de même que l'entente de principe de 1995 ont été analysés. Enfin, des rapports spécifiques préparés par ou pour le gouvernement ont été analysés : 'White Paper Policy' (1969), le rapport Tait sur l'évaluation de la Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord québécois (1982), le rapport Penner sur l'autogouvernance autochtone (1983), le rapport de la Commission Royale sur les peuples autochtones (1996), le rapport sur l'égalité des droits autochtones (2013) et le rapport vérité et réconciliation (2015).

Enfin, d'autres documents secondaires ont été utilisés, notamment des ouvrages d'historiens, de sociologues et d'anthropologues ayant mené des recherches sur la Nation Crie, la Baie-James et le projet hydroélectrique de la Baie-James (exemple : Bourassa, 1973; O. P. Dickason & D. Long, 2011; Kulchyski, 2013b; Lacasse, 1983; MacGregor, 1989; T. Martin, 2001, 2003; McGregor, Bayha, & Simmons, 2010; Newhouse, Voyageur, & Beavon, 2005; Niezen, 2009; Salisbury, 1986; Savard, 2013). De plus, des documentaires réalisés par le Grand Conseil des Cris en 2012 pour documenter l'expérience des Cris avec le projet hydroélectrique d'Hydro-Québec ont été analysés(Grand Council of the Crees, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c). Ces documentaires sont particulièrement utiles dans la mesure où on y retrouve la plupart des Grands Chefs du Grand Conseil des Cris qui ont représenté la Nation Crie depuis la formation du Grand Conseil des Cris à 2012. Cela a notamment été l'occasion pour moi d'écouter la version de certains Grands Chefs que je n'ai pas eu l'occasion de rencontrer, à l'instar de Billy Diamond et de Ted Moses. Enfin, de nombreuses séquences vidéo de CBC ont été visionnées sur le site de CBC Archives en utilisant les mots-clés suivants : 'James Bay', 'Matthew Coon Come', 'Billy Diamond', 'Aboriginal Rights' et 'Robert Bourassa' (exemple : CBC Archives, 1981, 1991a, 1991b). Celles-ci documentaient principalement la première phase de controverse au début des années 1970s, et la deuxième controverse au début des années 1990s.

Entrevues

Comme il a été expliqué en introduction de cette thèse, le processus de collecte de données s'est déroulé sur une longue période de temps, entre 2012 et 2018. Cette longue immersion s'explique notamment par les efforts requis pour établir une relation de confiance dans un contexte de recherche « extrême » (Hällgren, Rouleau, & Rond, 2018). Par ailleurs, c'est justement cette longue immersion dans le contexte étudié qui enrichit la validité des données collectées en ce qu'elle m'a permis d'établir des rapports de collaboration et de confiance avec les acteurs rencontrés, notamment chez Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie.

Il convient également de mentionner que la collecte de donnée se poursuit dans le cadre de collaborations avec Hydro-Québec et la Niskamoon. Pour les besoins de cette *Annexe*

méthodologique, je me limite aux données collectées jusqu'à septembre 2018, et qui ont contribué directement à ma compréhension de ce long processus. Au total, ce sont 112 entrevues qui ont été menées avec 94 répondants. Les entrevues ont duré entre 30 minutes et quatre heures, et en moyenne 1h30. Certaines entrevues ont été enregistrées et retranscrites, tandis que d'autres ont fait l'objet de prises de notes durant les entrevues. Cela était principalement le cas avec des répondants qui pouvaient être considérés comme fragiles et vulnérables, et cette mesure a été prise pour assurer leur sentiment de sécurité. Sept types d'acteurs ont été rencontrés et interviewés : des cadres du Grand Conseil des Cris, des cadres de la Niskamoon, des chargés des relations autochtones chez Hydro-Québec, des employés des Conseils de bandes cris (incluant des chefs et anciens chefs), des membres de la communauté crie, des *tayllmen* (responsables du territoire traditionnel cri), ainsi que des chercheurs et experts impliqués dans le contexte étudié. Le tableau ci-après présente de manière détaillée le nombre d'entrevues réalisé par type d'acteurs et par année. Ces chiffres illustrent le nombre d'entrevues formelles réalisées, mais ne tiennent pas compte des rencontres et discussions informelles qui ont également enrichi ma compréhension du phénomène. La section suivante présente de manière précise les guides utilisés pour les entrevues. Compte tenu de la nature sensible du contexte étudié, et de la vulnérabilité de nombre d'acteurs rencontrés, les noms des répondants ont été gardés confidentiels.

Table XXVI - Chronologie des entrevues par type de répondant

Type de répondant/année	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Grand Conseil des Cris, gouvernement cri et Conseils de bandes	2	-	1	1	5	2	5	16
Niskamoon	-	-	1	1	8	3	7	20
Hydro-Québec	4	3	2	2	-	-	-	11
Membres de la communauté et	-	-	-	-	25	3	23	51

<i>tallymen</i> (responsable du territoire traditionnel)								
Chercheurs et experts	4	1	1	-	-	-	-	6
Fonctionnaires québécois	4	3	1	-	-	-	-	8
Total	14	7	6	4	38	8	35	112

Observations participantes et non-participantes

Trois différents projets de collaboration avec la Niskamoon (société conjointe entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie) m’ont permis de réaliser des observations participantes qui ont été très bénéfiques pour ma compréhension des relations actuelles entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie. Ces trois projets étaient des projets formels où mon statut en tant que chercheur était connu et accepté par les acteurs. Chaque projet devait générer des retombées spécifiques pour la Niskamoon, tout en me permettant de réaliser des entrevues et de faire de l’observation pour mes recherches. Un premier projet de collaboration a eu lieu en 2016 pour l’organisation d’une conférence mondiale auxquels ont participé une vingtaine de représentants autochtones à travers le monde. Cet événement a pris lieu à Waskaganish, à la Baie-James, et a eu pour objectif de discuter des enjeux d’acceptabilité sociale des projets développement sur les territoires autochtones. Plusieurs représentants Cris, notamment l’actuel Grand Chief des Cris (Abel Bosum), ont représenté la vision Cri en matière d’acceptabilité sociale. Dans le cadre de l’organisation de cette conférence, des échanges et contacts permanents avaient lieu avec des cadres du Grand Conseil des Cris, la Niskamoon et Hydro-Québec. Ce projet a nécessité au-delà de 150 heures de collaboration. Un deuxième projet de collaboration avec la Niskamoon m’a permis de réaliser un séjour dans trois communautés crie à Mistissini (deux semaines en août 2016), Nemaska (une semaine en novembre 2016) et Waskaganish (une semaine en novembre 2016). Ces séjours devaient me permettre de rencontrer des membres de la communauté et des employés du conseil de bande local afin de comprendre comment les Cris perçoivent et comprennent l’acceptabilité sociale. Ce projet de recherche a pris fin en

2016. Enfin, un troisième projet de collaboration avec la Niskamoon – une extension du précédent projet – m’a permis de réaliser davantage d’observations en 2018. Un mois a été passé entre juillet et août 2018 dans quatre communautés crie : Wemindji, Oujé-Bougoumou, Waswanipi et Eastmain. Au total, ce sont donc sept communautés sur neuf qui ont été visitées dans le cadre de mes observations. Les deux dernières communautés seront visitées en octobre 2018. Puisque le processus de rédaction des deux articles empiriques était déjà avancé, voire complété pour l’article 3, ces données n’ont pas été directement intégrées aux articles, d’autant plus que l’approche historique des articles suggérait une utilisation plus importante de données d’archives, et donc secondaires. Cela dit, ces observations dans les communautés m’ont été bénéfiques en ce qu’elles ont grandement contribué à ma compréhension des réalités quotidiennes de la relation entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie.

Les guides utilisés pour la réalisation des entrevues

Les entrevues réalisées ont été semi-structurées et ouvertes avec les membres de la Nation Crie, d’Hydro-Québec et du Gouvernement du Québec. L’objectif des entrevues était de recueillir le plus grand nombre d’informations quant à la perception des acteurs du déroulement de la première phase du projet (1970-1985), de la controverse autour du projet Grande-Baleine (1986-1994), et du processus de reconstruction des relations (1995-2015). De manière générale, je souhaitais à travers les entrevues semi-structurées comprendre l’évolution des processus entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie, les intentions, attentes, stratégies et résultats des acteurs, ainsi que leurs perspectives sur la situation actuelle et sur l’avenir. Les entrevues ont souvent été malléables en fonction des souvenirs des répondants. Le tableau ci-dessous présente les principaux acteurs et leurs implications dans des épisodes spécifiques. Au début du processus de collecte de données, les entrevues étaient principalement réalisées en français. Par la suite, lorsque j’ai commencé à rencontrer les Crie un peu plus tard dans le processus de recherche, les entrevues ont surtout été faites en anglais. Les questions présentées ci-dessous ont donc été adaptées et traduites en anglais en fonction des répondants.

Grand Conseil des Cris

1. Comment est-ce que les Cris se sont mobilisés et structurés pour contester le projet annoncé par Bourassa en 1970 ?
2. Parlez-moi de vos stratégies pour contester le projet de la Baie-James au début des années 1970s ?
3. Comment avez-vous pu obtenir un gain juridique historique, quels ont été les leviers ?
4. Comment a été négociée la Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord Québécois ?
5. Certaines communautés autochtones en veulent aux Cris pour avoir signé cette convention. Qu'en pensez-vous et pourquoi l'avez-vous signée ?
6. Est-ce que les Cris étaient globalement contents de cette convention ?
7. On entend souvent que la Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord Québécois avait été bafouée par les autorités québécoises et fédérales. Qu'en pensez-vous ? À quoi était-ce dû ?
8. La stratégie médiatique internationale contre Grande-Baleine est historique. Comment s'est dessinée cette stratégie ? Comment vous-êtes-vous organisés ?
9. Certaines nations autochtones caractérisent les Cris de « traitres » pour avoir signé la Paix des Braves. Qu'en pensez-vous ? Aviez-vous d'autres choix ?
10. Quels sont les grands impacts liés au développement sur votre territoire ? Quelles mesures sont prises pour atténuer ces impacts ?
11. Avec du recul, pensez-vous que ce processus de développement depuis les années 1970s a été bénéfique aux Cris ?
12. Certains parlent de perte de traditions et valeurs ancestrales. Qu'en pensez-vous ? Est-ce que c'est un enjeu majeur pour les Cris de cohabiter entre tradition et modernité ?
13. Comment voyez-vous l'avenir de la Nation Crie dans plusieurs décennies ?

Niskamoon

1. Quel est le rôle de la Niskamoon dans la relation entre Hydro-Québec et la Nation Crie ?
2. Quels sont vos axes d'activités ?
3. Comment fonctionne la Niskamoon d'un point de vue de gouvernance ?
4. Quel rôle pensez-vous avoir dans le processus d'acceptabilité sociale du tout dernier projet hydroélectrique ?

5. Quels sont les facteurs qui contribuent à l'acceptabilité sociale d'un projet de développement selon vous ?
6. Quelles sont les perceptions des Cris sur le travail de Niskamoon ?

Hydro-Québec

1. Parlez-moi un peu de votre rôle au sein d'Hydro-Québec. Quelle a été votre implication dans les relations entre Hydro-Québec ?
2. Quelle a été l'attitude d'Hydro-Québec lorsque les Cris ont refusé le projet en 1971 ?
3. Quels avaient été les processus de consultation à l'époque ?
4. Comment se fait-il qu'Hydro-Québec et les Cris se soient encore retrouvés dans une impasse avec l'annonce de la Grande-Baleine ?
5. Comment est-ce qu'Hydro-Québec a géré la crise liée à Grande-Baleine ?
6. Comment est-ce que le processus de reconstruction post-annulation a été géré ? Est-ce qu'il y a des facteurs internes à Hydro-Québec qui ont facilité ce processus ?
7. Quelle était le niveau d'intégration du développement durable et des préoccupations d'acceptabilité sociale tout au long de ce processus ?
8. Que fait Hydro-Québec aujourd'hui pour maintenir de bonnes relations avec les Cris ? Sur quoi repose l'acceptabilité sociale des projets d'Hydro-Québec ?

Conseils de bandes

1. Quels sont les impacts des projets de développement sur votre communauté ?
2. Quelle était la position de votre communauté (leadership et membres) à l'égard de la Paix des Braves ?
3. Pensez-vous qu'il y a aujourd'hui un haut ou faible niveau de satisfaction générale au sein de votre communauté à l'égard d'Hydro-Québec et des projets de développement ?
4. Quels sont les défis pour les Cris pour l'avenir ?
5. Est-ce qu'il y a une différence de discours et de perceptions entre les aînés et la jeunesse ?
6. On entend souvent que la Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord Québécois avait été bafouée par les autorités québécoises et fédérales. Qu'en pensez-vous ? À quoi était-ce dû ?
7. Finalement, qu'est-ce qu'un projet de développement acceptable pour le leadership et pour les membres de votre communauté ?

Membres de la communauté

1. Parlez-moi un peu de votre parcours individuel. Quelle est votre occupation ?
2. Ressentez-vous les impacts des projets de développement sur votre territoire et identité crie ? Comment ?
3. Quel est votre niveau de satisfaction avec les projets de développement sur votre territoire ?
4. Quelle était votre position à l'égard de la Paix des Braves ? Pourquoi ?
5. On voit aujourd'hui que les Cris adoptent un style de vie plus moderne. Comment faites-vous pour concilier cette modernité avec la tradition ?
6. Comment voyez-vous l'avenir de la Nation Crie à long terme ?

Tallymen (responsables du territoire traditionnel)

1. Parlez-moi un peu de votre parcours individuel. Depuis quand êtes-vous tallyman ? Que faites-vous au quotidien ?
2. Quels sont les impacts des projets de développement sur votre territoire traditionnel ?
3. Êtes-vous en mesure de maintenir votre style de vie traditionnel ?
4. Que pensez-vous du travail que Niskamoon fait pour minimiser les impacts des projets de développement hydroélectrique ?
5. Que recommanderiez-vous à la Niskamoon pour améliorer sa façon de travailler avec les tallymen ?
6. Globalement, êtes-vous satisfait de la manière dont les projets de développement se déroulent sur votre territoire ?
7. Qu'est-ce qu'un projet de développement « acceptable » pour vous ?

Chercheurs et experts

1. Quelle a été votre implication dans le cas du projet de la Baie-James et/ou de Grande-Baleine ?
2. Qu'est-ce qui selon vous explique les deux controverses des années 1970s et 1990s ?
3. Quelles ont été les arguments et stratégies mobilisés par les acteurs durant ces controverses ?
4. Quels facteurs ont contribué à la reconstruction des relations qui ont abouti à la Paix des Braves ?

5. On entend souvent que la Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord Québécois avait été bafouée par les autorités québécoises et fédérales. Qu'en pensez-vous ? À quoi était-ce dû ?

Fonctionnaires du gouvernement québécois

Jacques Parizeau (ancien premier ministre québécois)

1. Votre mandat a eu lieu pendant la controverse Grande-Baleine. Que pensiez-vous de ce projet à l'époque ?
2. Certains affirment que la controverse de Grande-Baleine a eu un impact négatif sur votre volonté de faire du Québec un pays. Qu'en pensez-vous ?
3. Pourquoi avez-vous décidé de reporter sine die le projet de Grande-Baleine ?
4. Est-ce que cette décision donnait finalement raison aux Cris ?

Bernard Landry (ancien premier ministre québécois)

1. Comment est-ce que la Paix des Braves a vu le jour ?
2. Quel a été le rôle du leadership dans ces processus de négociations ?
3. Ted Moses était réputé pour être plutôt sage. Est-ce que la Paix des Braves aurait pu voir le jour avec Matthew Coon Come ?
4. Est-ce que la Paix des Braves donne finalement raison aux Cris sur le non-respect des droits autochtones et de la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord Québécois ?

Autres fonctionnaires

1. Pouvez-vous me parler de votre implication en tant que fonctionnaire dans le projet hydroélectrique de la Baie-James ?
2. Qu'est-ce qui selon vous explique les deux controverses des années 1970s et 1990s ?
3. Quelles ont été les arguments et stratégies mobilisés par les acteurs durant ces controverses ?
4. Quels facteurs ont contribué à la reconstruction des relations qui ont abouti à la Paix des Braves ?
5. On entend souvent que la Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord Québécois avait été bafouée par les autorités québécoises et fédérales. Qu'en pensez-vous ? À quoi était-ce dû ?

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¹⁷ Cette liste comprend toutes les archives mentionnées dans l'Annexe méthodologique. Cette liste présente les principales archives utilisées.

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