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**Activist worker's responses to tensions  
in hybrid organizations :  
The case of Solidarity Economy**

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## Communications and publications

Communications	
<i>Juillet 2020</i>	EGOS virtual Colloquium <i>"Hey! What did you expect?"</i> - The impact of job satisfaction and workers' social engagement on satisfaction regarding CSR and whistleblowing intentions
<i>Décembre 2019</i>	Journal of Business Ethics Publishing Workshop <i>"It's a Bible!"</i> - Framing activist workers' identity tensions with organizational CSR standards
<i>Juillet 2019</i>	EGOS Colloquium (Edimbourg) <i>"It's a Bible!"</i> – Unexpected use, misuse and non-use of CSR standards.
<i>Février 2019</i>	King's Business School conference "Promises on sustainability" (Londres) <i>"The importance of being earnest"</i> Framing identity tensions among internal activist with organizational CSR standards
<i>Juillet 2018</i>	EGOS Colloquium (Tallinn) <i>"It's a Bible!"</i> – Unexpected use, misuse and non-use of CSR standards.
<i>Octobre 2017</i>	Présentation au séminaire du LaRGE <i>"Sometimes I wish I didn't care"</i> . Identity work of the responsible worker
<i>Juillet 2017</i>	EGOS Colloquium (Copenhague) <i>"Sometimes I wish I didn't care"</i> . Identity work of the responsible worker
<i>Mars 2017</i>	6 <sup>th</sup> Critical Management Studies Workshop (IAE Paris Créteil) <i>"Sometimes I wish I didn't care"</i> . Identity work of the responsible worker
Publications	
<i>En cours de soumission</i>	En co-écriture avec Hélène Rainelli-Weiss <i>"Sometimes I wish I didn't care..."</i> Constructing paradoxes and dilemmas as a response to occupational tensions among hybrid organization workers



# Introduction



## Overview

### The activist worker

*"We have to do what we can do. I do what I can, hummingbird, dedicate to Pierre Rabhi, do what you can do. Do even your best, so that we are irreproachable. We can't have guilt, we did our best. Even if it's not enough...we did our best."* (Ben, 2017, Interview for Chapter I)

The excerpt from the interview given by this young organic farmer in the context of this research work is a powerful illustration of the demanding quest of a growing number of workers. The exponential multiplication in recent decades of "bullshit jobs", those jobs that contribute nothing to society, sometimes severely questions our contemporaries (Graeber, 2019). Lack of meaning, as well as conflicts of values, figure prominently among the factors favoring burnout, this new "evil of the century" that lastingly ravages the lives of certain individuals (Zawiedja, 2017).

In response, and sometimes at the price of economic and social sacrifices, an increasing number of individuals seek to make their work a source of meaning, of self-definition, and to find the opportunity to "make a difference". The idea of discovering "a calling" and responding to a particular mission, often linked to the pursuit of an aesthetic, artistic or scientific ideal, for example, is now valued, relayed by the popular media (Cardador and Caza, 2012; Dik and Duffy, 2012). However, particularly as awareness and knowledge about environmental and social issues grow, it is what can be described as "social idealism" that especially influences the career choices of many individuals. In response to the scale of current societal challenges, a proportion of workers are orienting their career choices towards a job that is at least neutral, but even better, that can have a positive impact and constitute a vector for change or social added value.

This search for alignment with personal values is particularly present among "Generation Y", or "Millennials", (i.e., individuals born between 1981 and 2000 (Ozcelik, 2015)), who today represent on

average about half of the active population in Western countries. Among generational differences (Eisner, 2005), in general, these individuals place a lot of importance on the meaning found in work (Gong *et al.*, 2018) and, more specifically, on belonging to organizations that have a positive impact on society (Weber, 2019). At work, as well as in their consumption, this generation is more in search of social responsibility. As a result, socially responsible companies appear to be particularly attractive to this population (Alonso-Almeida & Llach, 2019; Klimkiewicz & Oltra, 2017).

An extreme case of this type of attitude towards work is provided by individuals who choose work with the objective of being able to live a militant orientation. In this thesis, we will call the individuals involved in this process "activist workers". With reference to Corning and Meyers (2002), we define them as individuals who have expressly chosen work that responds to personal need to pursue collective interests, by addressing social and environmental issues affecting the collective, in order to produce some changes and preventing other ones.

The same authors define activist orientation as "*an individual's developed, relatively stable, yet changeable orientation to engage in various collective, social-political, problem-solving behaviors spanning a range from low-risk, passive, and institutionalized acts to high-risk, active, and unconventional behaviors.*" Because of the stability of this orientation, the authors point out that it would tend to persist over long periods of time, up to decades, although some external influences would increase the propensity to act (e.g., intergenerational effects, early activist experiences, new social environment), whereas some would reduce it (especially having children). With a constant and assertive activist orientation, it seems clear that these activist workers adopt particular behaviors in their work settings, opening up a field of study in organization studies. Activism in the workplace has thus often been approached under the more general term of "idealism" by researchers in this field, who have until now mostly been interested in the dynamics created by the cohabitation of this particular type of profile with other workers. The "idealist" worker, as opposed to the "pragmatic" (Ashforth and Reingen, 2014), or the "capitalist", "pluralist" or "indifferent" (Besharov, 2014) are characterized by the fact that they place social values above financial profitability, and their main consideration is the social mission of the organization.

## Tensions induced by militancy at work and organizational consequences

Still some of the dynamics created by workplace activism remain poorly understood. It has been shown that the pursuit of a higher purpose and meaning found at work would have undeniable positive consequences, promoting, among other things, well-being and satisfaction in life, job satisfaction, career and organizational commitment. It would also promote organizational identification, defined as *"a perceived oneness with an organization and the experience of the organization's successes and failures as one's own"* (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). The organizational benefits would be multiple (Wzesniewski *et al.*, 1997; Cardador & Caza, 2012; Elangovan *et al.*, 2010; Duffy and Dik, 2013; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). However, workplace activism carries the seeds of a number of difficulties. Activist workers react in a singular way. Among the four categories of members studied by Besharov (2014), for example, she observes that "idealists" are the only ones who cannot be converted to another identity, even a pluralist one. Because of this inflexibility, some have to give up managerial responsibilities or leave the organization. They would also be the only ones likely to experience the "violation of their identity", that is, to interpret the behavior of other members as a transgression of their values. The ideological breach would also act as a violation of the "psychological contract" concluded with the organization (Rousseau, 1989), a tacit contract based on expectations about what the individual and the organization are, but nevertheless defining reciprocal obligations (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). Among these workers, there is thus an increased risk of disillusion and dis-identification (rejection of the organizational identity) and their organizational consequences (e.g.: intention to leave the firm, reduced efforts) (Besharov, 2014).

The pursuit of a higher goal and a pro-social mission confers to the activist population many of the characteristics of "calling", which are recognized as potentially weakening for the individual. According to Schabram and Maitlis (2016) who studied the evolution of workers with a pro-social mission in animal shelters, responding to a calling would involve a process of overcoming difficulties that is intense and substantial because *"a vocation involves work that is rooted in people's values and that matters a great deal to the individual"* (Schabram and Maitlis, 2016). Over time, these individuals would adopt divergent paths, characterized by more or less noxious consequences. These workers would be more affected by overwork, burnout, work addiction, and difficulties in maintaining a



balance with private life and sacrifices (Cardador and Caza, 2012; Duffy and Dik, 2012, 2013). Bunderson and Thompson's (2009) study of zoo keepers also showed that vocationally-oriented workers were more prone to exploitation by the organization, which did not consider it useful, for instance, to give them the same financial compensation.

These authors also point out the major risk of "over-identification" at work. This describes "*an individual who may internalize the organization's goals to such an extent that the individual self is diminished and he/she becomes blind to other concerns and accordingly engages in a course of action that may ultimately undermine the true long term interests of the organization*" (Galvin, Lange and Ashforth, 2015). Thus, the search for work that has a deep meaning for the worker can obviously also have a negative impact on the organization: these individuals would be subject to "myopia" or narrowness of vision in the decision-making process, lack of flexibility, and a relentless pursuit of higher standards (Cardador and Caza, 2012; Duffy and Dik, 2012, 2013). As a result, some organizations would prefer less clear-cut profiles, and recruit, for example, workers who have not yet developed this pro-social orientation and who are easier to model according to the organization's logic (Battilana and Dorado, 2010).

### Hybrid organizations, refuge of the activist worker?

Activist workers naturally tend to turn to organizations that share their personal social mission, where they hope to find an echo of their values. Thus, the research projects that these "idealistic" workers are the subject of are often conducted in the context of organizations that pursue a social or environmental mission while engaging in market activities to support their operations. Having emerged in previous decades in the for-profit sector in order to provide a response to social and environmental issues, they have been described as "hybrid organizations" because of the duality of their identities, logics, resources, or modes of governance.

In their extended definitions, hybrid organizations are those that integrate distinct institutional logics (Sirris, 2019; Battilana *et al.*, 2015; Battilana 2018), divergent objectives (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014;

Smith & Besharov, 2019), organizational forms (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Padgett & Powell, 2012), resources and multiple organizational identities (Besharov, 2014). Thus, a hospital or an orchestra in which two major logics coexist can be considered as hybrid organizations: they have thus existed for centuries. In this thesis, however, we will reduce our field of research to organizations committed to creating a positive environmental or social impact through the pursuit of commercial activities (e.g. Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Battilana *et al.*, 2015; Hoffman, Gullo, & Haigh, 2012; Pache & Santos, 2013) in which individuals with pro-social orientations have previously often been studied. The term "social enterprise" has emerged since the 1980s / 1990s to refer in popular parlance to these organizations operating in a wide variety of sectors (e.g. rehabilitation enterprises, microfinance, food sector, software development). (Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey, 2011; Battilana, 2018) These organizations are also sometimes referred to in the literature as "alternatives", which can be loosely described as any organization or organizational practice that challenges dominant field level norms around business and capitalism (Parker, Cheney, Fournier, & Land, 2014).

In the absence of economically viable organizations that are fully in line with their vocation, hybrid organizations should *a priori* provide activist workers with a framework for a satisfactory alignment of their profession with their personal values. However, the contradictory logics at work in these hybrid organizations can create a sense of paradox in the individual, forcing him or her to deal with persistent contradictions. This individual level of tension management has so far been neglected by the literature on hybrid organizations, having favored the organizational level in understanding responses to the duality of missions (Deville & Mourey, 2018; Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Battilana, 2018). Authors in "Paradox studies" who have further initiated the exploration of this field at the individual level in other research contexts confirm for their part that contradictions can create significant tensions at the individual level among members of an organization (Miron-Spektor, 2018; Zheng *et al.*, 2018), namely "*stress, anxiety, discomfort, or tightness in making choices, responding to, and moving forward in organizational situations*" (Putnam *et al.*, 2016, p. 68).

However, Miron-Spektor (2018) demonstrates that the individual's ability to manage these tensions linked to contradictions would depend on his or her mental structuring: being endowed with a "paradox mindset" (vs. dilemma mindset), (i.e. being able to accept and be stimulated by the tensions),

allows some individuals to be more efficient and innovative. Zheng *et al.* (2018) uses this same paradox theoretical framework to study women managers who experience the tensions between agency, seen as a masculine trait, and communion, considered as a feminine injunction. She suggests that the intensity with which these women experience these tensions, for example, and the psychological resilience they demonstrate depends in part on the level of congruence required: they would thus be more or less able to withstand contradictions. However, it can be assumed that the worker who deliberately chooses a job in the hope of finding alignment with the values he or she holds dear is inclined to experience contradictions with a certain intensity, and is reluctant to accept this "paradox" state of mind. We can therefore ask ourselves how these individuals, demonstrating through their career choices a certain aversion to paradox, individually respond to the divergent logics at work in hybrid organizations that potentially represent the best compromise with regard to their activist orientation.

The literature suggests that an individual's ability to deal at the individual level with conflicting logics would also depend on the organizational context. Miron-Spektor (2018) pointed to resource scarcity as a factor that accentuates tensions, while Zheng *et al.* (2018) brought to light the importance of an organizational learning orientation in adopting a mindset that allows for the acceptance of contradictions. Thus, in addition to the individual's own characteristics that seems to determine his or her level of psychological resilience in the face of divergent logics, certain organizational factors could amplify or, on the contrary, reduce the experience of tensions and the responses adopted. The integration of this particular category of workers is therefore a subject for Organization Studies, since the organizational context could have a significant impact on the tensions experienced, and on the ultimate matching of the organization and its members.

Some research studies seem to lead to the observation that the tensions experienced by activist workers on the one hand and hybrid organizations on the other hand do not necessarily lead to the worst. Workers with an authentic, stable and confirmed militant orientation manage to flourish in organizations that ensure the duality of their mission (Besharov, 2014), and to overcome the challenge of responding to a calling (Schabram & Maitlis, 2016). Better still, the presence of these "idealistic" individuals could prove to be an asset for hybrid organizations, arguing for the mix in the profile of

recruits (Besharov, 2014; Battilana & Dorado, 2010). In particular, Ashforth and Reingen (2014) have highlighted some of the beneficial dynamics at work related to the presence of activists: inter-group conflicts between "idealists" and "pragmatists" and the rituals to repairing and maintaining the relationship would ultimately promote the smooth functioning of the organization. One group would project on the other what it does not want to be, while it needs the other to play this role for the viability of the organization.

## Research context: the case of the solidarity economy

In this study, we linked the concept of hybrid organizations with the concept of the French "solidarity economy" (Laville, 2014; Laville, Hillenkamp, Eynaud, Coraggio, Ferrarini, Gaiger & Wanderley, 2016). We have sufficient literature on this sector in France, allowing us to identify the potential tensions at work. Indeed, the solidarity economy presents, due to its hybridity, a large number of characteristics, making it a field that is both favorable to tensions, while generating great expectations among those who join it in the hope of bringing values and work into harmony. It is therefore a particularly favorable context for studying the responses of activist workers to tensions. After defining this research field more precisely and demonstrating the multiplicity of tensions inherent in the duality of the mission, we will show the relevance of this choice for our empirical studies.

## Definition of solidarity economy

Looking at the literature, it is difficult to find a universal definition of the solidarity economy, "*because the solidarity economy shows a multiplicity of practices rather than a unified theory*" (self-translation) (Allard & Matthei, 2008). According to Bernard Eme and Jean-Louis Laville (2006), the solidarity economy can be approached as "*the set of economic activities subject to the will to act democratically, where social relations of solidarity take precedence over individual interest or material profit*" (self-translation).

The history of the solidarity economy in France is rooted in the philosophies of past centuries, but really took shape with the emergence and then domination of the capitalist economic model. The development of this economy is linked to changes in order to defend ethics in the face of the challenges of our society: from the Christian utopians to the workers' movements, from the self-sufficient communities of the 1970s to today's hyper-connected anti-globalization movements, this economy finds its living strength in the debates that are constantly renewed and fueled by history.

The solidarity economy is a subset of the social and solidarity-based economy (SSE) which brings together private or public organizations (companies, cooperatives, associations, mutual societies or foundations), seeking to reconcile economic activity and social utility. This solidarity economy aims to be useful from an economic, social, ecological and political point of view. It is much more than a reparation economy, to which it has often been confined, but has on the contrary a proactive role: resisting the commodification of life and bringing about economic activities with a human purpose, promoting the advent of another world, new ways of living, working and producing wealth without exploiting or excluding, and without destroying the planet.

The difficulty in defining the solidarity economy stems in part from the diversity of initiatives grouped under this vague term with imprecise boundaries: for instance, solidarity finance, AMAP, peasant agriculture, organic produce purchasing cooperatives, fair trade, free software, popular education or renewable energies. However, if we examine solidarity economy, we see three characteristics that set it apart (Laville, 2014). First, the objective is to question the ideology of progress that is inseparable from the patriarchal society that produces social inequalities. Second, the initiatives have a political goal. This translates into impacts on the internal functioning: democratic governance, formal equality between members in the statutes and deliberative practices whose participants come from different groups (employees, users, producers, consortiums, elected officials...). Finally, this political dimension modifies the economic model: hybridization of resources, recourse to reciprocity and redistribution. These characteristics derive from two individual principles of action structuring the solidarity economy: reciprocity replaces individual interest and selfish calculation and emanates from the will of the individuals to freely involve themselves on an equal basis in relations with groups or individuals. The second normative principle is to act democratically. The political dimension of the solidarity

economy is based on reciprocity and the construction of public spaces that allow for debate between stakeholders on social demands and the objectives pursued (Eme and Laville, 2006).

### A hybridity generating paradoxes and individual tensions

According to Torres and Hersent (2014) *"The solidarity economy is intended to be a project of social transformation limiting social and territorial inequalities and allowing people to flourish in the workplace. By relying on collective energies and strengthening people's capacity for action, it also provides answers that encourage the emancipation and empowerment of the various actors involved in the initiative"* (self-translation).

We see in this definition the importance of the expectations that workers joining solidarity economy organizations may have: transformation of society, capacity for action, fulfillment in work or emancipation. The "solidary" aspect of those organizations gives them responsibilities and characteristics in the eyes of the stakeholders, which may contradict other injunctions and which tend to become over time more burdensome.

### The ambiguity of ideological positioning

In France, the solidarity economy carries the weight of an important cultural heritage: the critical function. It was born in the post-68 counter-culture movements: self-management culture, rural community, anti-militarist struggles, ecology, feminism, local development, etc. Among the militant initiatives of the time, some asserted their economic dimension while articulating it with a will for social transformation. The initiatives of this period are called "alternative economy". Although they often failed in their most radical form, they left their mark on the collective imagination, but also on the culture of the solidarity economy. Historically, this economy does not have a repairing but a critical function.

Far from the vision of the liberal economist Milton Friedman according to which the only social responsibility of the company is to make profit (2007), the commercial organizations we are particularly interested in are at odds with this idea, and mix multiple and sometimes antagonistic logics of action: to be part of the commercial world while defending a world free from commodification.

Being part of the commercial world often goes hand in hand with an activity heavy with mundane, repetitive tasks, difficult working conditions, and the need to keep an eye on purely quantitative indicators. A job in a restaurant or in the food trade, even if it is part of a "solidarity" project, is still associated with the notion of "labor" for the person who carries it out. Endrissat (2015) at the end of her study on workers in American organic supermarkets thus admitted the possibility of an authentic and sincere approach to creating an "enchanted" workplace as the very object of the organization, while summarizing the paradoxical nature of this situation: can one attempt to overcome an alienated workplace by selling non-alienation? And to what extent can one free oneself from the capitalist model in a mercantile enterprise? The mercantile dimension, by inscribing itself in contradiction with the ideological positioning of the sector, can favor the feeling of incoherence among the worker. The ancestral cultures of trade can also enter in contradiction with the culture of the solidarity economy. In the great diversity of the organizations that make up the solidarity economy, we find cultures that are historically deeply rooted in a patriarchal model, such as that of the catering industry, which is highly hierarchical and values the preponderance of the profession over private life, or that of the farming world, where land ownership is important. These cultures imply logics, identities that can create a sense of paradox for the militant worker.

Democracy is also an ambitious project that has been the subject of much criticism. The "degenerations" observed, for example in SCOPs, often show how difficult it is to think about managerial functions in such firms, where they are contested but remain central (Gand & Béjean 2013; Pasquet & Liartet, 2012). The ambition to act democratically can also contradict modes of governance and entrenched social mechanisms, creating tensions at the individual level.

# Hybridization of resources

Solidarity initiatives reinvent hybrid models to combine different market resources (price paid by users or customers), non-market resources (public funding due to the social utility of the activity) and non-monetary resources (voluntary contribution according to the principle of reciprocity by the different stakeholders). In addition to this, there is also special financing such as solidarity financing. According to Laville (1997), the sustainability of organizations depends on this hybridization. The hybridization of resources is a guarantee of security (in the event of a defaulting partner). It also protects the company's ethical project, since it avoids orientation in the interest of a particular partner. However, the hybridization of resources multiplies the stakeholders and functions of the company. Individuals therefore have several, possibly contradictory roles to fulfill (e.g. as partner and employee, manager) and various stakeholders to satisfy (e.g. partners, employees, consumers, producers). The organization wants to innovate through its democratic model, which opposes resistance to the reproduction of internalized patterns. This context favors individual tensions.

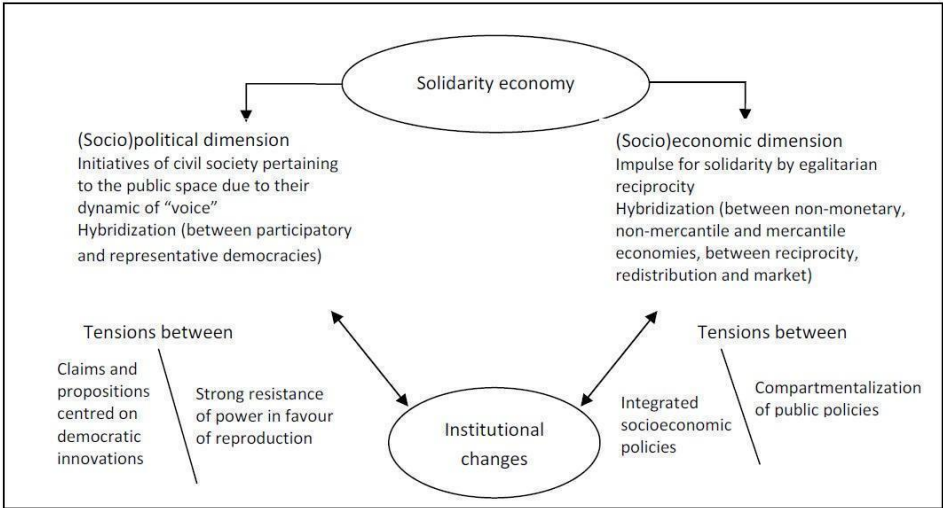


Figure 1: The two dimensions of solidarity economy (Laville, 2010)



## The absence of a legal framework and the need to legitimize one's belonging: solidarity economy versus social economy

The notion of belonging to the social economy is not very problematic, as it is clearly defined by the legal status of organizations (associations, mutual societies, cooperatives, foundations), without even a social or environmental objective being necessary. By contrast, the legal status is still failing to prove membership in the solidarity economy despite the attempts of the legislator (the creation of the ESUS<sup>1</sup> accreditation framing the solidarity character of organizations). As a result, this membership is not defined, but is questioned every day by the acts of the organization and its members. The identity of solidarity economy worker is thus never permanently acquired and obliges the individual to be permanently vigilant regarding the organizational project, maintaining this state of tension.

### Increased tensions

#### Extended solidarity

The tensions related to the solidarity character of the organization are accentuated by the fact that this solidarity character today covers an important and complex reality. If solidarity developed as a secular alternative to the charity of religious congregations or the politicized philanthropy of the most powerful, it was at the time more a "class" solidarity and had a very local dimension: one thinks for example of Godin's phalansteries. Today this solidarity raises new questions, since it is no longer a question of thinking only of the interests of one's social class or fellow citizens, but of all living and unborn humans. It is, however, this definition of solidarity in the broadest sense that underpins the solidarity economy and makes its project more ambitious than ever.

#### Economic difficulties

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<sup>1</sup> *Entreprise Solidaire d'Utilité Sociale*

Certainly, there is an appeal to the general public to which the solidarity economy responds for what is called "socially responsible consumption". However, this should not make us forget the economic difficulties faced by these hybrid organizations in particular, especially in comparison with those responding to consumer demand without necessarily sharing the same political project. Today, it is becoming rare to find a company that does not communicate on its "social and environmental responsibility". It is therefore very difficult for these organizations, sometimes born decades before we talk about CSR, to stand out for the sincerity of their approach in the eyes of "responsible consumers" who are new to the subject.

The SSE law of 2014 has certainly created the ESUS status allowing them to benefit from specific aid and funding, but solidarity economy organizations remain subject to the same obligations as "classic" companies regarding taxation, standards, or labor costs. They are confronted with the same economic constraints inherent to these projects. It is difficult to value the ethical surplus of the organization, which nevertheless weighs in terms of financial costs. Positive externalities are difficult to measure and only partially compensated. Because of the "sub-additivity of preferences", the propensity to pay for the community or for others is quickly saturated. For example, a consumer will be willing to pay a surplus for an organic product, but will not be willing to pay again to the same extent for its fair trade aspect (Cochoy, 2008). As a result, an organization's willingness to multiply the constraints in order to achieve the most ethical offer possible will not be valued to the same extent on the market.

Moreover, the ambition of many organizations in this solidarity economy is to propose an accessible offer, whereas the surplus of "ethical" values often has a cost. Hence, these organizations have the alternative of reducing the cost of its actions (by reducing the quality of its services, salaries and management costs), or of making the demand solvent while educating the consumer (Boncler, 2004). The worker therefore often bears part of the cost of the ethical added-value, limiting his or her salary without necessarily having any hope of progress. This contradicts the claims of the solidarity economy to want to remunerate its actors fairly.

Solidarity economy goals	Potential contradictions
Solidarity, fair treatment of workers, balance with private life	Low wages, hard working conditions (increasing)
Meaningfulness at work	“Labor” aspect of mundane jobs
Anti-capitalism, de-growth philosophy	For-profit and trading activity
Alternative to traditional scheme of domination and property	Anchored professional identity
Alternative governance, democracy, resources hybridity	Multiple role demands (partner, employees, managers, colleagues)
Democratization of responsible consumption. Extended ethical added-value	Cost saving weighting on workers

Table 1: Potential tensions in solidarity economy

**Conclusion: the special interest of the solidarity economy as a field of research**

Solidarity economy therefore has the desirable characteristics for a research field. At the crossroads of consumption, work, savings and citizenship, the solidarity economy is not only a place of political expression for individuals wishing to defend their ethical commitments, but also to flourish at work. The importance of expectations combined with the tensions inherent in the field make the activist worker of the solidarity economy an "extreme case" of managing paradox: the worker has a hypersensitivity to contradictions, and will be plunged into a universe that favors them. Extreme cases are desirable for constructing a theory because the dynamics are more visible (Eisenhardt, 1989).

This population of militant workers also presents widespread characteristics: family responsibilities, socialization in a common environment, professional experiences in traditional organizations. These common traits give our results a more generalizable character than would be the case with more

atypical profiles (in humanitarian work, religious congregations or alternative communities living in autarky).

## Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured around three essays.

### **Chapter I: "*Sometimes I wish I didn't care...*" - Constructing paradoxes and dilemmas as a response to occupational tensions among hybrid organization workers**

In this essay, we are interested in the responses that the individual brings at the individual level to identity tensions by creating meaning through narrative. While the challenges presented by hybrid organizations have been studied at the organizational level, we offer an overview of how individuals in these organizations interpret the tensions they face in their work.

In this chapter, we answer the following two research questions: What are the interpretations employees resort to when confronting the tensions created by the complex nature of hybrid organizations? To what extent do these interpretations reflect the paradox versus dilemma mindsets of their authors?

For this, we propose a structural analysis of the life story (Demazière & Dubar, 1997) of twelve workers in the market solidarity economy. We conduct twelve in-depth interviews with members of French hybrid organizations in order to document how they justify the tensions they experience in their working lives.

Referring to the literature on paradox (Miron-Spektor *et al.*, 2018), we show that members of these organizations show a strong sensitivity to what they perceive as a dilemma between their personal pro-social values and the values carried by capitalist type organizations. We document the personal professional tensions they experience in addition to those generated by the hybrid character of the organization they work for.

Moreover, individuals facing similar tensions either resort to a mindset in which they accept these tensions inherent to their profession (paradox mindset) or to a mindset in which they perceive the tensions as having to be eliminated (dilemma mindset). Three narrative patterns stand out within this dilemma mindset, corresponding to particular personal and organizational risks.

We contribute to the literature on hybrid organization by observing considerable interpretative variation in the way challenges are experienced at the individual level. We contribute to the literature on paradox by providing precise descriptions of the ways of thinking about paradox and dilemma that workers in hybrid organizations can exploit to deal with pervasive workplace tensions and by highlighting the dynamic dimensions of these ways of thinking.

## **Chapter II: "*It's a Bible!*" - Alleviating activist workers' identity tensions with organizational CSR standards**

In this study of the activist worker's responses to tensions, we explore the worker's interaction with organizational practices in this process. The previous chapter suggested the possibility for hybrid organizations to relieve the activist worker in the management of tensions. In this second chapter, we propose to explore this line of research through a sociological approach to management tools (Chiapello & Gilbert, 2013). The Critical Management Studies (CMS) have above all demonstrated the potential exploitation of the individual by Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices and its instrumental dimension (Costas & Kärreman, 2013; Banerjee, 2008). The objective of this empirical study is to understand the process of adaptation of worker activists to CSR standards that may generate individual tensions due to their inadequacy or contradictions with the worker's expectations regarding the ethics of the organization. As critical scholars have also highlighted the potential alienation of these ideal-seeking workers' personal identity (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Schabram & Maitlis, 2017), particularly in hybrid organizations (Kenny, 2010; Endrissat, 2015), we wonder about the impact of these tools on this issue.

We therefore attempt to answer the following research question: for the particular category of activist workers, what role do CSR standards play in managing the tensions created by the nature of hybrid organizations?

To this end, we interview twenty-seven individuals combining activism and work in a cooperative network of organic stores, Orgacoop (a pseudonym). This meta-organization has a hybrid identity (an original hybrid activist and a commercial identity) and frames the activity of independent retailers through specifications (a set of standards) detailing CSR imperatives.

Putting us in dialogue with the CMS, the main contribution is to show the cultural-symbolic dimension of these specifications, a management tool that is omnipresent and central, but that almost nobody really knows. This tool seems important by its mere existence rather than by its content. Workers use these CSR standards as a resource to outsource the management of identity tensions to the organization, due to a strong organizational identification. These standards protect workers from over-questioning and over-involvement, and help them manage ambiguity and paradoxes.

Echoing a Foucauldian approach (Foucault, 1984), we oppose two dynamics. As subjects of the standards (acting *using* the standards), workers show a deep trust in the standard-makers, stemming from an imagery about the expertise and ethics of the organization. Based on what appears to be an organizational myth, they blindly use this management tool as a resource to frame hyper-consciousness and hyper-knowledge creating endless internal conflicts. As the objects of these standards (regarding the internal social standards governing how the worker is used as a resource by the organization), workers tend to adopt a more critical or cynical stance. As a result, dissatisfied workers use these standards as a resource in a salutary struggle, to limit their propensity to sacrifice themselves for a higher goal. These results invite hybrid organizations to a participatory work of creation and adaptation of these standards, and to a particular attention paid to working conditions.

### **Chapter III: *"Hey! What did you expect?"* - The impact of job satisfaction and workers' social engagement on satisfaction regarding CSR and whistleblowing intentions**

In this last essay, we continue our exploration of the activist worker's responses to the tensions related to the hybrid nature of organizations by identifying, using a quantitative approach, the different individual and organizational variables impacting workers' cognitive, emotional and conative responses.

Intrigued by the recurrent discourse heard in the previous project (Chapter II) that some stores preferred not to recruit candidates with an activist profile because they would be more inclined to be dissatisfied with CSR and quick to react, we wanted to scientifically verify whether this strategy was justified: does activist engagement in private life make people more critical of the organization's practices, less satisfied and likely to create conflicts in this case? More broadly, is idealism more problematic or valuable (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014) for an organization? How does this affect struggles and conflicts?

This study will seek to answer the following research question: What is the impact of personal social engagement on satisfaction regarding CSR and whistleblowing intentions?

Drawing mainly on Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1974), we propose to empirically test the impact of personal social engagement on satisfaction regarding CSR and whistleblowing intentions in case of dissatisfaction with CSR practices. The 155 responses to a survey conducted among Orgacoop network employees made it possible to measure personal social commitment (through responsible consumption and activist orientation), satisfaction with Orgacoop's CSR practices, job satisfaction, organizational involvement and intentions to "blow the whistle" internally (staff representative, head office, etc.) or externally (word of mouth, denunciation in the media or social networks) in the event of ethical conflict. We use a Partial Least Square (PLS) approach to data processing.

In this study, we demonstrate that, contrary to the initial hypothesis, personal activist engagement is partially linked to greater satisfaction with CSR practices. On the other hand, it does promote alert

intentions in the event of a perceived ethical conflict. However, the impact of this variable is negligible in relation to job satisfaction. The perception of good working conditions and meaningfulness found at work favor internal means of recourse to raise the alarm, and reduce resort to means of resistance that are more harmful to the organization, such as word-of-mouth or public denunciation. Organizational involvement can also counterbalance the impact of activist orientation on external whistleblowing intentions.

These results help rethink the priority of CSR programs, showing the greater importance of job satisfaction, and relativizing the danger that employee activist engagement can represent for the organization, especially considering the other benefits that this type of employee brings to hybrid organizations in terms of legitimacy and reputation with other stakeholders. We invite one to consider militant workers as detectors of ethical drifts, guarantors of the organization's integrity. We identify several factors likely to promote internal whistle-blowing intentions and to reduce external ones: job satisfaction, organizational commitment but also representative functions or participative governance. Although we may doubt that activist orientation can be managed at work, these factors can easily be subject to management practices.

<b>Chapter and short titles</b>	<b>Chapter 1 :</b> Paradox vs. dilemma mindset narratives	<b>Chapter 2 :</b> Matching process with CSR standards	<b>Chapter 3:</b> Impact of personal social engagement
<b>Common thread</b>	Responses to identity tensions among activist workers in hybrid organizations		
<b>Theoretical background</b>	Paradox	Foucauldian approach of management tools	Social identity theory
<b>Methodology</b>	Life-story telling Structural analysis	Semi-structured interviews. Grounded theory	Survey PLS approach

Table 2: Structure of the thesis



## Epistemological posture

This doctoral work forces us to question the posture of the doctoral student as a producer of knowledge. An honest and reflexive questioning on the possible biases linked to the relationship with the field and the choice of research methods is necessary. This thesis also presents a critical aspect that invites us to question the doctoral student's own conception of the researcher's role in society. Consequently, in that section, I will switch from "we" to "I". Rather than a theoretical presentation on epistemological postures, I will first and foremost share my reflections on my posture as a researcher, which have obviously shaped the work I am presenting today.

## Relationship with the field

In 2009, I obtained a Master Entrepreneur degree that I followed with the objective of creating an organic/fair trade grocery/tea store. In this sense, I started to get closer to the responsible consumption network of Lille, as a client, as a potential entrepreneur, then as a worker. My first permanent job, part-time in parallel with my studies, was in L'Épicerie équitable, a store selling fair trade products, mostly organic or in short supply chains. Despite the rather difficult working conditions, I found this job very fulfilling. The counter and its €1 coffee in a popular market attracted a very mixed clientele. Having later become a manager and partner of this company, the co-managers gave me their trust to develop the grocery store and adapt to the environment.

After the birth of my daughter, I became involved without careful consideration in a catering SCOP, a "canteen-bar-café" in a co-working space in Lille. This work, although not an easy and pleasant experience pushed me to ask myself this question: what makes a hybrid company work or not, not only economically, but also humanly? I saw so much diversity around me in the experience of the workers, from enthusiasm to exhaustion, often revealing the atmosphere prevailing in the organization that I wanted to understand what was going on, behind the enthusiastic articles in the press and the smile that you can't get rid of as an entrepreneur. I had the will to grasp what was

happening behind the apparent cohesion of the teams around a project bigger than themselves, bigger even than the organization.

When I resumed my studies in 2016 in Strasbourg, it was this questioning that shaped the subject of my first research paper, and then of this doctoral work. I naturally turned to the Solidarity Economy, a field where I felt particularly capable of collecting data. Even though I gave up my work in commerce, I kept an active membership at the Nef<sup>2</sup>, where I regularly meet project leaders with a strong social and/or environmental dimension. This familiarity with the issues of Social and Solidarity Economy (SEE) trade organizations has enabled me to create a relationship of trust with the research field. Moreover, my experience of working in the trade allows me to have the vocabulary specific to the world of store work or organic farming, for example, and to collect data that I think is rare in its spontaneity and authenticity. Finally, my status as a young woman and a mother has also sometimes created a climate of trust conducive to the expression of more subjects of tensions.

Being a former SSE worker and an active member in Nef, as well as the contacts I have been able to maintain in this network have provided me with my first point of entry. I would probably have had difficulty getting interviews without this prior experience. The solidarity economy environment attracts a diversity of profiles, and individuals with very variable socio-cultural capital. Some are very open to the academic world, sometimes impressed by the status of researcher, while others show a certain mistrust of this milieu that does not properly "work" as they perceive it. It is also a field where there is a lot to be done, and a lot of struggles to be overcome. Time already tends to be short, leaving little time to talk and receive researchers. Moreover, the subject of tensions meant that delicate or disturbing subjects had to be addressed, and I also observed the extreme sensitivity of the quality of the data to the conditions of the interviews, especially in the workplace: some stories sometimes took a different turn because someone closed the office door as they passed by. The data collection was therefore still a great challenge and required a great deal of tenacity.

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<sup>2</sup> *La Nef is a solidarity-based finance cooperative with headquarters in Vaulx-en-Velin (Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes). It only finances ecological projects and social and solidarity economy projects in the broadest sense.*

This proximity and experience in the research field, while it has made it possible to carry out this doctoral work, raises the question of bias, and of the limit between intuition of what can be, or demonstration of what one thinks one knows. One guideline that guided me during this research was to tell myself that if I already had the answer to the question I was asking, it could not be a good research question. This objective and the awareness of the bias related to the proximity of the field also influenced my methodological choices.

The first two research projects are part of an interpretivist paradigm (Gioia & Pitre, 1990): I seek to describe and explain in order to understand, and I consider reality as a social construction.

The first project of this doctoral work (Chapter I) uses the life story-telling method. This approach will also be partly used for the second project (Chapter II). In the social sciences, *"the life story is the result of a particular form of interview, the narrative interview, during which a researcher (...) asks a person, hereinafter referred to as the 'subject', to tell him or her all or part of his or her lived experience"* (self-translation). Bertaux's (1997) realistic position, which will be mine, considers that the story, really and subjectively lived, can be apprehended through the life story. We construct from several narratives, the interest is not autobiographical: the aim is hardly to understand a person "in depth", but to extract from the experiences of those who have lived in a social world information and descriptions that, once analyzed and assembled, will help to understand its functioning and internal dynamics.

In this approach, a first bias lies in the context of relational interaction: the narrator tends to say what the researcher expects of him or her. A second bias lies in the researcher's interpretation of the data. However, this method, if the contract and the methodology are respected, limits the bias: the respondent talks about what is important to him or her and what he or she agrees to talk about. The main risk for me was the illustrative posture. This implies that the narrators are only there to illustrate something that the researcher wants to prove, having already theories that pre-exist the empirical investigation. A selective use of research interviews and excerpts would serve to reinforce the analysis, to exemplify. The collection would be based on an implicit questionnaire, an existing interview grid "watermarked" by the discussion.

In order to avoid this risk, we have chosen to use structural analysis (Demazière and Dubar, 1997). According to this approach, the narrative illustrates the structure of the narrator's "world and social logics", that is to say the meaning of his or her social environment. The foundation of structural analysis is based on the idea that "meaning" can be captured by the relations of opposition and association implemented by the narrative. This analysis involves decomposing and then recomposing the narrative to derive a specific narrative schema that can then be used for a comparative analysis between the different schemas, with the aim of aggregating and typologizing them. This methodology, although laborious and demanding in terms of time and method acquisition, has particularly responded to the need to reduce bias. I was a priori not able, when I came out of an interview, to typologize, without this analysis, the structure of the story.

The limited number of interviews in this first work is one of the weak points that can be pointed out. However, the very long, in-depth interviews in a climate of trust made it possible to collect data in quantity and of high quality. The particularity of the structural analysis helped to extract the substance. Finally, we do not claim to represent the whole of reality by our results, and we refrain from any claim to be able to generalize them. It is thus in the end not really a typology, but only 2 main ways of thinking about contradictions (dilemma and paradoxes), so we have refined the knowledge. We identify four main narrative patterns, while remaining cautious about whether there may be others.

This method of analysis is part of an interpretivist approach. It is based on the foundations of Grounded Theory, an approach presented by Glaser & Strauss (1967) as *"a theory arising inductively from the study of the phenomenon it presents"*. "The researcher must tell himself that he knows nothing: this method of structural analysis, in our opinion, pushes him to do so. This same concern guided the collection and analysis of interviews during the second research project (Chapter II), where I conducted a sociological study of management tools. This time, it was the Grounded Theory approach of Strauss & Corbin (1994) that mainly influenced my approach. In particular, Alvesson & Kärreman's (2007) use of it guided us. They suggest, *"a useful guideline in this kind of study is to look out for significant deviations from what could have been expected,"* making it possible to produce a mystery. After a thematic content analysis (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2013) on Nvivo using a list of codes from the literature to explore the relationships that workers have with a management tool, we looked

for our "mystery": why the vast majority of these workers had never seen this omnipresent object in the culture of the organization and in their discourse. I thus managed, despite my proximity to the field, to explore a phenomenon of which we had no prior idea.

Finally, in this research project the multiplicity of organizations within the same organic store network quickly disoriented me. For example, the network of the solidarity economy in Lille, which I knew well, was historically structured in a context of social precariousness, in the face of the power of mass distribution and food industry, of which the region is the cradle. This is by no means the same in Paris or in Provence.

For the third research project (Chapter III), I wanted to discover and appropriate quantitative analysis tools, which are considered less sensitive to researcher-induced bias. However, the idea that there is an absolute truth that can be revealed by numbers seems to me to be relative. Far from adhering to the positivist posture according to which a reality would exist outside of the researcher, who would only seek to verify hypotheses on a representative sample, I think that the researcher's influence on the results is inevitable. Firstly, if the choice of scales is tedious work, it influences the results. For example, we chose to use a scale on job satisfaction with several specific dimensions such as remuneration, or the relationship with the manager. Most of the scales are first and foremost access to general satisfaction linked to the meaning in the work. The results would therefore have been quite different with this type of scale, would perhaps have made the measurement of this construct more homogeneous within the sample and would not have allowed us to highlight the impact of working conditions. Second, the scales are often unsuitable for the research context, and require adaptation of the items (notably through translation into another language) which also leaves room for freedom (and bias) for the researcher. Thirdly, the level of requirement regarding the significance of the relationships, or the different tests carried out to verify the validity of the indicators may vary. Finally, the statistical method used also has an impact on the results. For example, the data forced us to use a PLS approach, which is not without its critics (Rönkkö & Evermann, 2013).

Moreover, this quantitative approach has raised more the question of the independence of the researcher vis-à-vis the institution in which he or she carries out the research. Access to a sufficient

number of answers and good representativeness is very difficult without collaboration with an organization. However, because they validate and disseminate the questionnaire, they have more potential control over the subjects addressed than in individual interviews, which can be delicate (such as working conditions). Accustomed to working with consultants, they do not always understand the constraints of research (the use of scales in particular). We experienced this during the third project, where the failure to collaborate with Orgacoop was a blessing in disguise: it limited the data collection, while allowing us to retain the job satisfaction scale that bothered the managers. As a result, the price of independence is limited access to data, especially with voluntary participation.

We also noted the mistrust of using an anonymous questionnaire, or the social desirability bias that could occur when a respondent justified his or her answer in the open field. In the end, we find some of the biases present in narrative methods: despite the intermediary of an electronic interface, individuals respond to a researcher in whom they place their trust, and whose project they share, and whom they want to please. Added to this are methodological biases related to the weariness caused by the repetition of questions. Finally, the representativeness of the population is difficult to obtain, firstly because of selection bias (the individuals who respond are those who have a motivation to do so), and secondly because it was impossible in our case to know the characteristics of the population studied. Collaboration with the organization would not have addressed this problem either, since the organization itself does not have this information. As a result, it seems impossible to claim that the positivist paradigm gives a better representation of reality and makes it possible to build more solid knowledge in all cases.

However, we concede that the use of quantitative analysis methods allows us to relativize the importance of certain phenomena, statistically tested. When certain interviews mark the researcher with a few anecdotes, they put these facts into perspective. Thus, for example, in job satisfaction, while some interviewees enthusiastically express the importance of the relationship with clients in their job satisfaction, statistically, this element contributes little to overall satisfaction.

Therefore, having had the chance to appropriate both approaches, this thesis convinced me of the interest of mixed methods. Narrative methods allow us to grasp subtle dynamics at work in an

organizational context, but which can be related to subjects that are very personal to the individual. These dynamics can only be mentioned, or even made aware of, in the context of an individual interview. These narrative methods give the researcher the prior knowledge to best design his or her theoretical and measurement model, as well as the intuition of what may need to be confirmed, or explored using quantitative methods. Finally, the back-and-forth between results from different methods mutually enriches the contributions and new avenues of research.

While solidarity economy was the environment in which I felt comfortable enough to carry out this research, the subject of identity-related tensions fascinates me more broadly, and more particularly the management of the gap between ideal and reality, which we all know to some extent. So I have always been keen to open up perspectives for reflection outside of my research field, in conversation with friends who are caregivers, teachers, or artists, especially in recent months when the question of the ideal being mishandled is more topical than ever. The question of the ideal linked to religion, to reality-proof parenthood for example, has also enriched this reflection.

### Posture towards Critical Management Studies (CMS)

Part of this doctoral work relies on a theoretical framework which draws from critical studies approaches. According to the definition given by Huault (2008), "*CMS correspond to the critical current of organization theory, which aims to question the existing order and institutional arrangements at the origin of phenomena of social, economic, ideological and symbolic domination. They highlight the emancipatory potential of societies, but also the way in which this potential is perpetually threatened by processes of alienation of individuals.*" (Self-translation) This is particularly the case in Chapter II where studies showing the use of CSR as instruments of domination and exploitation of the individual lead to the formulation of my research problem. At the end of my study, I confirm for my part the symbolic and cultural dimension of CSR standards, an omnipresent object that no one really seeks to know, in relation to blind trust in the organization. I am therefore partly inscribing myself in this critical perspective. More broadly, the study of this particular field of research, of which I show the alienating aspects for these individuals who are sometimes victims of their quest for identity, and the psycho-

social mechanisms by which they are confronted, raises the question of my posture towards critical approaches.

CMS, which form the basis of the critique of the capitalist system, have indeed inspired me greatly. However, rather than falling into this field, I would rather like to enter into a dialogue with its authors.

The main reason is related to my personal ethos, and the way I conceive of the role of the researcher in relation to this ethos. Having myself worked in the corporate world and having experienced the difficulties involved in freeing oneself from psycho-social mechanisms and attempting to create other systems, it is unthinkable for me to base my research on pure criticism of those who are imperfectly attempting, in the field, to create other paths. According to Laville (2014), critical theory has indeed recurrently drifted towards the sole denunciation of capitalist hold, leading to a world saturated by domination, where actors are mere agents, conditioned and reproducing norms of domination through meaningless acts. A large part of the sociology of the SSE considers that the researcher's duty is therefore to denounce these illusions, and to show that the SSE is a delusion. However, in my opinion, simply demonstrating that attempts at alternatives do not work perfectly either could only lead to certain nihilism, where research would only serve the simple demonstration of the researcher's sharp clairvoyance, without a project for society.

Critical theory would aim to clarify the struggles and aspirations working for freedom and equality (Foucault, 1984; Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). The Solidarity Economy is based on this same desire for emancipation, and its economic culture is also nourished by the same movements as that of the CMS: feminism, anarchism, or Marxism. It is therefore logical in my opinion, as a researcher supporting this emancipation movement, to be interested in putting it into practice, not to criticize sterilely, but to understand the dynamics at work and to propose tools to improve the performance of the actors working for this emancipation. Thence, I concur with Parker & Parker (2019, who suggest that *“the exploration of alternative forms of organization and management themselves already involved in struggle against a hegemonic present, should be the proper task for CMS academics who wish to engage with the present and remain ‘critical’ at the same time.”*



As a result, what guided me throughout this thesis was therefore to identify organizational practices that could be generalized, with the objective of the well-being of the worker combined with the survival of these organizations. Although this research was by no means intervention research, I was able to observe the impact of these simple interviews on certain respondents for whom the story was an opportunity to raise awareness of certain things, or to implement certain organizational practices. In one shop, for example, workers who became aware of their lack of knowledge about the specifications organized an event around the tool. Several managers asked to be informed of the conclusions of our studies, asking for "good practices" implemented in other organizations, not necessarily leading to better profitability or ease of use. This is where my work takes on its full meaning for me. Providing keys of understanding to these organizations that work, albeit imperfectly, to build another society with limited means is in line with my own activism.

Secondly, the role of "public" research is, in my opinion, to create knowledge, including in areas where the perspective of commercial valorization of this knowledge is absent. The aim is to contribute to a better functioning of organizations, with the objective of economic sustainability and viability, and the well-being of workers. This is the case of the solidarity economy. Despite the need to understand the different dynamics at work in this context, this field has been neglected by critical authors, particularly because of the Marxist hold that creates a mistrust of the double political and economic dimension. This mistrust is also found in authors such as Luc Boltanski of French pragmatic sociology, who proposes though a turning point in critical theory by recognizing the possible paths of emancipation and the competencies of the actors. However, Boltanski (in preface of Frère, 2003) sees, for example, in the attempts of the solidarity economy only "*often courageous intentions, involving actors full of good will and self-sacrifice*". This time, the solidarity economy is thus referred to a naive humanism which does not deserve the attention of critical authors and which excludes the usefulness of critical approaches in this field. However, according to the ANACT, the social and solidarity economy in the broadest sense represents 10% of GDP, 12.7% of private employment, 2.38 million employees, and 200,000 organizations. Institutions such as the ANACT call for contributions from the scientific community on alternative models of management, production and governance<sup>3</sup>. This field, by the

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.anact.fr/themes/economie-sociale-et-solidaire>

importance of the stakes, cannot therefore be legitimately ignored by public research in management sciences.

In conclusion, and in response to the questions of various authors taken up by Eynaud (2019) concerning the role of management sciences in the emergence of the social and solidarity economy, I wish, through this doctoral work, to show that the role of management sciences is not necessarily intended to support managers trained in market logic, but can be part of a reflexive and critical approach to support the creation and maintenance of more solidarity-based organizational models.



# Chapter I

*“Sometimes I wish I didn’t care...”*

## **Constructing paradoxes and dilemmas as a response to occupational tensions among hybrid organization workers**

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*“Sometimes I wish I didn’t care...It’s so exhausting to make choices all the time. It would be so simple to watch TV and go to MacDonal’d’s. So much simpler... It’s exhausting to refuse facility... Sometimes you’re tired, you don’t want to do anything... Sometimes it’s more complicated. I still believe in what I fight for, but I’m tired...”*

Entrepreneur in a fair trade shop



## 1. Introduction

Hybrid organizations, which include social enterprises (Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey, 2011) and alternative organizations (Parker *et al.*, 2014), have a dual goal at the core of their business model. Incorporating a commitment to making a positive environmental or social impact through the pursuit of commercial activities into their strategy and everyday operations, they operate at the intersection of social, environmental, and business sectors, exhibit qualities of both nonprofit and for-profit enterprises and have been proliferating over the last 30 years (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Battilana, 2018). The challenges of grappling with hybridity in organizations that combine different institutional logics (Sirris, 2019; Battilana *et al.*, 2015) and organizational forms (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Padgett & Powell, 2012) are unique. They stem from the plurality of non-aligned goals (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Smith & Besharov, 2019), institutional complexity (Battilana, 2018), tensions between internal groups and logics (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Smith & Besharov, 2019; Farias, 2017), internal and external pressures, disagreement over resource allocation, and the sourcing of funding and talent (Battilana, 2018).

The literature on hybrid organizations, while acknowledging these various challenges, has mostly focused on the organizational level and offers numerous insights into the organizational responses provided by thriving hybrid organizations (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; André, Cho, & Laine, 2018; Battilana *et al.*, 2015; Besharov, 2014; Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Bacq *et al.*, 2018). However, less is known about the way individual members of hybrid organizations experience the tensions generated by hybridity and the persistent conflicts about the identity of the organization. How do individual members cope with the emotional stress, discomfort, competing languages, and their own identity issues when internal and external constituents disagree on what they expect the organization to be, and when, internally, distinct values and beliefs held by different subgroups generate violent dissent (Besharov, 2014; Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Battilana & Dorado, 2010)? What is the impact of these tensions on individuals' performance or resilience within hybrid organizations? Are there factors accounting for individual variations among employees, regarding the intensity of their experience of

challenges within the organization? Do individuals' approaches to the challenges they meet affect their ability to cope with or even benefit from, these tensions?

In this paper, we propose to address these issues and to explore, at the micro level, the way individuals working for hybrid organizations cope with the tensions, contradictions, and paradoxes they encounter in their professional life. We draw on the paradox literature (Schad *et al.*, 2019; Putnam *et al.*, 2016) and recent insights provided by Miron-Spektor *et al.* (2018) on the micro-foundations of organizational paradox to conjecture that various individuals confronting similar types of tensions might react differently according to their mindset, i.e., the way they frame contradictions as either paradoxes or dilemmas.

We ask two research questions:

**What are the interpretations employees resort to when confronting the tensions created by the complex nature of hybrid organizations?**

**To what extent do these interpretations reflect the paradox versus dilemma mindsets of their authors?**

To answer these questions, we use a narrative approach and structural analysis (Demazière & Dubar, 1997; Cova & Pace, 2006; Di Martino & Zan, 2010). We analyze the discourses the 12 members of hybrid organizations in our sample provide, to account for the contradictions they meet in their occupational life. We find that individual members of hybrid organizations who have purposely chosen to work for such organizations exhibit a strong sensitivity to what they perceive as a dilemma between cherished personal pro-social values and the values borne by "capitalist"-type organizations. We also document that the individuals we study experience personal occupational tensions in addition to those generated by the hybridity of the organization for which they work. Finally, we find that individuals confronting similar tensions leverage two distinct mindsets, one in which they accept these tensions as inherent to their occupation and not to be overcome (the paradox mindset), and the other in which tensions are perceived as undesirable and to be eliminated (the dilemma mindset). Several dynamics

are at stake and several trajectories are possible among individuals with a dilemma mindset, and have more or less positive impacts on both individuals and the organization.

Our argument makes contributions to both the hybrid organization literature and the paradox literature. For the former, we provide an individual-level analysis of the tensions that pervade the working life of members of hybrid organizations. Using structural analysis, we provide a fine-grained analysis of the way individuals account for these tensions. We observe considerable interpretive variation in how the challenges are experienced at the individual level and emphasize the necessity of leveraging not only on inter-subjective interactions, as prior literature has done, but also on individual cognition and interpretive subjectivity to understand the challenges hybrid organizations cope with. We show that the organizational level is not sufficient as a lens to understand the potential trajectories of workers who exhibit a strong commitment to their occupational life but deal inadequately with the tensions generated by the hybridity of the organizations for which they work. This provides a stimulus to extend the research on hybrid organizations towards a better understanding of the micro foundations of organizational complexity and especially towards analyses of actors' ideas, interpretation and construction of meaning.

We contribute to the paradox literature by offering fine-grained descriptions of the paradox and dilemma mindsets hybrid organization workers can leverage to cope with pervasive occupational tensions, and by emphasizing the dynamic dimensions of these mindsets. Previous literature suggests that individuals with a paradox-mindset seem to better perform and exhibit more resilience than those with a dilemma mindset when confronting the challenges of occupational life. Since literature on thriving hybrid organizations emphasizes carefully selecting members and socializing them as a key factor of success, understanding the way individuals construct paradox and dilemmas differently, the level at which they are ready to see tensions as dilemmas rather than paradoxes and the kind of dynamics they demonstrate might be relevant competencies for hybrid organizations dealing with unavoidable institutional complexities. Our work also provides a stimulus for research on potential organizational responses to individuals' type of mindsets (Kark *et al*, 2016).



## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1. Hybrid organizations: the challenge of overcoming tensions

Over the last 30 years, we have observed a proliferation of so-called hybrid organizations (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Battilana & Lee, 2014; Haveman & Rao, 2006; Padgett & Powell, 2012) that operate at the intersection of the social, environmental, and business sectors. These organizations, which carry out social or environmental missions, while engaging in business activities to support their operations (e.g., Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Battilana *et al.*, 2015; Hoffman, Gullo, & Haigh, 2012; Pache & Santos, 2013), are sometimes called social enterprises (Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey, 2011; Mair, 2010). They include microfinance institutions, fair trade retailers, and work integration social enterprises (e.g. Pache & Santos, 2013).

The literature devoted to these organizations acknowledges that their hybridity presents unique challenges (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Smith & Besharov, 2019; Battilana, 2018; Farias, 2017). While these challenges can cause significant difficulties, such as conflicting values, cognitive tensions, emotional stress, competing languages, and organizational identity issues, the literature tends to propose a relatively positive vision of the capacity of hybrid organizations to overcome them. Battilana (2018), for example, lists the organizational practices that research has proven to allow hybrid organizations to overcome “challenges in the joint pursuit of social and financial goals,” to “survive and even to thrive over time.” Among them are setting organizational goals (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; André, Cho, & Laine, 2018), structuring organizational activities (Battilana *et al.*, 2015), carefully selecting organization members (Besharov, 2014; Battilana & Dorado, 2010), and socializing them by training them, rewarding them properly, and enabling informal interactions between members with different profiles (Bacq *et al.*, 2018; Battilana & Dorado, 2010).

However, these approaches, which embrace the challenges hybrid organizations face at the organizational level, pay only scant attention to those at the individual level. They do not provide much insight into the way individuals within hybrid organizations cope with the tensions generated by pursuing a social mission and an economic objective in the same time. Much remains unknown

about the individual micro-processes through which hybrid organization members face the challenges that confront them. Echoing the emphasis recent literature on institutional logics places on the role of individual cognition and subjectivity in the interpretation of competing logics (Hallett, 2010; Bévort & Suddaby, 2016; Blomgren & Waks, 2015; Sirris, 2019), we propose to address this gap and focus on how workers cope with the tensions generated by hybrid organizations.

## 2.2. The paradox studies approach to understanding organizational tensions

Paradox studies offer an insightful perspective on this issue. Defining paradoxes as “persistent contradiction between interdependent elements” (Schad *et al.*, 2019), these studies offer insights into an array of organizational tensions. such as cooperation and competition, stability and change, profits and purpose (Jay, 2013; Smith, Gonin, & Besharov, 2013), or novelty and usefulness (Miron-Spektor, Erez, & Naveh, 2011). Some scholars (Lewis & Smith, 2014, Zheng et al, 2018) propose that using paradox as a meta-theory offers a powerful lens for management science through deeper understanding of the constructs, relationships, and dynamics surrounding organizational tensions: in organizations, seemingly distinct and oppositional elements are tied in a web of perpetual mutuality (Schad *et al.*, 2019; Putnam *et al.*, 2016). The vibrant research on organizational paradoxes seems especially relevant to the study of hybrid organizations, which embed distinct institutional logics and multiple organizational identities (Besharov, 2014). In no other organizations are “contradictory yet interrelated elements” more likely to “exist simultaneously and persist over time,” which corresponds to Smith and Lewis’s (2011, p. 382) very definition of paradox.

Despite the fact that early paradox theory built upon micro-level insights from psychology and philosophy (Miron-Spektor *et al.*, 2018; Waldman *et al.*, 2019), the paradox literature has tended to focus on the nature of tensions at the organizational level (Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009; Lüscher & Lewis, 2008) and responses to them among senior leadership (Smith, 2014; Zhang, Waldman, Han, & Li, 2015). Miron-Spektor *et al.* (2018) note how little we still know about individual variations among employees within the organization, the conditions that intensify the experience of tensions, the impact of tensions on employees’ workplace efforts, and the factors affecting the ability of employees

to cope with, or even benefit from, these tensions. Besides acknowledging that organizational tensions may trigger anxiety, raising stress, negative emotions, and counterproductive defenses at the individual level (Lewis, 2000; Putnam et al, 2016), the scant literature devoted to individual responses to organizational tensions and paradoxes seems to indicate that, faced with similar challenges, individuals can interpret them differently, have different emotional responses to them, and develop different accounts of themselves and their ways of coping with the tensions they produce (Schabram & Maitlis, 2017; Zheng et al, 2018). Building on early paradox theorists, who themselves leveraged philosophy and psychology to propose that the impact of tensions depends on the ways individuals approach them (Bartunek, 1988; Schneider, 1999; Smith & Berg, 1987). Miron-Spektor *et al.* (2018) propose a paradox mindset approach to the question of why some individuals confronted with the competing tensions and demands pervading their working life thrive, while others struggle. Drawing on the notion that individuals who view tensions as paradoxes rather than either/or dilemmas gain a deeper understanding of opposing elements and seek more integrative solutions, Miron-Spektor *et al.* (2018) aim to distinguish between the experience of organizational tensions and the mindset that addresses those tensions. Seeing a mindset as a mental frame or lens that an individual uses to organize information and make sense of an experience (Crum, Salovey, & Achor, 2013), the literature they draw from defines a dilemma mindset as one where solutions are seen as either-or choices (Quinn and Cameron, 1988; Smith and Lewis, 2011), one that assumes incompatibility between opposing poles and in which one alternative must be selected among mutually exclusive options. Confronting contradictions they perceive as dilemmas, individuals may resort to various strategy to cope with the resulting tensions (Vince and Broussine, 1996; Schneider, 1990; Ely, 1995). In contrast, a paradox mindset is a mental frame in which the simultaneous existence of contradictory elements is recognized and accepted (Smith and Tishman, 2005). With this mindset, contradictions are perceived as inherent and potentially reinforcing, rather than as incompatibilities (Smith and Lewis, 2011).

Miron-Spektor *et al.*(2018) echoes the research of Zheng *et al.* (2018), who study female leaders. Zheng *et al.* (2018) document how these women face tensions between the genderized demand to display more communal characteristics, such as being affectionate, helpful, and sympathetic, and the requirement of their leadership role to display more agentic characteristics, such as ambition, assertiveness, independence and self-confidence. Zheng *et al.* (2018) show that female leaders can adopt either a paradox mindset, which simultaneously embraces agentic and communal

characteristics, or a dilemma mindset that dichotomizes agency and communion, with quite different outcomes regarding psychological resilience, identity coexistence, and leadership effectiveness.

In this paper, we adopt a similar approach to understand how employees of hybrid organizations, who experience the paradoxes generated by the specific nature of such organizations, interpret these paradoxes. Following Zheng *et al.* (2018), we aim to try to gain insight into the type of mindset workers in hybrid organizations generally adopt in the face of the tensions they experience.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research context

In this research we focus on individuals working in French hybrid organizations belonging to the network of “solidarity economy” that Laville defined (Eme & Laville, 2006) as “the group of economic activity ruled by the willingness to act democratically, where solidarity social relationships predominate on individual interest and material profit.” Similar to the “alternative organizations” defined by Parker *et al.* (2014) as those that defend social and ecological values and denounce the capitalist logic of domination, while pursuing commercial activities, French solidarity economy organizations can be expected to be particularly prone to identity tensions, especially between idealism and pragmatism (Besharov, 2014; Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Farias, 2017). While these tensions probably pervade the occupational life of most workers in these organizations, we can predict that they must be experienced specifically strongly by those individuals who purposely choose their occupations to express shared current social concerns and beliefs. In order to answer our research questions, we chose our interviewees from among individuals working in solidarity economy organizations who claimed to have chosen their job purposely because they perceive it as having a positive (or less negative) impact on their social and natural environment. We expect these individuals to confront strong challenges within their occupational life and to exhibit a specific sensitivity to these tensions. A second reason why we focus on the panel of interviewees studied in this

paper is related to the first author's personal experience as a shop-floor worker and consumer of solidarity economy organizations. As noted by Schabram and Maitlis (2017), her experience gave her insider knowledge that enabled a relation of trust, better knowledge of the vocabulary used by interviewees, more in-depth discussions, and a nuanced understanding of our respondents' daily work and specific issues.

### 3.2. Data collection

We adopted an interpretive approach to answer our research questions. Influenced by Ricoeur's notion of narrative identity (Ricoeur, 1984), the stories humans construct to tell about themselves in order to understand who they are for themselves and for others, we join previous research (Wright, Nyberg, & Grant, 2012; Mallett & Wapshott, 2012) in considering narrative approaches as a trustworthy method to investigate career paths (see also Watson, 2009; Svenningsson & Alvesson, 2003). The freedom given to the narrator in creating a storyline using the facets of his/her identity underlying his/her conduct (Ricoeur, 1984) enables him/her to broach unexpected topics and to express deep emotions, hence providing a rich data set particularly suitable for structural analysis. More specifically, we collected and analyzed narratives from workers telling the story of their professional life. We chose to present respondents with a brief document summarizing the main topics to be broached, while specifying that the narrator should not "stick" to it. Then, we started our interviews with the following request: *"I would like you to tell how you got to your current job."* The interviewees decided which decisive plots of personal experience in the private and social sphere to relate, guiding the narrative throughout. For instance, we never asked about values transmitted by parents: the worker evoked this subject if it seemed relevant to his/her experience. As we did not resort to a strict interview guide, this method required great attentiveness from the researcher in order to obtain valuable data on the research, and implied asking for more information about important or incomplete elements and re-focusing when respondents became lost in the narrative. The interviewees were highly educated and showed a remarkable faculty for reflexive thinking, providing us with extremely valuable information, despite the unusually low-ranking jobs they occupied. The freedom of speech offered by the

methodology also suited the culture of the field, the emancipated personality of the narrators, and the sometimes erratic and atypical path that led to their current occupation.

The data were collected in 2016. We used snowball sampling, starting with contacts of the first author from her previous professional experience. We contacted these individuals, justifying our study as an interest in talking to people who voluntarily chose a job that aligned with their personal values. After having participated in the interview and understood the aim of the study, our initial respondents put us in contact with other workers whom they considered had a similar profile, exhibiting strict rejection of jobs they considered incoherent with their moral values (previous job or alternative jobs) and reluctance to occupy “neutral jobs.” We declined some interviews after a first contact with this extended group, and suppressed one narrative from the sample as the respondent did not meet the criteria of experiencing identity tensions in his occupational life. At the end, our sample consisted of 12 workers. (See Appendix 1) While encouraging caution about generalization of our findings, we think that this reduced sample is acceptable for an in-depth study using a narrative approach (Alvesson and Robertson, 2016). The length of our interviews (between 90 min to 150 minutes) and the significant variety of narratives we have collected (Özçaglar-Toulouse, 2009) have favored semantic saturation, while the structural analysis method we will describe in the next section prevents from picking out quotes for illustration. All respondents came from private, commercial, solidarity economy, hybrid organizations (see Appendix 2) in three French regions, operating in organic fair trade or vegan food (gardening, catering services, retail, import/export), fair trade clothing, ethical banking, free software, and alternative organization consulting. Three criteria were used in its construction : variety of social realities, socio-economic profiles and experiences (Bertaux, 1997). (see Appendix 1 and 2). The organizations differed in size, legal status (worker-owned, one-person company, cooperative, LLC, and so on) and age (1–30 years). Seven respondents had previous job experiences in what they called “capitalist” or “conventional” economy (banking, catering service, chemical or car industry, oil extraction); three had so far oriented their career toward NGOs and humanitarian projects; two had always focused on solidarity economy organizations, chose their education to this end, and refused to work in classical economy except for occasional student jobs. Participants were aged 27–43, and had a variety of family situations. They had ten months’ to 12 years’ experience in their job, and a monthly income between €319–3000. In order to enrich our methodology (Yin, 1994), we supported their

narratives with information from other sources, such as factual information provided by the narrators about their private and organizational life (income, education, consumption, working time, position, etc.) and about their organization. Data on lifestyle show that all the respondents had “responsible consumption habits” (Roberts, 1995) and were committed to environmental, social, or political movements (see Appendix 1), arguing for an effective personal social engagement.

Secondary source data on the organizational context were collected by the researcher before the interviews to get a better understanding of workers' profession and working environment, and to conduct the interview more efficiently. Each interview was conducted, recorded, and transcribed in full by the first author. We had more than 200 pages of transcription, as well as memos written after each interview. Non-verbal language, revealing emotions or resistance to the narrative process, was included in the transcription and contributed to our findings. Each narrative was summarized and sent a few weeks later to the interviewee for approval and confirmation (See Appendix 4). We collected the subsequent feedback from all the interviewees.

### 3.3. Data analysis

To help us attain the objective of a fine-grained analysis of individuals' narrative of how they coped with organizational tensions, we analyzed the data using the structural analysis method of Demazière & Dubar (1997), which has been influential among French sociologists, but has also been used in the Anglo-Saxon literature (Özçaglar-Toulouse, 2009; Cova & Pace, 2006; Di Martino & Zan, 2010). Used since the 1930s, mainly to analyze tales, myths, or religious literary narratives (Barthes & Duisit, 1975), this methodology produces categories, characteristics, and relations that enable in-depth investigations of narrators' accounts of their experience. It is based on the idea that the meaning of a word can be understood only by restituting the disjunction that specifies it, and the conjunction that binds it to a category. For instance, “boy” has a different meaning depending on whether we oppose it to “girl” (gender category) or to “man” (age category). We believe this attention to disjunctions makes structural analysis particularly well fitted to account for the contradictions, tensions and dilemmas which are at the core of our analysis. This is the reason why we chose to use this methodology and rely

on the original edition of Demazière and Dubar (1997). We carefully replicated the step-by-step process they describe for their own analysis of autobiographical interviews in the field of sociology.

The method consists of two steps: first, the intra-narrative, and then the inter-narrative analysis. Regarding the former, we coded each segment of discourse by a letter according to three levels of description: S for sequences, A for agents, and P for argumentative proposals. Sequences represent events experienced by the narrator. Agents are the people in the narrative and their relationships. Argumentative proposals present opinions, feelings, or assessments of an event or an agent. The coded units were then organized according to three levels of description, (S, A, and P) and summarized using the most typical phrases from the narrative. This enabled us to identify the disjunctions and conjunctions structuring the narrative. For example, past experiences and other organizations are associated with “meaninglessness” and current organizations are associated with “coherence,” showing the following opposition: the organization to which the worker belongs is the converse to the other organizations, and meaninglessness is the opposite of coherence. We usually concluded by building cross-axes, enabling us to assign identical properties to different realities (see Table 3). Lastly, each narrative was condensed into a “specific schema”. An example of intra-narrative analysis is presented in Appendix 3.

	<i>Positive perception from the narrator</i>	<i>Negative perception from the narrator</i>
<i>Integration</i>	My wife (now) My organization The activists My boss	My colleagues in conventional bank My generation when I was young
<i>Non-integration or rejection</i>	My wife (before) The sports marketing field My family	My ex-bosses in conventional bank Key account customers

Table 3 : The agents in Oscar's narrative

We were then able to access the inter-narrative analysis: we considered the whole dataset, comparing recurring categories between narratives. This enabled us to pinpoint the common social rationales



that respondents shared in their stories, which were hidden in the links between the three levels of description (sequences, agents, and argumentative proposals) and the categories used, and to produce a “specific schema” shared by several narratives. For example, we observed that different narratives opposed what the worker wanted to do, and what he/she had been forced to do. The first was associated with the figures of “people like me,” (the alter ego) and the second with someone responsible for failure (the scapegoat). Argumentative proposals and non-verbal communication associated those scapegoats with feelings of anger and bitterness. Then, we understood that for this narrative pattern, to explain contradictions, narrators tended to mention a negative figure considered the source of failure, and that their sad experience was shared by others. We finally created a typology by sorting narrative schemata using this common “backbone.”

## 4. Findings

Our findings focus on the stories in which participants discussed the reasons that had led them to their current occupation in this type of organization and narrated their experiences in other types of organizations. We first describe the way the participants built their current occupational identity in opposition to an anti-identity, and in reference to an ideal identity. We then depict the tensions they identify in their occupational life. We finally analyze the way participants make sense of these tensions through narratives and identify typical scripts they use for that purpose. We sum up those narratives in Table 2.

### 4.1. From anti-identity to ideal identity: constructing a dilemma to account for occupational choices

All our interviewees expressed a strong sensibility of a perceived dilemma between their own beliefs or values and their occupation. This sensitivity is displayed in their whole life story: narrators often talked about the origin of this sensitivity, and could date the moment when they realized that they felt this urge to align their work with their moral values and social concern: an encounter, a trip, a student

job, or the echoes of a moral education. Nathan, who used to make a lot of money as a manager in catering services, told how his awareness arose: *"It was when I started to go to the undocumented migrants protest. I began to remember that when I was a kid we were not allowed to buy N\*\*\* or A\*\*\* (sportswear manufacturers) stuff, because my family worked in the textile industry, and those brands were made in China by children. So... memories return... and you think that you're doing wrong, and wasting so much energy to do wrong doesn't make sense. So I ran away from it all."* Workers expressed a strong desire for coherence between what they are, and what they do, or for being themselves at work, which they claimed they could not achieve in traditional business organizations. They rejected perceived tensions between private values and occupational life. They seemed incapable of dealing with what they perceived as a long-term dilemma, between standing for strong values and beliefs in their private life, and occupying a job in which they had to put those same values aside. *"I could easily have worked for T\*\*\* (oil and gaz company) and been an activist for G\*\*\* (environmental NGO) at the weekend, but there is a little bit of contradiction at some point"* (Paul). They failed to find integrative solution, and saw their professional choice as a dilemma between genuine integrity with their moral values, boycotting and contributing to attempts to weaken the capitalist system on the one hand, and on the other, a kind of hypocritical schizophrenia, supporting the capitalist system during working hours. Ben told us about his previous job: *"You make good money in a factory, you know, but you must be brave enough to say 'I'm leaving.' I think it would make you schizophrenic if you stayed..."* Occupations in conventional organizations were perceived as situations of tension associated with feelings of psychological or even physical distress that eventually made the worker's situation unbearable. *"It was harder and harder with all those issues because I manipulated products that... At the end of the day, I had a rash on my arms, I couldn't stop scratching. I had a psychological problem with what I was doing, and it turned into a physical problem"* (Marine). The choice of fleeing their occupation for one more aligned with their own personal values was presented as inevitable. Having changed to their current job, they strongly rejected the idea of going back: *"It's like a door that you can't close once you've opened it"* (Victor).

## 4.2. Many organizational tensions experienced at the individual level

The workers we studied declared that they had chosen their occupation in order to meet their personal requirement for coherence between what they do and who they are. However, the hybridity of the organizations considered in this study generates an environment that seems particularly conducive to paradoxical injunctions. Besides the satisfaction of defending their values through work, respondents' narratives revealed numerous and frequent personal and organizational tensions.

### 4.2.1. Tensions generated by the organization's hybridity

Workers display very high ethical standards in their private life that they expect to apply at work. Indeed, solidarity economy organizations mostly defend limiting the environmental impact of human activity, a de-growth philosophy, the fair sharing of resources and profits, and the rejection of mass consumption, while pursuing economic goals at the same time. Some of our interviewees demonstrated the discomfort, or frustration, that they felt, for instance, in selling exotic, over-packaged, or unhealthy products in an organic shop, using the services of banks, insurance companies, or Facebook, or burning petrol for on deliveries: *"When you have to put petrol in your car, you clearly feed those you fight against, you support T\*\*\*, you make them richer, you caution exploitation and enrichment in Africa, Asia, tax exile but... what can you do?"* (Victor).

Tensions also arise from the alternative management practices implemented in hybrid organizations. Most of our interviewees expressed the desire to create "the good organization," free from domination, violence, hypocrisy, censorship, and injustice. This desirable democratic form of management is also a challenge for workers, as they have to rethink their roles and relationships within the organization, juggling with an internalized top-heavy culture shaping the identity of managers, co-workers, owners, or employees. The manager of a co-owned company related: *"Sometimes, even I get mixed up, I don't know who I'm talking to, am I speaking to my colleague? Am I speaking to my manager? It's not obvious..."* In a worker-owned company, the manager illustrates the acute reversal of the "debate culture" they try

to embody, leading to quick-witted debate that gives the “big mouth” the advantage. Another respondent described the dark side of the hierarchy-free atmosphere of her workers-owned company as a “jungle law” run by an “informal dictator,” where she finally renounced speaking up, despite the critical and dissenting aspect of her personality: *“Officially, we implemented this collective governance, but actually we have adopted this system: corridor meetings, creating waste of time, misunderstanding, exclusion, bad emotions.”* She highlighted the gap between the story told about the cooperative that motivated her to work there (three friends who were partners at the same level, joined by other friends) and the reality (a leader who is the face of the company).

Moreover, many narrators described hard work in very psychologically and physically demanding sectors (sales, catering, farming) with the risk of exhaustion and a challenging workplace atmosphere. The mundane aspect of the job was frustrating for educated workers, who had been led to that occupational choice by their critical mindset and intellectual curiosity, who valued manual labor, but still suffered from tiresome repetitive tasks: *“Depalletizing is not a calling for anyone”* (Sidonie). Workers often evoked unpaid overtime and hard working conditions, which contradict the principles usually defended in this milieu. *“For a milieu which claims to offer different working conditions, we pay a high price for our values...”* (Sidonie). Dam, manager and employee, acknowledged the conflict that sometimes appeared between his philosophical concept of a good life, embedded in the company’s political positioning and rules (right to 10 extra unpaid days off, schedule that fits family situations and hobbies, political activism against French work law reforms) and the idea that everyone must be strongly involved in the firm to make this project work. *“We are a tight-knit group, and when someone takes a step back, it’s complicated for me, and that bothers me... I should be open-minded, saying OK, X has three kids, he has a little bit a life apart, maybe he is less present, but we shouldn’t remain in this functioning...”* While he mentioned that he sometimes worked 90 hours a week for a minimum wage, he said: *“Some of us do not write down all their extra hours, because they consider that it is also their business, it’s you and your good conscience.”* Persistent contradictions can also stem from the downside of solidary values. We found this dilemma in the narrative of Victor, who limits the profit margin of fair trade products he sells to make them affordable, which leads to low salaries. *“Sometimes when I pay the wages, I say ‘How can I pay so little?’ For the time and involvement of certain people, it is unfair...”*

#### 4.2.2. Social role and demands of exemplarity

Furthermore, these workers are expected to be outstanding examples of coherence with the values of the solidarity economy. The activism of workers both in and outside work contributes to the legitimacy of those businesses. Workers in our sample described the permanent political role they have to play both in the organization and off-site in a network with a very strong ideology and culture, populated with people who are at times more involved in activism than they are themselves, and who expect coherence between the stated organizational values and their way of living and working. This imperative for perfection even exceeds professional duties: *“There’s a kind of fascination! Because you’re part of something important”* (Hilde); *“People imagine that we are super-heroes, perfect people, organic fair trade saints”* (Paul). As those organizations embrace a public education role, putting the commercial aspect in the background, public bodies also expect workers to devote time to unprofitable local projects, without acknowledging economic constraints: *“As the only representative in the region, you are supervised by the activist milieu. Basically, you must respond to all the possible solicitations”* (Oscar). To sum up, taking an activist position is not only a workers’ need: they are also expected to do it.

#### 4.2.3. The quest for alignment with other aspects of personal identity

Besides the tension between activism and business, our respondents’ narratives revealed the complexity and multiplicity of the demands made by and of them. Workers expected that instead of adopting a hypocritical attitude at work, hiding their real self, their professional choice would enable them to avoid contradiction with various components of their personal identity. They chose their current job to align with moral values that they often received from the moral or religious family education that shaped their vision of the world. But, for instance, workers from modest backgrounds often questioned the fact that their offer was mostly aimed at privileged people, and that they worked in an *“entre-soi”* (exclusive group) where they ultimately did not feel they contributed to changing the world: *“We must be careful that under the guise of helping people we don’t end up addressing only rich*

people. *It bothers me, I feel cornered, because I was born in the working class, copper mine diggers and so on...*” (Paul). In other cases, family heritage can carry opposing weight, when workers have to face the perplexity of an entourage that measures the sacrifice made for such a precarious position: *“Sometimes my mother says, ‘What the hell are you doing with your education, you’re a shop assistant!’”* (Sidonie). In fact, data on the respondents’ economic situation show that most suffered from job insecurity and poverty, despite their high level of education (see A2).

Overall, our respondents’ narratives highlighted the consequences of occupational tensions, threatening their well-being and abilities in their professional and private life. Feelings of exhaustion, linked to the overload of competing identities, were mentioned by managers who struggled with the dissonance between the role they had to play and their ideals: *“Sometimes I wish I didn’t care... It’s so exhausting to make choices all the time. It would be so simple to watch TV and go to M\*\*\* (fast food restaurant)... So much simpler... It’s exhausting to refuse ease... Sometimes you’re tired, you don’t want to do everything... Sometimes it’s more complicated. I still believe in what I fight for, but I’m tired...”*(Victor). Reality creates painful dilemmas that workers cannot resolve and they feel torn between many paradoxical demands: *“You refuse this system, it makes you sick, but at the same time, you’re forced to feed it a little if you don’t want to be a fringe element”* (Victor). Workers have to do the dirty work that they are uncomfortable mentioning: firing people, calling to order, claiming unpaid debts from partners in the same network: *“N is going to become a real bank, for retail customers. It bothers me... I don’t want to return to what knew before... The “payment has been rejected” problem, the problem “I’m going to be in debt”, you call the client to say “you are in debt, you don’t want to pay” and so on...”* (Oscar) *“I never wanted to have a sales activity. That’s the most tragic part. I never wanted to sell anything to anyone, but here we are... going in for activism... I don’t like money. That’s the problem; I think it’s the most evil invention of our civilization”* (Victor).

Using work to enact activism still takes individuals away from their original intention, putting back tensions that they experienced in conventional organizations.

### 4.3. Paradox vs Dilemma mindsets: are tensions to be lived with or overcome?

Using structural analysis to gain insight into the sense-making our interviewees' narratives give of the persistent contradictions they encounter in their professional life, we identified four different categories of narrative, reflecting four types of mindsets with which the individuals we studied seemed to face the numerous tensions generated by their occupation. As in structural analysis, disjunction (the word a given word is contrasted with, like girl or man, for the word boy) plays a crucial role, we emphasize here the main disjunction each type of narrative, and hence of mindset we identify, relies on.

#### 4.3.1. The paradox mindset: *"Tensions cannot be overcome but I can be a bridger"* (the bridger)

Paul, Léo, and Marine's narratives were structured around the disjunction between what could be done ideally and what, as workers, they had chosen to do: *"We're not saints. And it's better, because it pushes people to follow us"*(Paul). In their narratives, tensions are not perceived as something to be overcome. These narrators do not see themselves as responsible for the contradictions they confront and just press on, accepting them. They try to strike a balance between activism and prudence from the outset. Well aware of the contradictions, they appropriate them, and describe them as useful: *"Being an island is not our thing. We are here to build bridges"* (Paul). This appears to be a permanent feature of their personality, a mindset they adopt in a variety of situations: for instance, Marine told how working in M\*\*\*, a fast food restaurant *"taught her a lot"* and Paul explained why he eats in M\*\*\* with his children: *"My son won't fantasize the thing and run to M\*\*\* when we let him go when he is 18."* They see accepting tensions in their professional life as necessary to launch projects and keep them going instead of being petrified by unreachable targets: *"If you need everything to be perfect to take the plunge, you will never do anything. No, at some point, you take the plunge, you set a goal and try to achieve it"* (Paul). These narrators re-think contradictions as a means of action for long-term political gain, a way to achieve a final ethical purpose, while keeping in sight the goal to gradually reduce inconsistencies when the organization becomes more solid. Marine, for instance, would prefer to sell only local produce to subscribers, but postpones the project: *"We are not ready yet."* Hence, she prefers

to consider contradictions as means of action: *“I eat local food, I almost never eat bananas, for instance, and I’d prefer to sell our produce exclusively. But we have a clientele with habits that date back 20 years with the previous farmer, and they know that when they come to our stall they can have bananas, oranges, litchis, etc. But many customers came first for bananas, then lemons, then apples and oh! The apples are local! And then they get used to coming.”* Compromise is seen as “better than nothing,” while the narrators prefer to focus on positive outcomes: *“If people think that you’re perfect, it will inhibit them”* (Paul). Contradictions become a means toward achievement of their projects, which tempers the frustration they might resent when confronting necessary compromise.

The narrators in this category often evoke work in progress: *“The second year of the business, we paid ourselves €300, so... to be honest, we used to shop at Lidl. Step by step, when we were able to afford it, we started to buy our vegetables in organic shops, and so on. I like it because it’s the progress approach. That means that nobody is perfect, but that we all have room for improvement.”* (Leo). They keep strict guidelines at the core of the project. For instance, Paul delisted products that sold well but did not meet his criteria: *“For me, products must have a social background, and be environmentally friendly.”*

Although they sacrifice for their values, they are lucid and realistic about their limitations and personal needs as well as activism (money, time for the family, their desire to stay in control of their organization as an entrepreneur): *“We try to follow through, and if things start to make us struggle, we drop the pressure and start again, little by little, and we go to M\*\*\* (fast food restaurant) [laughs]”* (Paul).

More disjunction arises in their discourse between activism and extremism. Workers who see themselves as bridgers claim they accept contradictions because they dread the ideologist positions hidden in drastic guidelines and see them as detrimental: *“There will always be people there to lecture you. I’ve already been to M\*\*\*, because we have two kids. I don’t like it. They like it, but not the burgers, they like the marketing, toys... They need to learn it. But my son is seven, he lives in a family who eat organic, it’s his world, but we are not in a sect, we don’t want to shut out reality”* (Paul). As they prefer to conciliate paradoxical visions and remain moderate, they stay away from extremist ethos. To justify this, they use scientifically supported discourse to counter the philosophies commonly valued by the solidarity milieu that they associate with inefficiency and absurdity: *“We must be interested in Marxism*



*philosophy. The issue of commons, for instance, is a real issue. But some people have a hyper-restrictive view, dogmatic positions: that's pointless, not scientific. It's poor*" (Leo). Regarding another kind of philosophy seen as extremist, Marine, before developing rationally why she did not believe in a society without animals, talked about vegan customers and friends: *"I would like to see people in our farm, because they don't realize. Killing ewes is cruel, isn't it? There is an astonishing disconnect between farming and veganism."* These narrators see themselves as self-doubters, ready to learn and discuss: *"I don't know if I would be strong enough to be more activist, more involved. I don't feel perfect. I envy activists who have a vision and stick to it. I feel like I'm always putting myself in question. Never sure of anything..."* (Paul).

#### 4.3.2. A first dilemma mindset: *"Tensions should and could be solved if only I were stronger"* (the sinner)

Victor, Ben, and Sidonie's narratives are built on the disjunction between what they should do and what they try to do. They experience their job as a saintly mission: *"I'm not enlightened, I haven't attained full enlightenment. There are days when I feel lazy, when I'm not centered"* (Ben). These narrators set very high ethical standards for all aspects of their activity: *"I know I set the bar high. But I won't compromise"* (Sidonie).

They suffer from the impossibility of achieving the perfect coherence they desire: tensions are experienced as guilt. Indeed, they consider that contradictions could be overcome, as they are the result of weakness (too much greed, too little physical resistance, abnegation, or humility). Conciliation would be difficult, mainly because of their personal limitations, but wisdom and courage would allow them to reconcile the various roles inherent to organizational life, and to escape the dark side, linked, for instance, with their managerial role: *"You must do it with your being, not with your ego"* (Ben). In fact, they evoke people who inspire them, and who seem able to reach this perfect coherence, as evidence that conciliation is possible: *"There are models that came before us. Gandhi, Bob Marley, John Lennon, Pierre Rabhi. People who have really contributed to the world. They were able to see the guiding light where they were, we all have this guiding light"* (Ben). Similarly, Sidonie described her boss—a far cry from these iconic figures—almost with devotion: *"He can be a boss, he can manage, he*

*can get everybody to follow. He's a hard worker, he's kind of a superman, on an energy level, energetic, oh yes...completely."*

In their narratives, respondents in this category often referred to themselves as belonging to a minority in conflict with the mainstream economic system represented by iconic capitalist firms. As members of this opposing minority, they expect work to be uncomfortable and perceive difficulty as adding value to their actions. Sidonie explains: *"It's not illogical in the capitalistic logic. We swim against the tide."* They explain some of their strategic choices, like underpricing, working for free, or refusing lucrative markets, in terms of their taste for taking the steepest path. For instance, Ben, the vegan food truck cook and farmer, said that despite a difficult business launch, he preferred a working-class neighborhood market to a wealthier area: *"Yes, the most lucrative market is the rich one. But that's not our goal."*

The narrators in this category seem to see work as a calling that involves sacrifice, which they accept without question and without considering their own needs. Ben explained how he lives with his partner on his unemployment benefits: *"I defend values, but I haven't earned anything so far. [...] We tell ourselves that we will cope on our own, there are odd jobs for that... harvesting grapes and so on... But we can do it. That's why we took the plunge like that. We have no children, we have nothing to fear! We have a roof, and food, that's enough."*

Confronting inconsistencies in their professional life, our interviewees in this category seemed to experience them with concomitant low self-esteem. They felt exhausted and incapable, without blaming anyone other than themselves. For instance, Sidonie acknowledged that because of her lack of physical and mental strength, and changing personal needs, she would not be able to spend another winter in the indoor market where her organic shop is situated, unlike some colleagues who had been working there for decades (we learned a few months later that she was pregnant): *"My shop is fed by fresh energy, and supported by supermen... We don't have the same capacity, we are not equal in terms of our needs. I admit that it's a lot for me [to cope with]"* (Sidonie). Non-verbal communication strengthened their verbatim accounts, demonstrating lassitude and feelings of failure when they evoked tensions: *"In my sarcastic way, I say that I became greedy."*(Victor).

4.3.3. A second dilemma mindset: *“Tensions should have been resolved but I see myself as having lost the battle”* (the quitter)

Charlie, Nathan, and Hilde’s narratives are structured by a disjunction between what the workers wanted to do and what they were forced to do. These narratives have a strong chronological dimension. First, the respondent describes an initial, ideal, and very demanding project: *“We wanted an ultra-coherent project”* (Nathan). Organization members set very high ethical standards and a level of activism in the organization that is often higher than in private life: the group’s polarization toward strong values is often based on a political and intellectualized agenda. Disenchantment follows as workers realize the limits of their ideals. For example, Nathan, a passionate reader of literature about the emancipation of labor, admits that he used to have *“a romantic view of the cooperative system.”*

These narrators indicate that the project finally fails to match their values, given the human and economic sacrifices that result in poverty (challenging family identity and self-esteem) and contentious relationships at work: *“We’ve moved away from the original project, and it’s not interesting any more”* (Nathan). This gap between expectation and experience generates renunciation and extinguishes the taste for sacrifice in the name of the calling. Finally, they express conscious resignation to the experience of lack of identity coherence, together with emotional exhaustion, anger, cynicism, frustration, bitterness, and despair: *“People are going to say ‘No way! You sold your soul to capitalists, you’re not the same, you’ve changed!’ That’s true, I have changed! Sorry, I have changed, I was fed up with abject poverty. I wanted to live, and to be able to buy Christmas presents for my kids! [...] I didn’t want to end up homeless for the beauty of the cause”* (Charlie).

To avoid low self-esteem and discomfort in the face of incompatibility, the workers in this category impute the contradiction they met to a scapegoat (a manager, another organization, customers or suppliers), blaming them for the failure of the perfectly coherent project they wanted, and to whom they have finally surrendered. For Charlie, the public service in charge of worker-owned companies is responsible for their economic situation, which constrains him to accept contracts with mass

distribution and take a second, more profitable, job. Nathan blames the same service: *“They treat you like dogs because you are in the catering service. For them, it’s a convicts’ activity, anyway... They say human first, but as soon as they have to deal with human beings at work, they forget it.”* He renounced a 100% organic supply as he also felt fooled by local producers and customers: *“Your raw material costs an arm and a leg, you restrict your margin, you reduce the wages because so far, I think we have the lowest wages in the street... My boys are poorly paid, they have materials that are hard to work because, while next door’s chips are delivered ready-for-frying, we brush and cut potatoes and we have to go and fetch them from the farm. More work, more time, less pay, and we feel that they’re taking the piss... So I’ve now said we will have a non-organic offer and a 30% more expensive organic offer.”* For Hilde, deceived by the governance system in the worker-owned company she joined, the boss who was an “informal dictator” is responsible for the failure. She accepted a minimum salary reduced by the equity investment she has to pay without any real voice in front of the founder: *“I could have asked [the boss], I often thought about it... he’s an authoritarian who was all-powerful, always informal of course, so no possibility of a counter-putsch. It was really complicated, so I knew that if I did that, I would have questioned something much bigger than the meeting place, there were bigger concerns... So I didn’t want to fight...”* Apart from these scapegoats, the narrators talk about “alter egos” who share the same disillusionment and feelings of failure: other colleagues or entrepreneurs.

The workers in this category express a will to leave the organization or stop the business, as identity alignment was what justified the sacrifice they made: *“I’m tired enough, like Nathan, to say that I must give up everything, losing all the money the company owes me, basta, I’ll do it. I’m not here to fight...”* (Charlie). As the workers are not necessarily able to resign, they stay and work with reluctance or, as a manager, continue to allow the strategy to deviate from its initial ethical standards: *“Every time we need to cut corners, we shift away from the original project, and in the long run, it’s not very interesting”* (Nathan). In these narratives we find many proposals and non-verbal communication showing anger, bitterness, and cynicism, especially toward other activist workers who refuse to compromise: *“There are diehards like Victor who discontinue products sold in mass retailing [sarcastic laugh]. Does that mean he will remove my software from his computer if my software is in A\*\*\*(hypermarket)’s cash register system?”* (Charlie).

#### 4.3.4. A last dilemma mindset: *"Tensions must be solved and will be... by the organization"* (the believer)

The last of the narrative categories we identified is built on the disjunction between what is done in the respondents' organizations and what is done in other, less virtuous organizations. Daphne, Oscar, and Dam adopt this narrative strategy. In their accounts, the organization they work for allows them to flourish and should be highly respected and valued for this. Conversely, the psychological distress experienced in previous jobs where respondents suffered from high identity tension is still a vivid memory: *"You're trained, taught you don't deserve better, that you're not worth more, that you're already lucky to have what you've got, you never have any autonomy, you have to do what they say [...]. You're just a subordinate, a number, a line of figures with what you've done, what you've produced, what you have to do, so you're dehumanized"* (Oscar). Then, the organization they chose to join helped its workers to find the coherence that had been lacking in previous job experiences, to fulfill their need for differentiation (through respect for their individuality), and to integrate the group: *"At some point, I thought it was too beautiful, that the stage sets would collapse, that I would discover something. Actually, not at all...It's still the same..."* (Oscar). As a consequence, these narrators seem to adhere completely to the organizational project. They make all the effort needed to commit and to adapt to the occupational identity expected, even when this evokes frustrating aspects of organizational life.

Early on in these narratives, our respondents strongly support the workplace ethics, and a substantial part of their narratives consists of promoting the organization's difference, pictured as strong and free: *"We don't care about the El Khomri law.<sup>4</sup> We decide what we want by ourselves"* (Dam). The organization's strength is depicted as having even allowed the narrators to work on personal identity, to become free of internalized patterns (such as hierarchy), to shake off the entrepreneurial identity that tends to make it difficult to share leadership, power, decision-making, and responsibility, or to be far more activist than they used to be: *"I knew nothing. Now I'm discovering it. I'm able to have a fresh look, almost like a child"* (Oscar). For instance, Dam, a founding entrepreneur of a worker-owned company admitted that his belief in the cooperative spirit conflicted with his inclination to keep lead projects. He finally reworked that aspect, which he sees as a bad tendency of his entrepreneur identity:

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<sup>4</sup>The El Khomri law came into force in August 2016 and is a piece of national employment legislation in France. It is commonly known as the El Khomri law or the Loi travail. It provoked country-wide protests by French labor unions.

*“In the beginning, this business was like my baby. Five of us created it, and now there are 14 of us. At some point, you have to force yourself to get out of the thing and tell yourself that the company belongs to the people who work in it.”* These workers are reluctant to talk about incoherence, shown in certain signs of discomfort. Later in the narratives, our respondents give us glimpses of the contradictions that create internal conflict: dirty work inherent to the job, the organization’s ethical limits, the resurgence of unwanted social mechanisms, dubious partnerships, etc.: *“I think it’s crucial to review our governance in order to be... much more... consistent with our message and the values of the solidarity economy”* (Daphne). Workers demonstrate great expectations, but systematically match current sources of dissatisfaction with organizational solutions, either through a large-scale project (governance or strategy transformation) or through day-to-day practices (management tools, regular meetings, and so on). For instance, Oscar balanced his concerns about the future strategy of the ethical bank that employs him by stating: *“We have an ethical committee that keeps watch over it”* (Oscar). Dam explained the rules his team had created in his worker-owned restaurant: *“We set the standards we use for both places. For instance, whether we choose organic rather than local products. For the cooperative shares, we are all limited to €3,000. So there won’t be anyone who’s invested €10,000 while another only has €2,000 or €3,000. We block it, we stop it. Symbolically, it puts everyone on the same level.”*

In return, these narrators suggest that they will leave the organization if no changes are made. For instance, Daphne expects her fair trade tea company to change its governance system; *“I’m not going to wait 15 years for things to change.”*

## 5. Discussion

In this paper, we seek to understand how members of hybrid organizations cope at the individual level with the tensions they experience in and around their professional occupation. The objective of our research was to identify potential variations in the interpretation members of hybrid organizations resorted to when confronting these tensions and to analyze these variations in terms of the paradox vs. dilemma mindsets of their authors. We interviewed 12 members of French hybrid organizations who

specifically claimed to have purposely chosen their present occupation and asked them to tell us how they got to their present job. We used narrative methodology and structural analysis to document the way they accounted for the tensions they experienced in their occupational life. We obtained three main results.

First, our interviewees exhibited a strong sensitivity to the tensions they perceived or sometimes experienced in their previous professional life, between personal pro-social values and the profit orientation of many organizations. They constructed these contradictions as a dilemma, and depicted their current occupation as the solution they adopted to solve that dilemma. In this regard, and unsurprisingly, given the way we chose our interviewees, the individuals featured in this study could be described at first sight as “idealists,” such as those described by Ashforth and Reingen (2014) or Besharov (2014), who endorse social idealism as members of an hybrid organization, rather than financial viability (vs. pragmatist members who do the opposite, or pluralists who see societal and economic values as mutually reinforcing). However, as we shall see, although all our interviewees shared this dilemma mindset at the general level of personal vs. occupational values, they had various ways of dealing with the practical contradictions they might encounter between these two sets of values in their daily occupational life. While some framed these contradictions with a more paradox mindset, accepting them as opportunities to learn and progress, others kept seeing these contradictions as unacceptable at both the general and practical level. The narratives provided by these latter individuals relied on the assumption that the contradictions they depicted should and/or could be overcome and elaborated on the way to attain this desired outcome. In this regard, the divide between individuals with a paradox vs. a dilemma mindset provides new insights into the distinction operated in the hybrid organization literature between idealists, on the one hand, and pluralists or pragmatists, on the other. In particular, our work calls for some nuance regarding the level at which members of hybrid organizations articulate the contradictions inherent in their occupational life.

Second, the individuals we studied all experienced a high number of intensive occupational tensions, despite the fact that they had chosen their occupation purposely to align their personal pro-social values with that of the organization. In line with previous literature, some of these tensions are generated by the dual nature of hybrid organizations and their joint pursuit of financial and social

objectives (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014). However, the individual level approach we use here allows us to identify other sources of tensions. One of those is the high expectations of the individuals we studied had towards organizations that, as part of the solidarity economy field are supposed to exhibit a real willingness to have solidary social relationships predominating over individual interest and profit. A second source of tensions felt by hybrid organization members at the individual level stems from customers' demands for exemplarity. This translates into a pressure to behave at all times in perfect alignment with a set of demanding moral values, whether professional or personal, and to a feeling of being constantly monitored and pressured to endorse a demanding social role in many aspects of life. A final source of tensions described by our interviewees is generated by complex family loyalties, pulling in various directions. Some of these loyalties might support the individuals' commitment to a prosocial type of occupation, while others translate into harsh criticism about the cost of this commitment in terms of low wages or poor career prospects. These tensions come in addition to the tensions typically described elsewhere in the literature of hybrid organizations, which tends to focus on the duality (social vs. financial) of their objectives. This result emphasizes the need for hybrid organization literature to consider, in addition to the organizational level (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; André, Cho, & Laine, 2018; Battilana *et al.*, 2015; Besharov, 2014; Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Bacq *et al.*, 2018), the way tensions are experienced at the individual level.

Our third result relates to the types of narratives developed by members of hybrid organizations to diffuse the occupational tensions they experience. We obtain a typology of four narratives (see Table 4), involving four mindsets, one of a paradox mindset, and three variations on a dilemma mindset. Individuals who perceive themselves as “bridgers”, and construct occupational tensions as paradoxes rather than dilemmas, emphasize the gap they experience between what they would like to do and what they have chosen to do in order to accommodate the paradoxes with which their occupational life is fraught. They tend to see this gap as an opportunity to progress and foster the personal values they cherish. All the other individuals in our study exhibit dilemma mindsets. In contrast to the “bridgers”, they see the occupational tensions they experience as negative and describe their attempts to overcome them and attain a wished-for state of greater coherence. However, individuals in this category vary in the narratives they propose to account for the type of dilemma they experience. We found three typical narratives. For the individuals who perceive themselves as too weak for the task,



the main disjunction framing their dilemmas is between what they think they should do and what they try to do. Not unlike some of the animal shelter workers described by Schabram and Maitlis (2017) or the women in Ely (1995), who struggle in law-firm with masculine and feminine attributes and are depicted as self-blamers, the individuals in this category run the risk of exhaustion, burn-out, and damage to their perception of self.

	<b>Narrator profile</b>	<b>Main disjunction</b>	<b>Quotes</b>
<b>Paradox mindset</b>	The bridger	What can be done ideally/what I chose to do	<i>“If people think that you’re perfect, it will inhibit them” (Paul).</i>
<b>Dilemma mindset</b>	The sinner	What I should do/what I try to do	<i>“In my sarcastic way, I say that I became greedy”(Victor).</i>
	The quitter	What I wanted to do/what I was forced to do	<i>“Every time we need to cut corners, we shift away from the original project, and in the long run, it’s not very interesting”(Nathan)</i>
	The believer	What is done in my organization/what is done in other ones	<i>“We have an ethical committee that keeps watch over it”(Oscar)</i>

Table 4: Summary of the four narrative schemes

A second narrative developed by workers exhibiting a dilemma mindset was that of defeated members of hybrid organizations who accept contradictions grudgingly, sheltering behind anger, acrimony, or cynicism. They appear disillusioned and exhibit a will to “give up” and “stop fighting.” While clearly framing the tensions they experience as dilemmas, they attribute their failure to reach greater coherence and succeed in their pursuit of cherished values to “others,” “the context,” or a scapegoat, rather than a specificity of their self.

Finally, the third category of individuals with a dilemma rather than paradox mindset also tends not to accept contradictions and tensions as inherent parts of their professional life but sees the perceived dilemmas as taboo. These workers are not keen to discuss the tensions they experience and prefer to elaborate on how the organization for which they work takes care of them and is working hard to solve the contradictions they describe as temporary. The main disjunction they resort to lies between what is done in their organization and what is done in other, less-virtuous, organizations.

Overall, our analysis echoes the results of previous literature by depicting individuals succeeding in accepting contradictions and even transcending them (Schneider, 1990; Ely, 1995) while others struggle and resort to projections on a scapegoat (Vince and Broussine, 1996) and might be defeated or broken (Shabram and Maitlis, 2017). Besides, our typology provides two new insights. First, the mindsets of the individuals we study seem to result from a dynamic understudied in the literature. Two groups in our typology share a strong relationship with present time. For bridgers, paradoxes are not to be overcome, they are to be lived with in the present and used to progress towards a better service of the pro-social values which are at the core of the organization they work for. Similarly, the individuals who live the tensions that pervade their professional life as a dilemma, but rely on the organization to sort for the generated issues, tend to frame the contradictions they encounter in present time. They differ from other individuals for which a painful experience of trying to solve a dilemma and failing *in the past*, generates anger, cynicism and frustration. They also differ from those individuals with a dilemma mindset which dream about the perfect person they would like to be in a dreamt-of the future and blame themselves for not being able to attain their objective as yet.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, our typology unveils a specific feature of hybrid organizations, which besides being prone to conflicting values, cognitive tensions, and organizational identity issues, may be seen by some of their employees as able to provide a solution to the unresolved contradiction they perceive as dilemmas. By refusing to reflect too much on these dilemmas and crediting their organization as committed enough to take them in charge, some of the individuals we study resort to a strategy not documented in the literature on paradox in more classical organizations. This result may have interesting implications for hybrid organizations who may develop creative ways to take care of

the emotional stress and cognitive conflicts experienced by employees that trust them to take care of issues they do not seem to be willing to solve at the individual level.

Overall, we believe our work makes two main contributions. First, we contribute to the literature on hybrid organizations, by taking, in contrast with most previous literature, an individual-level and narrative approach to document the identity tensions experienced by members of these organizations. This allows us a finer-grained analysis of the members depicted as idealists, pragmatists, or pluralists in the literature (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Besharov, 2014; Battilana, 2018). We show that the difference between idealists, pluralists, and pragmatists might be usefully enlightened by a study of the paradox vs. dilemma mindsets exhibited by members of hybrid organizations. Analyzing these mindsets at different levels, we gain insight into the fact that some individuals might exhibit a dilemma mindset about cherished values at the general level and more of a paradox mindset at the practical, everyday level. We observe considerable interpretive variation in how the challenges are experienced at the individual level and emphasize the necessity of leveraging not only on inter-subjective interactions, as prior literature has done, but also on individual cognition and interpretive subjectivity to understand the challenges hybrid organizations cope with. We show that the organizational level is not sufficient as a lens to understand the potential trajectories of workers who exhibit a strong commitment to their occupational life but deal inadequately with the tensions generated by the hybridity of the organizations for which they work. This provides a stimulus to extend the research on hybrid organizations towards a better understanding of the micro foundations of organizational complexity and especially towards analyses of actors' ideas, interpretation and construction of meaning.

Our work thus partly answers the call in recent streams of literature to reassert the role of individual cognition and subjectivity to understand organizational paradoxes (Miron-Spektor *et al.*, 2018) and the interpretation of competing institutional logics (Bévort & Suddaby, 2016; Blomgren & Waks, 2015; Sirris, 2019).

Second, we contribute to paradox studies (Schad *et al.*, 2019; Lewis & Smith, 2014; Miron Spektor *et al.*, 2019) by refining the distinction between paradox vs. dilemma mindsets and showing that there are

many types of the latter. We depict too-weak-for-the-task and defeated types of dilemma mindsets, which partly echoes the “calling paths” described in Schabram and Maitlis (2017). We also identify a type of dilemma mindset, which places the highest stake on the organization, seeing it as best capable of solving the dilemmas individuals perceive but do not wish to confront at their level. Our work emphasizes the temporal dimensions of these mindsets and suggests the dynamics of their evolution is of crucial importance. Individuals facing the challenges of hybrid organizations with a paradox mindset not only seem to be insulated from identity violation (Besharov, 2014) but also appear capable of framing tensions into a dynamic process where contradictions are a means to progress and learn. However, individuals confronting identity tensions with a dilemma mindset differ as regards the dynamics depicted in their identity narratives. Those who construct tensions as taboo remain in a dynamic where improvement is still possible. They hope solutions will be provided by the organization, if not immediately, at least later on. The too-weak-for-the-task type of narrative seems to refer to a fixed identity, perceived as insufficiently armed for the necessary struggle, which might lead to exhaustion and burn-out. The defeat type of narrative, although probably less dangerous for the individuals who attribute perceived failure to the context or a scapegoat, seems to be triggered by past experiences from which individuals do not easily recover. Again, the risk here is of exhaustion, cynicism, and dis-identification.

Previous literature (Besharov, 2014; Smith and Tishman, 2005; Smith and Lewis, 2011; Miron-Spektor *et al.*, 2018; Zheng *et al.*, 2018; Vince and Broussine, 1996; Schneider, 1990; Ely, 1995) suggests that individuals with a paradox-mindset seem to better perform and exhibit more resilience than those with a dilemma mindset when confronting the challenges of occupational life. Since literature on thriving hybrid organizations emphasizes carefully selecting members and socializing them as a key factor of success (Besharov, 2014; Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Bacq *et al.*, 2018), understanding the way individuals construct paradox and dilemmas differently, the level at which they are ready to see tensions as dilemmas rather than paradoxes and the kind of dynamics they demonstrate might be relevant competencies for hybrid organizations dealing with unavoidable institutional complexities. Our work also provides a stimulus for research on potential organizational responses to individuals’ type of mindsets (Kark *et al.*, 2016).

## 6. Conclusion

We believe our work, despite some limitations, has several significant organizational implications. The main limitation of our study is the number of interviewees, which is too small for us to be overly assertive about the generalizability of our results. Not uncommon in studies favoring interpretative depth over quantity of subjects (Alvesson & Robertson, 2016), this small number nevertheless allowed us to construct a thorough structural analysis that we believe yields significant and relevant results. Including individuals answering a calling (Schabram and Maitlis, 2017), our work contributes to a better understanding of the increasing number of people who seek work that satisfies their core values (Wrzesniewski, 2015) and pursue meaningful and purpose-led occupations.

Previous research on hybrid organizations has provided insights into the organizational practices these organizations seem to use successfully to overcome the challenges generated by the dual nature of their objectives. In her comprehensive summary of the existing literature, Battilana (2018) proposes that successful hybrid organizations share a commonality: *“they have created and maintained a hybrid organizational culture that embeds the joint pursuit of financial and social goals in all aspects or organizational life.”* The pillars of such an organizational culture, she explains, are human resources management practices as well as setting organizational goals and structuring organizational activities. Our work shed lights on these results in two main ways. While carefully selecting hybrid organization members and socializing them involves privileging pluralistic members who help to mitigate the tensions between “idealists” and “capitalists” (Besharov, 2014; Dutton *et al.*, 2010) and skillfully playing on inter group interactions (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014), we can assume idealists form the bulk of would-be applicants to hybrid organizations. We show in this paper that it is crucial to understand their mindset, the level at which they articulate paradox vs. dilemma states of mind, and the kind of dynamics they demonstrate. The best interest of hybrid organizations might well be to employ individuals who are idealists at the more general level, and to identify and retain among them the pragmatists or pluralists, who are best able to handle the challenges of hybridity (keeping the risk of mission drift in mind). As idealists provide the natural bulk of applicants to hybrid organizations, a useful skill could be the capacity to identify and select those among them whose dynamics of commitment, despite a structural dilemma mindset, remain flexible and open to progress.

Further, we concur with previous literature in emphasizing the importance of the organization taking charge of the plurality of objectives, as this meets the demands the most promising (taboo) idealists clearly have vis-à-vis the organization. More generally, our work suggests that skillfully designed management tools could be critical to the success of hybrid organizations: they have the power to relieve some of the tensions members experience in their occupational life and to facilitate positive dynamics of identification for these members.



## Chapter II

### *"It's a Bible!"*

# Alleviating activist workers' identity tensions with organizational CSR standards

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*"Nevertheless, I think that even if I haven't read it, this specification note is a Bible."*

Activist and employee in an organic shop





## 1. Introduction

The last few years have been marked in Europe by the rise of the ecology party, while all other politicians are adopting a green discourse. Young people from all countries are demonstrating in the streets to denounce the inertia in the face of the looming ecological catastrophe, while local initiatives, individual or collective, are multiplying. People are reconsidering the impact of their consumption, their waste, their transport or their work: fair trade, local or organic products, the "Zero Waste" program, veganism, opportunity and sharing are no longer only appreciated by marginal population groups, but are attracting the attention of the traditional media and the general public. Companies have long understood these growing concerns and have integrated the dimension of corporate social responsibility (CSR) into their strategy, offering researchers new phenomena to explore. Echoing considerations on this topic, in addition to paying increasing attention to CSR engagement and exploring the impact of CSR practices at a macro or inter-organizational level, practitioners and researchers in organizational studies have focused on the intra-organizational dynamics involved in CSR initiatives (Costas and Kärreman, 2013; Christensens, Morsing and Thyssen, 2013). Among the multiple stakeholders involved in CSR initiatives, workers have particularly attracted the attention of researchers (Gond *et al.*, 2017). Organization scholars have shown that CSR initiatives promote many positive effects for organizations, such as attractiveness, trust, job satisfaction, leadership, motivation, commitment, loyalty or reputation (Turban & Greening, 1997; Dögl & Holtbrügge, 2014; Valentine & Fleischman, 2008; Lee *et al.*, 2013; Kim *et al.*, 2010; Brammer *et al.*, 2007). However, *"to announce CSR ideals publicly is to create expectations"*. Consequently, decoupling CSR discourse and practice cannot be a long-term strategy and triggers cynicism (Christensen *et al.*, 2013), while CSR that is not rooted in the organization can be perceived as "greenwashing" (Aguinis & Glavas, 2013). Thus, the organization must refine its strategy to align itself with its promises (Haack, Schoeneborn & Wickert, 2012).

However, researchers in this field have neglected to explore how workers at the individual level also simultaneously adapt to the actual practices of their organizations. This process is particularly crucial among the growing share of workers with a strong pre-existing "green" or "activist" identity (Corning and Myers, 2002). In this paper, we will refer to these individuals as "activist workers", that is, workers for whom their work responds to *"personal need to pursue collective interests, by addressing social and*

*environmental issues affecting the collective, in order to produce some changes and preventing other ones*" (Corning and Myers, 2002). The same authors indicate that the *"individual's propensity to engage in activism is a developed, relatively stable, yet changeable orientation toward political action-taking"*. Logically, these workers should be particularly receptive to CSR initiatives in their workplaces. But in addition, they may logically have high ethical expectations of their organization and therefore need to adapt to actual management practices. This is even more problematic in hybrid organizations (Battilana, 2018) that operate at the intersection of the social, environmental and business sectors and face the challenge of jointly pursuing social and financial objectives (Smith & Besharov, 2019; Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Battilana & Dorado, 2010). Activist workers can expect more from these particular organizations that claim a pro-social mission. The potential mismatch between those ideal organizations they dream of belonging to and the imperfect organizations they work for could trigger a process of alignment or mismatch with actual CSR practices. This process remains unexplored (Gond *et al.*, 2010).

In addition to these high expectations regarding CSR, another problem encountered by this population working for a higher goal is that of avoiding excessive commitment (Duffy and Dik, 2013). There are also questions about the role that CSR practices play in balancing personal needs with the propensity to sacrifice for a higher goal.

Based on these two questionings, the purpose of this paper is to study how activist workers, who have strong demands regarding CSR and expect workplace standards to be in harmony with their own moral values, perceive and use practical management tools that turn CSR discourse into daily practices. We propose an extreme case (Eisenhardt, 1989) to study this process. We chose to conduct this research in Orgacoop, an organic food retailing cooperative network. This hybrid organization combines an historical activist identity and a business identity. Organic shops have often provided an interesting research context for organizational scholars interested in tensions resulting from ambiguity between "utopian ideals and mundane business concerns" (Besharov, 2014; Ashforth and Reingen, 2014; Endrissat *et al.* 2015; Farias, 2017): that tension is more than ever enhanced by the competition of newcomers in that booming market, constraining old activist organizations with an hybrid identity to adopt a more business-oriented approach in order to survive. We have conducted 27

semi-structured interviews of shop-floor workers who claim to be “activist” about the "specification notice", a set of CSR standards which frames the activity of the shops belonging to this network.

While we could expect that workers would be particularly cautious and critical regarding CSR in their organization, we find that they display surprising trust in the organization which constructed the standards at work in Orgacoop. This tool is often referred to but its precise content remains largely unknown by our interviewees. The trust workers tend to exhibit is based on imagery about the expertise and ethics of the organization. However, we show that it can backfire if workers have the sense to be exploited.

In developing our arguments, we make three contributions. First, we demonstrate the benefits for workers of CSR standards in managing identity tensions, particularly in hybrid organizations. Second, we show that against all expectations, it seems that these demanding activist workers do not really seek to know the standards, but are satisfied with their mere existence. We therefore link this ignorance to the cultural and symbolic dimension of CSR standards. They would be an artifact allowing workers to externalize identity conflicts to a mythical organization, the result of deep trust. Thirdly, however, we demonstrate that this blind trust is nevertheless limited and presents a risk. In particular, we contrast the dynamics that arise from social and environmental norms. In light of these contributions, we will recommend organizational practices.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1. CSR as a domination tool: a critical perspective

The largest company can no longer afford not to recognize, at least in its discourse, its responsibility for the externalities of its activity. As a result, ethical initiatives are flourishing in the organizational landscape.

Among the stakeholders concerned by CSR initiatives (such as ethical standards, codes of conduct, CSR programs and activities, charter...), workers are attracting the attention of the organization's specialists. Most studies have mainly adopted an instrumental approach to CSR, demonstrating the positive results of CSR on organizational commitment and identification (Brammer *et al.*, 2007; Müller *et al.*, 2012; Farooq *et al.*, 2014; Glavas and Godwin, 2012; Kim *et al.*, 2010; Rego *et al.*, 2011), reputation and attractiveness (Turban and Greening, 1997), perceived external prestige and citizenship behaviors (Carmeli, 2005). These studies mainly refer to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1974) to explain these positive results. According to Tajfel, the groups (e.g., organization, social class, family, soccer team, etc.) to which people belong would be an important source of pride and self-esteem and would provide a sense of social identity (i.e.: sense of belonging to the social world). CSR combined with very positive values would enhance the pride and self-esteem that members would find at work, giving them a better image of themselves (Turban and Greening, 1997).

With respect to the ability of CSR to address personal identity needs, other researchers have proposed a more critical approach to the organizational dynamics arising from CSR standards. They point out that these positive consequences may conceal some of the mechanisms by which firms exploit and control employees. According to these authors, the CSR discourse is mainly defined by narrow business interests, constituting an ideological movement aimed at legitimizing and consolidating the power of large corporations (Banerjee, 2008). In traditional organizational contexts, researchers have demonstrated that CSR standards have become new means of ideological control over corporations by exploiting the "ethics of narcissism" of human beings (Roberts, 2001). Through CSR initiatives, corporations would regulate identity (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002) through the exercise of aspirational control. Instead of the traditional strategy of imposing control, the new strategy would be based on the election of commitment and the role of the manager is rethought in terms of strategies for this election of commitment (Roberts, 2005).

Foucault studied the different modes of participation of individuals in their own subjectivation based on moral or scientific definitions of what they could be (Chan, 2000). Organizations, through CSR initiatives, would create a socially, ecologically and ethically "responsible corporate self" (Costas and Kärreman; 2013), giving workers an idealized self-image. In this way, according to these authors, CSR

functions as a socio-ideological management control system. Moreover, if workers play the CSR game, this could be explained by the fact that CSR initiatives would be used personally as a means to improve image or career. Consequently, workers would have some tolerance for decoupling: even if employees observe a gap between the company's CSR ambitions and management's actual actions, they would tolerate hypocrisy, as long as it is transitory, or due to a lack of capacity, not a lack of will (Christensen, Morsing and Thyssen, 2013).

## 2.2. The influence of the pre-existing “responsible self” on the matching process with CSR standards

However, in the existing literature that explores the dynamics of CSR initiatives, and particularly in the critical approach, it appears that workers either respond to self-interested motives or constitute a blank slate with no real pre-existing personal ethics, opinions or practices that would interfere with the way they perceive CSR initiatives. This view of workers devoid of any personal “responsible self” prior to being sensitized by the organization contradicts studies on the psychological micro foundations of CSR, showing the different individual drivers that influence the perception of CSR (Gond *et al.*, 2017).

Indeed, like awareness of social and environmental issues, concerns about the impact of human activity strongly influence the choices and behaviors of certain individuals in their social and private lives. The literature on marketing, for example, demonstrates a profound and lasting transformation in consumption, particularly among the younger generations (Johnson & Chattaraman, 2020), which is deeply linked to questions of identity (Urien & Kilbourne, 2011). Logically, it is to be expected that individuals who try to align their consumption with their values will find the same need to align their profession with these values. In this context, we make the hypothesis that workers are not those blank slates whose ethics are created and shaped by the organization, but that they display certain expectations in terms of CSR before joining the organization. Millennials, or Generation Y, in particular, have been identified as being very sensitive to CSR issues (Klimkiewicz & Oltra, 2017). In our opinion, this lack of consideration for what we will call, in reference to Costas and Kärreman (2013), “a pre-existing responsible self” keeps in the shadows certain dynamics that allow these people to adapt to

CSR. In particular, given the critical perception of CSR as an instrument of domination and control, it is questionable whether workers with a strong pre-existing "responsible self" are more prone to criticism and cynicism, or on the contrary more easily inspired by CSR initiatives.

This question is even more crucial among what we will refer to in this paper as "activist workers", i.e., individuals who have claimed to have chosen their work to express social concerns and convictions. Activism would be a *"developed, relatively stable, but changing orientation"* (Corning and Myers, 2002). In this case, instead of a new facet of employee identity created by CSR programs, this activist identity would be something that companies need to include in organizational life and practices when they decide to hire certain workers, or when workers who already belong to the organization develop this activist orientation. We can assume that among organizational practices, CSR initiatives should particularly attract the attention of these activist workers, as they allow them to assess whether their organization meets their ethical expectations and provides them with an adequate workplace to express their concerns and social convictions.

Among CSR initiatives, CSR standards may be suspected of eliciting particularly strong reactions among activist workers. The CSR standards that have emerged in recent decades in favor of greater respect for people, the environment or animals are *"initiatives based on principles, certification, reporting and accountability frameworks, and other formalized modes of industry self-regulation or co-regulation in the area of human rights, social rights and environmental protection"* (Haack, Schoeneborn, Wickert, 2012). These tools are likely to be sensitive objects among this population, as they clearly normalize the points of balance between values and profit, between idealism and pragmatism in the organization.

Furthermore, Colle *et al.* (2014) have highlighted one of the paradoxes of CSR: they could erode individual responsibility. First, because individuals could develop a *"counterproductive tendency towards quasi-automatic thinking, whereby individuals ask "Am I following the rule" instead of "Am I doing the right thing"*". Secondly, because the more successful CSR standards would be in shaping individual behavior, the less likely it would be the result of individual, morally responsible and

"ethically conscious" deliberation. We could predict reluctance or reservations among these activist workers to adopt standards which erode their individual responsibility.

Another issue among workers in these hybrid organizations characterized by this desire to work for a pro-social purpose is the management of identity issues related to the idealistic aspect of their identity. The literature on vocation, for example, shows how working for a higher purpose can be psychologically difficult at the individual level and threatens personal identity (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Kreiner *et al.*, 2006; Schabram & Maitlis, 2017).

In this regard, Foucault's theories argue that management tools are an invisible technology that provides discipline, control, dehumanization, and conformity of organizational behaviors (Foucault, 1977). This would lead us to take a suspicious stance on CSR standards regarding personal identity. However, our previous study on activist workers found that while the organizational level was not sufficient to understand the potential trajectories of workers who demonstrate a strong commitment to their work life, the organization was seen by some of their employees as capable of providing a solution to the unresolved contradiction that they perceive as dilemmas (see the "the Believer"'s mindset in the previous chapter). In particular, our findings suggest that management tools, including CSR standards, could provide organizational support in managing the tensions resulting from this strong commitment to work life.

Besharov's (2014) study in a socially responsible retail company corroborates the potential positive impact of management practices that promote and advance the social mission in a hybrid organization. In this health food store, workers with an "idealistic" profile (the equivalent of "activist" in this study), for whom societal values are important compared to economic values, have to work with individuals with divergent values. Management practices help to "confirm identity", that means workers perceive respect for the values they cherish. On the other hand, the absence of management practices encourages the violation of identity, which means that members interpret the behavior of others as a moral violation of the values they hold dear, a violation that is experienced only by "idealistic" members. These observations show that certain management practices are even more likely to support the particular category of militant workers.



Given these contrasting observations, one may wonder whether, indeed, these management tools play a role in the alienation of these militant workers and increase identity tensions, as the Foucauldian theory suggests it.

### 2.3. CSR standards in hybrid organizations

While some of these activist workers have to adapt their expectations to the traditional organizational context, another part of the workers are looking for a workplace that seems to provide them with the opportunity to live out their activist identity. They find in hybrid organizations the promise of coherence with their personal values. At first glance, organizations that generate social value in addition to profit (Battilana, 2018) should provide an adequate workplace for these workers in particular.

In these hybrid organizations, CSR standards are crucial to the success of the organization. For example, the creation of measurement tools can be a strategy for developing its own legitimacy and systemic power (Slager, Gond and Moon, 2012). On the other hand, tools are also a means of achieving political objectives and changing the world for organizations that want to promote a different vision of society. For example, Déjean, Gond & Leca, (2004) demonstrated how institutional entrepreneurs set standards consistent with their identity and interests in a growing industry that become standards for the rest of the industry. In this regard, activist workers in hybrid organizations who want to devote their workforce to the most impactful project should recognize the usefulness of CSR standards.

Nevertheless, in hybrid organizations, we can suspect that CSR standards can also crystallize the tensions generated by hybridity and the plurality of objectives, logics, values and standards (Ashforth and Reingen, 2014; Smith, Gonin and Besharov, 2013), because they give material reality to conflicting questions about organizational dual goals: the CSR standard is the technical translation of the balance point established between the pro-social mission and business in a hybrid organization. The

relationship that workers have with these tools in this particular context must be very specific and crucial for their commitment and well-being at work.

It may be assumed that workers' aspirations regarding CSR practices are higher in hybrid organizations, as are the risks associated with potential disillusionment. Thus, the pro-social promise of hybrid organizations is a double-edged sword, enhancing the attractiveness and commitment of workers, but raising expectations. Indeed, CSR generates moral capital: workers see imputed moral values as implicit promises, and expect the organization to respect this implicit contract. Discrepancies between CSR discourse and real practice, especially if the motives seem purely instrumental (Vlachos *et al.*, 2010), can foster cynicism and sabotage (Christensen, Morsing and Thyssen, 2013). Besharov (2014) demonstrates that when members with an 'idealistic' profile (and they alone) perceive practices that are incompatible with their own values, they interpret them not as differences, but as violations of morality. This could lead to dis-identification, disillusionment, reduced work effort and sometimes resignation. Conversely, a good match between workers' expectations and CSR practices is a decisive factor in a firm's reputation (Helm, 2011; Edinger-Schons *et al.*, 2019). As a consequence, the way CSR standards are perceived, accepted and used by activist workers who join these hybrid organizations is crucial.

Lastly, this organizational context presents another particularity that exacerbates the potential impact of CSR standards on identity issues. Ethical organizations have been identified as an environment that can be threatening to personal identity: Kenny's (2010) study, for example, shows how, in this type of organization, people working together for values and passion identify, to the point of having self-localization outside of themselves ("ek-stasis"), a state of enclosure that promotes mutual recognition but also exclusion and policing. This context of hybrid organizations can reinforce the threat to personal identity that those working for a higher purpose are likely to face, exacerbating the role that CSR can play in the potential alienation of personal identity.

In light of the specificity of hybrid organizations, we suggest that the process of matching/mismatching with CSR standards is particularly decisive, in the interest of both the organization and the individual. Considering, on the one hand, the growing proportion of workers

characterized by this militant identity, and on the other hand, the proliferation of so-called hybrid organizations (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Battilana, 2018), these dynamics deserve special consideration.

This leads us to our following research question:

**For these activist workers, which role do CSR standards play in the management of identity tensions created by the nature of hybrid organizations?**

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research context

We propose a case study (Yin, 1994) with a sociological approach to CSR standards in Orgacoop, a cooperative network of retail stores selling organic and fair trade food products, cosmetics and cleaning products with an eco-label. A sociological approach to management tools (Chiapello, Gilbert, 2013) consists of analyzing how management tools are created, used, considered, and their influence on power, behavior, and well-being at work. To carry out this analysis, in this empirical research, we chose to study the "specification notice" of Orgacoop, a set of standards dating back 25 years concerning social, economic and environmental concerns, used by more than 500 stores. This tool is a set of CR standards: the objective indeed is *"to advance the social, ethical and environmental performance of organizations by codifying aspects of organizational behavior"* (De Colle et al., 2014). This specification notice is a very comprehensive and widely used management tool with a long history, which is exceptional compared to others that have recently flourished. In this section, we will introduce the organization and then the management tool on which we focus this research.

### 3.1.1. The organization: Orgacoop network

In the Western European country where Orgacoop operates, this organization is the only national network with an authentic militant identity and alternative governance. Orgacoop was created in the 1980s as a non-profit organization structuring the initiatives of consumer cooperatives that had emerged since the 1970s, while its competitors belong to large retail groups with usual commercial policies and profit objectives. The organization is a public cooperative society. The conception of governance is particular because Orgacoop is managed by a board of directors elected at the general meeting of shareholders, and composed of four groups of shareholders: producers, stores, consumers and store employees.

In the 1990s, the "Orgacoop charter" was created, bringing together independent stores, whether cooperative or not, based on a set of specifications that frame the choice of products and the economic and social management practices of Orgacoop stores. To be part of the network, entrepreneurs wishing to manage an Orgacoop store must pass a selection, particularly with regard to their personal ethics. Then, the stores must comply with the specifications and donate a percentage of their turnover to the network. In exchange, they benefit from Orgacoop's access to wholesale purchases, logistical support and communication strategy.

The ambition of the pioneers to create a militant network enabling customers to fight for a different economy through their daily purchases is still a determining factor in the strategy: a range of low-margin basic products or bulk products aims to democratize the consumption of organic products. Orgacoop establishes partnerships with farmers in order to ensure them a decent wage. The network takes strong positions such as banning certain products from stores despite their profitability (notably bottled water). This commitment allows Orgacoop to play a consulting role when public institutions wish to work on the theme of organic industry and agriculture: Orgacoop has become an institutional entrepreneur in the organic food sector. As a result, this network has often been an interesting case study for research in marketing, green supply chain, food science, organizational studies, economics or political science (N.B.: Due to anonymity, we are not allowed to share these references).

Recently, however, this reputation has tended to be called into question. With 560 stores in 2018, the network achieved a turnover of 1,210 million of euros, double that of 2013. The network's rapid expansion and success with a broader and changing clientele is challenging Orgacoop's militant identity, an issue widely debated in the media and in books written by the network's founder (N.B.: Due to anonymity, we are not allowed to share this reference).

For our part, we chose this particular meta-organization because of its hybridity, which raises high expectations in terms of CSR: it combines a militant and commercial organizational identity. Rather than being a new component of its recently implemented strategy, CSR is a cornerstone of Orgacoop's hybrid identity. This hybridity is now particularly challenged by the growing competition in this booming market where newcomers from the mass retail sector have reshuffled the cards, forcing traditional stores to adopt a more business-oriented strategy. The products sold by Orgacoop have the same official labels as those sold by stores for which organic food is nothing more than a market opportunity and which, for example, sell products from the other side of the world or grown out of season as long as they are organic. The network therefore needs to distinguish itself from its competitors with additional ethical standards, demonstrating a higher level of ethics and the original hybridity of the organization, while there is pressure for a more business-oriented approach and a competitive price. This context of hyper-competition can exacerbate tensions.

Studies carried out in organic retailing show the symbolic strength of this sector, creating high expectations among workers (Besharov, 2014; Ashforth and Reingen, 2014; Endrissat *et al.*, 2015; Farias, 2017). As a potential worker, even a low-skilled one, it is easy to be recruited, but the incentives, apart from the ideological aspect, are weak. As a result, Orgacoop appears to be a context where one can easily find many militant workers motivated primarily by values.

At the meantime, the organic retail sector is a context conducive to tensions. The working environment of the retail department combines emotional work (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002) and difficult working conditions: the need to counterbalance disadvantages with non-transactional aspects is important to maintain commitment.

Finally, the stakes in the process of matching of front-line workers with CSR standards are logically very high for Orgacoop. The marketing literature has shown that the relationship of workers with CSR standards is particularly crucial in the retail sector, and how important it is for shop-floor workers to have genuine satisfaction and faith in organizational ethics for the reputation, performance and legitimacy of their organization (Alexandrov *et al.*, 2007; Pettijohn, 2008; Singhapakdi *et al.*, 2015). The satisfaction of front-line employees with CSR is crucial, as they are the organization's "part-time marketers" (Helm, 2011) or CSR "ambassadors" (Edinger-Schons *et al.*, 2019), moreover, in the area of responsible consumption (Roberts, 1996) in which stores must differentiate themselves from conventional commerce (Geysmans *et al.*, 2017). This issue of store workers' satisfaction with CSR is exacerbated in Orgacoop, because of the network dimension, and the threat of social media, entailing a risk of contagion in case of ethical conflict. For instance, during an interview in the exploratory part of this study, the president of Orgacoop confided that he was concerned about the way shop workers experience their work: teams in some workshops recently went on strike, which can have disastrous consequences for the entire network, even if each workshop is managed independently. Indeed, during data collection, some respondents in our sample went on strike and used the client mailing list to relay their claims and the progress of the social conflict.

However, as in the context of similar research in which Besharov (2014) explored the process of identification among members with differing values, the Orgacoop network at that time very rarely experienced intractable conflicts or poor performance. This means that despite the expectations and potential tensions experienced by the vast population of activist workers in this organization, the process of matching with CSR standards was mostly successful.

In light of all this, Orgacoop is an extreme case of a CSR compliance process given the importance of workers' expectations, potential tensions and organizational implications: the dynamics should be more visible than it would be in other contexts (Eisenhardt, 1989).

### 3.1.2. Management tool studied: specifications

Created at the beginning of the 1990s, the specifications cover various subjects (see Table 3) and have regularly evolved and been enriched following amendments adopted at the General Assembly. The general trend is towards higher standards for the products that stores are authorized to sell (distribution agreement) and lower internal social standards (social agreement). In addition to the specifications, we found a "Recommendations" section, a set of voluntary standards intended to become mandatory rules. The latest version of this document is available on the Internet and easy to find out (first result on Google).

Section of the specification note	Description	Examples of specifications
<i>Distribution agreement</i>	Ratios and rules promoting local food, strictly organic, fair-trade, mostly food (instead of cosmetics or dietary supplement), excluding air transportation, non-seasonal, GMOs or engendered species, no water bottles	<i>Food products &gt;70% of the turnover</i> <i>Loose products &gt; 4% of the turnover</i>
<i>Economic agreement</i>	Ratios restricting margin rate, in order to limit retail prices. Rules to impose a range of basic products with a low margin rate	<i>Gross profit margin &lt; 31.5%</i>
<i>Ecological agreement</i>	Rules on energy consumption and waste management	<i>Shop sign lighting prohibited between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.</i>
<i>Social agreement</i>	Ratios and rules imposing equitable wages, lasting employment, enhance well-being, training and participation of employees	<i>75% of working hours done by permanent contract workers</i> <i>Disparity between the highest and the lowest income &lt; 5</i>
<i>Communication agreement</i>	Rules on advertising and use of clients data,	Prohibition of advertising showing children, male or female bodies or sexist references.

Table 5 : Specifications

The stores are audited by an external control body and by an Orgacoop committee that visits the stores. Orgacoop's central services check the financial documents every year.

Considering that CSR can be seen as an overarching concept, we use De Colle's (2014) classification of CSR standards based on four key elements (nature, focus, monitoring process and development and governance approach) to qualify Orgacoop standards: they combine process and substantive standards (intended to address substantive areas of concern), they are specialized (focusing on social, environmental issues), they do include an independent monitoring process and do adopt a multiple-stakeholders approach.

### 3.2. Data collection

We began by collecting secondary data online, in the media or newsletters. The organization was also the subject of academic empirical studies and communications that we read. We met the Orgacoop's president for an exploratory interview to understand the context of the organization.

We conducted semi-structured interviews of 45 to 75 minutes. Over a period of one year, we conducted a total of 27 interviews in various types of stores in different regions of France. The only filter was on "activist identity": we wanted to interview workers who do not work there by chance (such as temporary student jobs to pay the bill) but for whom this work responds to a personal need to pursue collective interests. We used snowball sampling (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to progressively select Orgacoop workers with good representativeness of gender, age, status and level of responsibility (Appendix 5) until saturation point (Mason, 2010). After the 23rd interview, no new elements emerged. We started with contacts from previous work experience. We contacted them, justifying the study by an interest in talking to people who had voluntarily chosen their jobs to align with their personal values. After participating in the interview and understanding the objective of the study, the interviewees put me in contact with other workers they clearly considered to have a similar profile. The stores selected offer a variability of location, governance, age or turnover. The level of responsibility may be different (cashier, salesperson, department manager or owner...) but the business model and the limited size of the stores encourage all the workers in our sample to share the same basic tasks and similar working conditions. We have worked hard to gain access to a store that is



still not very open to research: long, exhausting working hours make workers reluctant to spend time talking about their work after work, as well as suspicions of ill-intentioned maneuverings by employers, competitors, journalists or staff unions to denounce "the dark side of Orgacoop".

The interview guide (see Appendix 6) was designed to focus on the subject of Orgacoop standards, while facilitating the narrative of identity and organizational tensions, satisfaction and frustration. The interview begins with a narrative approach (Bertaux, 1997), which builds trust and focuses on the narrative on identity issues at the individual level. Next, we focused on the relationship between the personal and organizational dynamics created by norms. We concluded with a looping question, asking the worker to imagine what it would be like for him/her, for the store and for the Orgacoop network if the norms did not exist.

In agreement with Schabram and Maitlis (2017), we also chose to study the organic food distribution network because of the PhD candidate's personal experience as a store worker and consumer in this environment. This allowed us to acquire insider knowledge that allows us to have a relationship of trust, a better understanding of specific vocabulary, a more in-depth discussion and a nuanced understanding of our respondents' daily work and particular issues. This pre-existing knowledge facilitates interviews and helps with data collection.

### 3.3. Data analysis

The interviews were transcribed and analyzed using a thematic content analysis methodology (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2013) on Nvivo. Using an initial list of codes from the standards and CSR literature, we began by coding each interview according to workers' expectations, satisfactions and dissatisfactions regarding their work and organization, the Orgacoop network and CSR standards. Secondly, we used the techniques and processes of Grounded Theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1994): instead of using a simple coding of narratives, we focused on the variations and contradictions within the interviews. As Alvesson and Kärreman (2007) suggest it, *"a useful guideline in this kind of study is to look*

*out for significant deviations from what could have been expected*". In our case, while we expected to understand the relationship that workers had with the specifications, we found that most of the time, workers in fact ignored them. This ignorance became our mystery. We turned our attention to coding the reasons that workers give for this ignorance or, on the contrary, for their knowledge. We also noted that internal social standards (regarding working conditions) were associated with different outcomes than other norms. Subsequently, we focused on the coding of reactions, emotions and uses of these social norms in particular. We then grouped these themes into aggregate dimensions that were the result of back-and-forth between transcripts and theories. Thus, as new codes emerged from the data, we consulted the literature on fantasy and the imaginary in the identification process (Roberts, 2005; Kenny), ignorance (Roberts, 2013; Bakken & Wiik, 2018), glass cage phenomenon (Gabriel, 2005), stupidity management (Alvesson & Spicer, 2012; Paulsen, 2016), resistance (Fleming & Sewell, 2002), or cynicism (Fleming & Spicer, 2003).

## 4. Findings

Drawing on the Gioia methodology (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton, 2013) in order to structure the data, we propose the following schema (Figure 1) to sum up our present findings.

In this findings section, we show how CSR standards respond to pre-existing tensions related to activists' identity in a context that fosters other tensions. We identify how standards are used by interviewees to manage tensions, thanks to blind trust linked to an imaginary network creating this tool. We show how the easing effect of norms reaches its limits when workers are subject to standards, and can be used in this case for resistance and struggle.



Figure 2: Findings (see enlargement in Appendix 14)

#### 4.1. CSR standards as a response to pre-existing tensions ensued from personal activism

The specifications are seen as a safeguard to prevent the risk of drifting from the Orgacoop's original policy plan, especially considering the rapid and continuous development of the network, which attracts entrepreneurs considered less militant than those who joined Orgacoop before the organic market boom. In this way, specifications guarantee the coherence that the workers demand. *"It is the soul of Orgacoop". "Without specifications, the Orgacoop would not be the Orgacoop"*. The specifications make the difference with other organic food distribution networks, between *"organic and organic++"*, and give the workers the certainty that they are giving their labor force not only to the right store, but also to a powerful project that is aligned with personal values.

Workers evoke inconsistency with their values as something they cannot stand, which has caused them to run away from their previous working life, which they describe as meaningless and painful. Even if for some of them Orgacoop is a part-time job that allows them to give time to another vocation (PhD, self-employment, agriculture, arts and crafts...), working at Orgacoop is never only seen as a job to pay the bill: workers would refuse an occupation that would be incoherent with what they represent. They already knew the particularities of this network, especially as clients. This is why they naturally turn to Orgacoop when they want to apply for a job or open a store. Very often, they could not imagine themselves working in another organic food distribution network. *"The specifications are the reasons why I chose Orgacoop". "To be like B\* (competitors' names), there is nothing interesting. I wouldn't have joined Orgacoop otherwise"*.

For workers who were naturally inclined to get involved, being a member of Orgacoop allows them to have more impact and be activists with greater efficiency: instead of being alone, workers join "hummingbirds" who work in a national network with more power. In exchange, many workers admit that they engage beyond their work duties, working unpaid overtime or spending time at home to improve product knowledge. Thus, working at Orgacoop appears to be a way to achieve a better version of themselves, and a response to a need for coherence with their activist identity.

## 4.2. A tensions-prone context

### 4.2.1. Paradox and ambiguity in a hybrid organization

In spite of their deep satisfaction, Orgacoop workers describe certain aspects of their work that create uneasiness, arising from divergences or deviations from their expectations of Orgacoop's ethical project, and from paradoxes between the network's activist identity and its actual practices. This malaise may be related to tensions between personal activism in the broad sense that covers a particular lifestyle, political opinions concerning the whole society, the vision of how a "good organization" should be managed and the goal it should aim for. Expectations are seen as legitimate given the activist identity claimed by the network. In this section, I will address three main themes that create tensions: the commercial aspect of the activity, governance and working conditions. These sources of tension are summarized in Table 6.

The organic market is booming, which has allowed the network to expand, but also brought newcomers with different expectations to the client base. Workers describe personal consumption patterns that demonstrate a drastic commitment, and wish that Orgacoop represents a much more ambitious vision of society by limiting the supply of certain items. According to some of them, meat, products whose packaging or price is perceived as excessive, exotic or unhealthy should be banned from the shelves. The abundance of products seems to contradict the message of degrowth that workers wish to spread. The certification requirement excludes certain interesting products, standardizes the offer and harms the identity of the store and its insertion in the local economic system that the respondents are trying to promote. The sales techniques commonly used in mass distribution and now proposed by Orgacoop's head office create uneasiness.

*"I think some things are ridiculous. Ridiculous Christmas decorations. The events... Once, I found it scandalous. They chose to celebrate Father's Day and the Football World Cup with the Beer Festival. If Orgacoop goes down that low... Seeing this, in fact, shows that there are two different realities, between Orgacoop stores that are more militant, and others that fall so low... And you can feel it in the Orgacoop marketing strategy."*

Finally, the fact that organic products remain unaffordable for part of the population creates tensions for workers who are very concerned about social issues.

*"I am supposed to tell customers that it is possible to eat organic if you change your consumption habits. But how can I say that when I know that I can't afford to do all the shopping in my store given my income?"*

Having to work with colleagues who are less concerned about environmental and social issues is also a source of tension. According to the interviewees, there is a new trend in the network: some managers prefer to hire workers with traditional retail experience, who would be more hard-working and submissive, rather than militant workers. However, interpersonal tensions mainly come from customers. The growth of the organic market has brought a new clientele that does not necessarily share the workers' activism and exacerbates competition, and some workers regret the fact that they have to give up some of the authenticity in the relationship with customers, and accept the lack of effort from this clientele who, for example, do not reuse paper bags, ask for tomatoes before the summer, or do not use solid rather liquid shampoo. The desire to be authentic, activist, and "educate people" comes up against the need to attract and retain customers.

*"We recall that business is not as easy as it used to be with the competition. But before... If a customer said something racist, I didn't yell at him but I was cold, no discussion, no bye bye, no pretence, you see. Before, we didn't question our attitude and everything worked, there were no problem moments".*

As the pace of work accelerates, workers regret the lack of time to educate clients. For some workers, selling organic products is also a way to help people have a better life and heal. Activism is expressed through the need to "take care" of people. The feeling that advice is ignored and that clients simply want to "buy a solution" also creates tensions.

*"It makes me frustrated and unhappy because I've experienced wonderful things. And changing people's minds is so difficult.... I've even cried sometimes... When you're in this business, you want to take care of people, and let the other person indulge in that ... It's painful."*

In addition, respondents express ambivalence about their perception of themselves as shop workers in a large organization that we could call "the apron complex". On the one hand, they are proud to do this work, considered as noble and useful, despite its repetitive, humble, rotten, depersonalizing, even "humiliating" dimension and difficult working conditions that contrast with their level of education. On the other hand, they refuse the identity of a salesman. Accordingly, to wear or not to wear the apron becomes the issue: the apron is a uniform that threatens personal identity. Thus, workers who refuse depersonalization and corporate culture do not wear the apron as a sign of dis-identification in favor of their personal identity.

*"I can't wear the apron. I see it as... something degrading to me. It reflects too much of something that I find hard to accept. There is a part of me that finds it very noble to be a salesman, and another part of me that is hit hard by the social image of the "salesman" who fills the shelves and works at the cash register. (...) I have problems with authority, with the idea of being "corporate". Merging into a corporate identity, I can't do that. A lot of colleagues think the same thing".*

The second tension comes from the conception of governance. According to some workers, using the name Orgacoop should mean that their store should try to remove the mechanism of domination and fight for solidarity, equality, freedom of expression, benevolence or non-discrimination of women. It is also a need for managers who see the power dimension of their role as a dark side of the work they tend to escape or reinvent. In workers' view, the organization should use alternative management practices and deconstruct traditional views of money, work or hierarchy. As a result, they feel disappointed when the organization doesn't work to avoid traditional patterns.

*"For me, the pay scale in the specification notice is too conservative. Why duplicate a system that annoys us, that makes us leave, a pyramid scheme that doesn't suit us?"*

The workers, especially those who have been working for Orgacoop for a long time, regret that the network does not preserve the original cooperative aspect instead of becoming a kind of franchise. The fact that the network depends mainly on the voice of store owners who sometimes own "an empire" of

stores contradicts the militant project that Orgacoop is still claiming. Many workers also feel that they have little incentive to commit themselves as employee-members of the cooperative. The cooperative aspect now resembles a showcase that the network displays at the annual meeting, described by one employee-member who attended as "an ostentatious event". Most of the new stores are not cooperatives, but have traditional business forms, and Orgacoop would not attempt to defend the cooperative movement. Some interviewees even consider the name of the network to be a fraud, making customers believe that they are not employees but co-owners of their store.

*"I remember one customer asking, "What kind of company is this here?" - I said, "A classic corporation, with shareholders, business partners". He said, "Is this it? I thought they were cooperatives, and I learned that they were not. So, you are...?" - "Yes, I'm an ordinary employee, like I if worked at Mcdonald's." But it's true, when I came here, the fact that it's called Orga "cooooooop", it looks like a co-operative. It's magical, isn't it?"*

The last theme we identified concerns the gaps between expectations and actions, and relates to working conditions. Workers expect Orgacoop to defend a vision of society that must also be consistent with the way workers on the shop floor are treated and considered. However, low wages, working hours, physical hardship, health and safety problems, lack of space for expression and violence in management are redundant complaints from workers. Having a job that is consistent with their activist identity is the reason they accept working conditions. However, some workers question the sustainability of this choice, as suggested by this worker who said she could afford to work there thanks to the personal assets: *"Working at Orgacoop is almost a luxury"*.

Interviewees meet and share their experiences with other workers through training programs or cooperative meetings, or have colleagues who worked in other Orgacoop stores. As a result, they are aware of the huge differences in working conditions between stores and know that standards are being subverted. "Some of us agree, in the name of the ideal. Yes, but this is not consistent with Orgacoop. It's a nice showcase, but after that, we are not consistent with what we say". Thus, these personal demands are not expressed first of all as something selfish, for the comfort of the worker, but as a moral or political principle that must be applied to every worker. Even though the workers may be



satisfied with what is done in their own organization, they are concerned about the misdeeds suffered by Orgacoop workers in other workshops. The fact that social practices differ in some Orgacoop stores from others calls into question the desired consistency and creates discomfort. Workers have high expectations regarding this social section and are concerned about the potential time bomb that this neglect could cause to the network.

*"Workers don't dare to talk about it. They minimize the problem and give up, or it bursts".*

Thus, complex tensions remain between the idealistic and professional identities, calling into question the perfect coherence that these workers try to achieve through their career choice. We cannot find a story with total satisfaction or dissatisfaction, but the respondent always goes from enthusiasm for working at Orgacoop to more negative emotions such as anger, disbelief, doubts or disappointment.

Main themes of contradictions	Recurrent sources of tensions
<i>Commercial aspect of activity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer of insufficiently ethical or useless products</li> <li>• Sales techniques similar to mass retail</li> <li>• Impossibility to meet the need for caring instead of selling</li> <li>• Unaffordability of the offer</li> <li>• Competition constraining to reduce authenticity</li> <li>• Need to adapt to non-militant customers and colleagues</li> <li>• Depersonalizing job</li> </ul>
<i>Governance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weakening of the cooperative model</li> <li>• Fraud on the cooperative aspect</li> <li>• Traditional management</li> <li>• Absence of political will to suppress social mechanisms of domination, discrimination and violence</li> </ul>
<i>Working conditions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bad working-conditions for shop-floor workers in the shop or in other shops of the network</li> <li>• Supporting fair trade but to be a poor worker</li> <li>• Lack of staff representation, reliance on the managers' ethics</li> </ul>

Table 6: Sources of tensions

#### 4.2.2. Hyper awareness and hyper knowledge

The tensions that can be found in many hybrid organizations where two identities compete are exacerbated by the propensity of workers to question and grasp all facets of a problem. Rather than being blind activists with entrenched arguments, workers demonstrate a strong willingness to seek information, understand and learn, a critical attitude and a remarkable ability to discuss all the constraints on a choice and to assimilate the complexity of certain issues. This phenomenon reflects the expectations of customers who, according to one respondent, come to an Orgacoop store for much more than a purchase and do not want to interact with store workers who are just *"cash drawers and storage shelves"* but rather expect *"health advice and product information"*. In this sense, notwithstanding the down-to-earth aspect of the activity, it presents a characteristic of a knowledge- and care-intensive professional context, where customers do not just buy a product, but knowledge, attention and advice on health issues. The level of education (half of the respondents have a master's degree and two of them are PhD candidates) and previous professional experience are enriched by continuous efforts to acquire new skills on products, team management, personal development, but also to stay regularly informed on the latest social or ecological issues. Having doubts about a product or feeling incompetent is a real source of tension.

*"Customers tell us a lot, because they know we are activists. They told us that some products come from L\*, which is said to be a subsidiary of Monsanto. So I tried to read about it. Because sometimes we have questions and we feel we don't know enough. So we look like supermarket salesmen, we don't know what we're selling; it's not good for consistency"*.

To be able to help customers with their purchases, you need a great deal of knowledge about the characteristics of the products, such as their chemical properties, potential health benefits, cooking recipe or seasonal aspects. This knowledge gives the desirable identity of an Orgacoop worker, instead of the rejected image of the conventional supermarket worker. It allows them to be honest and transparent with customers and to become an ethical trader and an activist with arguments, not an activist "who just pisses people off". Thus, hyper-awareness allows our respondents to transform the anti-identity of a merchant or activist into a noble and desirable identity.

*"You need to know your producers. You need to know why their product is excellent, or spoiled. And that's the interesting point. If you take out this part, finally, working for A\*\*\* and ordering on the A\*\*\* platform, or ordering on the Orgacoop platform, you're just a principal, there's nothing interesting about it. I didn't want to do business in my job anymore. My parents are merchants, and for me, doing business is out of the question".*

Workers also display a hyper-consciousness of the constraints of the organization and a great knowledge of the multiple aspects that interfere with the organizational reality. Respondents express a great awareness of the economic or legal constraints that affect the profitability of companies, such as very high rents, taxes or labour costs. Thus, their requirements in terms of wages, working conditions, professional training or schedules are always balanced against these constraints. This hyper-awareness and hyper-sensitization intensify tensions: first, the worker does not simply adopt a pure "militant vision" in assessing a problem. Second, knowledge promotes complexity, depriving the worker of the certainty of making the right choice.

In short, workers tend to be overwhelmed by a continuous influx of information that they nevertheless wish to obtain, creating endless cognitive dissonance and internal conflict. Their awareness of the reality of the multiple constraints on the organization prevents them from blind activism, while the organization's ideology simultaneously pushes them to defend their values. The more time workers spend at their work, the more knowledge they acquire and the more potential tensions they face. In this context, faith in the organizational project, serious discourse or serene decision-making are compromised.

### 4.3. Specifications as an object helping workers to alleviate identity tensions

#### 4.3.1. Outsourcing of identity tensions management to the organization

The need for knowledge is considered infinite when time is already counted. *"It's complicated to see everything, to know everything"*. Very often, the worker tries to deepen a particular aspect of his

department, but he struggles to be competent in all the products in the store. Some products create dilemmas for these activist workers who try to keep up with ethical issues, amplified by customer questions and crises transmitted by the media. For example, is it better to sell organic salmon that pollutes the seashore, or wild salmon that is threatened with extinction? To sell quinoa from France, or to support fair trade by selling quinoa from Bolivia? Is it reasonable to sell bananas that have made such a long journey to reach store shelves but are affordable among rare fruits in winter? Is it better to order from the Orgacoop platform and support Orgacoop activism, or to order directly from local producers? Respondents evoke a feeling of drowning in the different results of the many actions and choices they have to make. *"Without specifications, I would do incoherent things, out of ignorance"*. In this respect, specifications appear to be a comforting solution to resolve conflicts related to seasonality, supplier ethics and the location, composition or distance traveled by the products that Orgacoop stores sell. *"I'm not sure I can judge whether or not a product has the right to be sold by Orgacoop. I don't think I'm confident and competent enough to do that. I think there are many factors and that we, the store employees, don't have enough information about why a product is accepted"*.

The standards include ratios that stores must use, including the margin rate used to set prices. Pricing, for example, is a key issue and a redundant topic in the stories. These activist workers are very concerned about this issue: they want organic products to be more accessible, but this will first run up against another vision they evoke, one that aims to give more value to food and the work of producers, to make consumers pay the real price of food, and to reconsider the whole way of consuming. At the same time, they are fully aware of the need to make profits, also to pay their own wages and to give value to the work they do. However, Orgacoop limits the margin of sale. As a result, workers do not question this ratio, which appears to be a good compromise that Orgacoop has found between economic constraints and its political project.

*"I imagine that the ratio is calculated taking all this into account at headquarters"*.

*"We made our forecast result with these ratios. I think the margin is consistent. It allows the store to live, to develop, and at the same time I don't have the impression of stuffing my pockets, I guess our margin is lower than what is done in mass distribution"*.

*"As far as accessibility is concerned, Orgacoop imposes a maximum gross margin ratio, the store cannot exceed 31.5<sup>5</sup>, so it caps it, we can't do what we want. You have to understand that when a product is cheap, the first person in the supply chain is paid as little as possible. I think it's a good thing that the certifications frame that. Our goal is not to have the highest price and make the most money".*

*"A sales margin that is too high or too low is lying to customers about prices. It's not going to happen."*

Second, the specifications are seen as a response to different levels of activism among team members. Collaborating with colleagues who display seemingly stronger beliefs and commitment creates internal conflict between individuals who question, comparatively, the level of their own commitment. In other cases, workers who are willing to lower their own standards in order to fit in with the rest of the team are threatened by the feeling of betraying themselves and their values. Having a third party that sets "how much is enough" to be sufficiently militant relieves workers of these internal conflicts and, in the end, reduces tensions in the team, providing a common and recognized reference of the level of militancy the store is aiming for.

*"In my store, we are a family, and all of us are activists, but in other stores where there are different people, coming from the mass retail sector. Knowing that there are specifications that support us helps to bring people together."*

This unifying effect also works with customers. Workers use specifications to explain the Orgacoop project, close the debate, ease tensions and create trust with clients. Customers sometimes express a lack of confidence in the store related to their own knowledge of the products, and provoke a debate on ethical issues. Workers emphasize their role as the front line of Orgacoop for customers, and need clear and easy to give arguments when they do not have enough time to look for information. In certain case, store workers may feel unsettled, doubt themselves and even question the strength of their commitment.

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<sup>5</sup> Sales margin = price excluding tax – cost of the item, that is to say that for a sales margin of 31.5%, an item is sold 100€ to consumer and the shop paid € 68.5 to the supplier (including shipping charges or discounts)

N.B: According to INSEE, in 2015, the margin rate for food was 20% in supermarket, 22% in hyper-market and 38% in specialist stores

*"Sometimes we need survival kits. Last week, a television show showed that organic salmon was more toxic than non-organic salmon. Fortunately, Orgacoop is there to react, to dissociate the truth from the lie. Because you are alone in the store, and if a customer asks "What about this salmon story?" You can't say I don't know. So thanks to the big Orgacoop machine that spoon-feeds us."*

In these extreme cases, such as in crises reported by the media that require an immediate response with solid scientific arguments, the workers feel helped by Orgacoop because they would not feel able to deal with the problem on their own. They rely on, or "hide" behind the standard set by a large legitimate organization, a "ready-made" argument to close the discussion.

*"It helps, for example, when a customer asks if bananas have been irradiated, which means 'I don't trust you, I really don't, but I'm still coming to buy your damn bananas'. If you think they've been irradiated, do it yourself and grow them in your garden, then it pisses me off. So I say it's in the specifications, I guess, even if it's a non-European country, they require European specifications to be met. And that gives an additional argument, because sometimes abroad there are unscrupulous supply chains that exploit people. I think that gives an additional argument".*

In this way, the specifications limit the emotional work involved in contact with this demanding clientele, supporting the legitimacy and authenticity of the militant identity that the worker claims. In this way, standards are used as a means to counterbalance the extreme knowledge and consciousness of workers but also of stakeholders such as clients.

At the same time, however, the ability of standards to support the effort to balance idealism and pragmatism also relies on a certain flexibility that (relatively) encourages more binding standards. This flexibility provides the opportunity to feel more committed than the minimum required by Orgacoop. Ratios such as the margin rate, for example, are given in a range and the specifications have two different parts: mandatory standards and recommendations. Therefore, even a possibility to "do more" is included in the document, an optional part of the specifications is already built in, offering ready-made guidelines for stores willing to go beyond the minimum activism required, providing good

practices they don't even need to imagine. This reassures workers, who know that they are not only sufficiently militant, but more than is required to be part of the organization.

*"Gross margin ratios come from Orgacoop. They give us a document, and on that document there are different departments like bulk products, vegetables, etc. So... I don't know how they do it but we have a document with the ratio that we have to apply. So we often look at these margin ratios with the person in charge. For example, we decide that for diapers, formula, my manager says that we have to support the parents, so we decrease our sales margin. We make less money, but the idea is that for young parents, it's expensive, it's not easy, so we set a symbolic price, we lower the price".*

#### 4.3.2. A shield against anti-identities

As we have previously mentioned, workers have an ambivalent relationship with the vision of the status of the store assistant/trader, that is to say, of an element of the capitalist/consumerist system. Knowing that specifications frame the profitability of a store and limit the disposition to satisfy customer desires at any environmental or social cost helps workers to believe that they are not "like others", and to escape this anti-identity of shopkeeper (what they do not want to be).

*"The specifications allow me to be consistent with what I believe in despite the fact that I work in a store".*

In the same manner, the social chapter of the specifications addresses the need for managers to have clear guidelines for managing human resources. The Orgacoop standards would ensure that the minimum required to be an "ethical boss" is met. Some managers in our sample express discomfort with the role of boss, while employees sometimes mention their manager's reluctance to act as such. The use of the Orgacoop standards seems to be a protection against social aberrations and conflicts, and guarantees managers that they do not embrace the identity of the "boss" they want to avoid.

*"In the beginning, we were more interested in the environmental dimension, but when you think about the role of the manager, the social dimension is very important. I think consumers know that at Orgacoop we try to be kind to our employees. First of all, being at Orgacoop helps with human resources management*

*because we receive advice from the cooperative, from the technicians, regarding social issues. Then, thanks to the specifications that allow us to have the greatest weight compared to other natural food networks. (...) There may be things I wouldn't do because I wouldn't think about it, and at the same time... the specifications give me a basis for reflection. I tell myself that at least I'm doing that. It gives me the assurance that the minimum is done to be consistent with the values I want to defend".*

#### 4.3.3. A justification for the sacrifice of personal identity

Finally, the existence of these specifications makes the negative aspects of retail acceptable. They compensate for the harsh working conditions, emotional work and roles that create identity tensions experienced by this population of educated workers, compensating for the sacrifice they make by the existence of a real tool that also constrains the company. Secondly, workers do not feel that their personal identity is being put on the back burner for nothing. They maintain their self-esteem.

*"We have problems with our salaries and so on, but it gives legitimacy. It's true, it's not easy, they don't care about everything, but I'm in Orgacoop, I'm not in N\*\*\* or B\*\*\*. I think the specifications are a counterbalance, I have that feeling."*

In short, standards facilitate decision making, frame idealism and give what is accepted as the right solution to complex problems. They help fulfill the role of workers, facilitate worker-client relations, and give a sense that they do not betray their activist identity.



	CSR standards use by activist workers
<i>Outsourcing of identity tensions management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Set “how much is enough” regarding activism</li> <li>▪ Support the legitimacy and authenticity of activist identity in front of stakeholder with ready-to-use arguments</li> <li>▪ Help to dealing with the large amount of conflicting information in order to feel consistent as an activist</li> <li>▪ Give the possibility to feel more activist by setting higher standards</li> </ul>
<i>Anti-identity shield</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assure workers that they are not what they do not want to be (a simple salesman, a bad boss...)</li> <li>▪ Give clear guidance in order to avoid rejected identity</li> </ul>
<i>Justifying sacrifice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preserve workers positive self-concept despite their professional status</li> <li>▪ Give meaningfulness to a mundane work that challenges personal identity</li> </ul>

Table 7: Alleviating identity tensions with CSR standards

#### 4.4. Organizational blind trust

##### 4.4.1. CSR standards as an ubiquitous but imaginary object

What is most unexpected is that a large majority of workers have never read or even seen the document that lists the specifications. This is very surprising, given the predisposition of the workers we described earlier to question, criticize, face complex problems or seek information.

Workers justify this ignorance by an unanswered search from their manager, an inability to find it (it is easy to download it after a quick Google search, see the first pages of Appendix 7), or a lack of time or need. At the same time, they say that it is an essential document, but do not feel concerned: *"Specifications are barriers, addressed to people who are not activists"*. For example, one worker who spoke to us about "the importance of certifications" explained, *"I've never really seen the specifications. I knew it existed, I asked, they vaguely said "here it is," they put something in my hands once, but it's not a basic document in the store. And to be honest, I didn't want to read all that. We barely have time to drink or pee and once we are exhausted, I have other things to do in my life"*. Signs of discomfort are often present in this part of the interview. They often describe it as a "paving stone" (in fact, in the 2016 version, the specification is a 44-page document with many tabs and the main information fills 20

pages). In fact, only 7 respondents in the 27-people sample said they had read it before. Two of them were store tenants. Three were staff representatives and were most familiar with the social section. One had to work on it during an internship. Only one read the document entirely without any particular professional need, motivated solely by the desire to know and assert his rights *"just in case"*. These certifications are most often transmitted informally in bits and pieces, *"by hearing things"* through daily practices. Some workers also justify this ignorance by the fact that they don't really need specifications, because they think that their workshop has its own informal rules that would be stricter than the Orgacoop standards. Vocational training for new workers (and often postponed) refers only to the document, which apparently gives the feeling of knowing it. As a result, workers confess that they do not know the standards that are so often promoted by Orgacoop. Considering this, we understand that for most workers they do not refer to specifications as such, but to the existence of specifications.

*"It's written, so I don't need to worry about it".*

Specifications are a ubiquitous object in the network, in communication to potential workers in job interviews, to workers in training programs, to customers in stores. They are an argument that all our respondents use daily in their discussions about Orgacoop's values. But this object is above all imaginary, a product of the organizational myth built on the network's militant identity. Ignorance is not linked to contempt for the tool, but to a power that lies in the simple presence in the organization that this verbatim illustrates perfectly: *"Nevertheless, I think that even if I have not read it, this specification note is a Bible"*.

#### 4.4.2. Fantasy about standards-makers

We noticed the apparent contradiction between the high value placed on these specifications and actual knowledge. Our analysis linked this ignorance to the trust that workers place in the organization that creates them. The stories show the existence of an imagery in which Orgacoop's headquarters are composed of experts who work hard and study the best solution taking into account all the ins and outs in their decision.

*"I trust the members of Orgacoop to keep this thing alive. So I trust them... blindly... because I don't know them, I don't know how they are organized, I don't know how the debates are conducted... But since I don't have time to stick my nose in, I trust them".*

*"There are people in Paris, at headquarters or elsewhere, and when you need, you can ask. For example, why we have quinoa from Bolivia and France, why not just French quinoa. So I don't have time to ask. But since Orgacoop is present, I tell myself that there is an answer somewhere, which justifies it".*

*"The specifications are made by Orgacoop's people, Orgacoop's research department. I don't know how they do it, but I imagine they consult experts, people who know the field".*

The specifications seem to be a reification of this fantasy about standards manufacturers. As one worker put it: *"I have a lot of 'I imagine that'."* In fact, this is a particularly redundant phrase that workers use in their narrative when they talk about Orgacoop and express fuzzy knowledge and unverified beliefs about Orgacoop or its competitors. *"I guess our margin is lower than in retail."*

Thus, the specifications emanating from Orgacoop appear legitimate and unquestionable, morally speaking. *"It's their business. We have to trust them."* This imagery is based on the long history of Orgacoop told in training programs, and also on the redundant figure of the president in the interviews. This man, a pioneer of the Orgacoop project with the legitimacy of a farmer, is regularly cited by the workers and seems to be an icon of the environmental movement, a leader of Orgacoop that the workers describe as competent, militant and very accessible even for front-line workers.

#### 4.4.3. Preservation of the confidence in the meta-organization

This blind faith in standards makers is reinforced by the attribution of guilt to others. Our respondents are inclined to see Orgacoop as playing its role, and to blame those who are not part of Orgacoop, such as customers, politicians or society. They tell that they are powerless in the face of the capitalist

system, models of domination, or deep-rooted thoughts about food, money, and the distribution of wealth.

*"If tomorrow the specifications say that the minimum wage is 2000€ for 32 hours, it's a good idea. But for everyone. If the minimum wage is only the minimum that allows people not to starve to death, it is total nonsense in our society. The problem is not that organic food is too expensive, but that people are not paid properly and that rents are too high. Does that mean that you are only working to pay for a place where you are never there because you are busy working to pay for it? We feed people, and the employees who have the most important work are the least paid. The workers who build houses, educate children, take care of people and feed them? And all those who have useless shitty jobs, the banks, finance, etc... This is our society".*

The workers also concede that aiming too strongly at reducing packaging, non-seasonal products or meat would be economically unrealistic, but this is due to the customers who don't think and force Orgacoop to adapt the offer. Regarding working conditions, the workers denounce the fact that some store managers are cheaters and opportunists, and that the network can hardly sanction them, otherwise it would weaken the whole network, which would lose overall turnover. Once again, according to them it is not Orgacoop's fault.

#### 4.4.4. Glass-cage phenomenon

Accordingly, if some workers intend to leave their store because they are not satisfied with their work, they do not turn away from the Orgacoop network. They do so because they feel that even though Orgacoop is not perfect, the standards ensure that the network is the best ethical choice for finding a job based on their personal values. This feeling of being "in the right place" is strong and often linked to the lack of a valid alternative. After recounting all the abuse she suffered at Orgacoop, one worker said, *"The worst thing is that it didn't traumatize me, because I could work in another Orgacoop workshop, I would be happy. I like retail, but I don't want to sell shoes! It still allows me to have a job that makes more*

*sense than in another store. There's not necessarily a better place. If you want to work to do something good for the earth and so on, you don't have a better option than Orgacoop, with all its imperfections. Don't fool yourself, among natural food networks there is no better place than Orgacoop if you don't want to work for the capitalists..."*

*"At least my impact may be neutral, not negative. There are few jobs that don't have a negative impact. When I feel depressed, at least I think it's neutral".*

The workers also mention the positive perception of Orgacoop by the media, clients or the entourage to justify their refusal to denigrate the network. The "ethical prestige" counterbalances perception of inconsistencies.

*"People say, 'Ah, it's great what you're doing' and you're locked into an image, and I didn't feel authorized to ruin that image. I met someone who worked in an Orgacoop department store who told me that it's even worse than at C\*\*\* (the name of a major retailer), because at C\*\*\* you have unions, health insurance, meal tickets and ergonomic seats, and on Sunday roast you can tell your family that your boss is an asshole and nobody contradicts you. But you know, it's difficult because you have an ideal and I didn't feel authorized to break it. Maybe it's because of my upbringing. You share things with people, but with a false image."*

This alienating image that people attribute is also the image that workers give when they mark the distinctive character of Orgacoop. A worker in a store where working conditions were so bad that most of the workers went on strike confessed: *"It's hard that I believe in this. Because I look like a naive fool to my friends in public. When a good friend told me that organic is shit, I wanted to explain it to him, talk about organic in general and Orgacoop, and then he said, "What do you say about your Orgacoop? You're absolutely the opposite of what you're preaching..."*

The workers seemed petrified. Even though they are free to leave and would easily find a job with similar working conditions, they are captivated by the positive image they have projected on the network they are joining, and which their community still attributes to them. As a result, even if

workers see discrepancies, they know, they claim, and their community makes them believe that they could not find a workplace that would allow them to be more consistent with their activism. Workers want to avoid the resurgence of this painful sense of identity misalignment experienced in other workplaces. At the same time, they feel that they will not find a better alternative. As a result, they prefer to maintain their confidence in the organization and believe in a system that manages their internal conflict.

## 4.5. Using standards for resistance

### 4.5.1. Critical stance on social standards

Nevertheless, the soothing effect of specifications on workers' tensions reaches its limits when the narrators dare to reflect more deeply on their working conditions. Workers use the major part as a tool in a struggle for their ethical values, with relatively blind confidence in their relevance. This easing effect no longer works with regard to the social specifications setting out how labor is supposed to be used. (NB: in the rest of the document, when we refer to social specifications, we will only consider those that concern Orgacoop workers, and not supply chain workers). The opposition between the social and environmental sections is mentioned in many interviews, but dissatisfaction is abundantly expressed when the worker has personally experienced poor working conditions or social conflicts.

The specification notice clearly states that *"well-being at work is a major issue for Orgacoop members. In addition to the legal requirements concerning physical and psychological health, each member is committed to taking well-being into consideration in a rigorous manner. To this purpose, each member gives meaning to work, shows consideration and ensures decent working conditions"*. However, the social specifications are often considered very weak, insufficient by the respondents. The most informed workers note that these standards are barely higher than the labor code: they point out that the social specifications correspond to the strict application of the law (e.g.: banning the camera in the staff room), or of what is commonly done in many organizations (e.g.: offering tea and coffee during

breaks). In fact, the existence of standards has been shown to stimulate even more cynicism than the absence of standards in some employers' attitudes.

*"A staff room with tea and coffee... is the minimum! This means that some people don't even think about making a staff room with tea and coffee? If they have to say so, it means that some people didn't want to do it".*

*"It is forbidden to monitor employees with a camera; it is not made for that. But if it's in the specifications, it means that some have done it! It's a simple reminder of the law".*

Workers in managerial positions say that it is easy to comply with these standards, but admit that it is also easy to circumvent them. Respondents recount all the practices used by employers to circumvent rules regarding pay scales, staff equipment, holidays or scheduling requirements.

*"There is one store where they pretend not to open on holidays to respect their employees, and in fact, the weekly day off is simply moved to the holidays, even on May 1st. You see, it's a guy who's always going to try to cheat, to get around the specifications. You know, he can distort everything... He's a deadbeat. Does he have anything to do with Orgacoop? I'm not sure."*

*"It's the part of the specifications that's the easiest to get around. And it's often an important means of coercion".*

Workers criticize the lack of use of relevant indicators to assess the social climate in the stores. Some important ratios are missing, or data collection is biased. They emphasize that ratios should be progressive, and increase with store profitability and strength.

*"In Paris, there is a lot of staff turnover. What is the ratio in each store? Give it! If you're above 15%, you're bad"*

*"Orgacoop wanted to create a tool to find out what's going on in the stores, but it's the boss who fills out the questionnaire, it's completely absurd. The boss does what he wants, he says what he wants, if you really want to know, don't ask the boss, ask each employee, anonymously, and with a serious questionnaire, "Do you like your job? Do you know the staff turnover rate?""*

Workers also criticize the lack of serious control over one social aspect: the treatment of workers in the stores (which they often oppose to the attention paid to producers). They also underline the ethical drift when the same employer owns several stores. The committees check the ethics of the contractors during the admission procedure, but afterwards they are free to open other stores without examination, when the risk of drift and power is higher.

*"This is the great weakness of Orgacoop"*

*"Orgacoop does not check compliance with the specifications at all. Maybe the certification committee comes, but the guy buys the bullshit, it's no big deal. I've seen the guy come 2 or 3 times, for him everything was fine, despite the fact that they there were 5 temporary workers, so there are a lot of things that are not controlled".*

According to some interviewees, the social component of the standards is the last one that stores apply. *"I know of one store where there is a lack of employees. So they continue to comply with specifications on products, and the social aspect suffers because it is not sufficiently monitored".* The workers express the feeling that there are the real payers of ethics. *"We help the producers, we do a lot of things, we promote it, and the social aspect is put aside".* The lack of relevant standards and control regarding working conditions is interpreted as negligence or even a refusal to know on the part of Orgacoop. The expertise and strength that workers perceive, which can foster trust, leads some workers to believe that if Orgacoop had the will to really engage in a project of social responsibility towards the workers on the workshops, Orgacoop would have the capacity to do so. Thus, imagery no longer promotes trust, but disbelief. When workers have experienced deep dissatisfaction with social issues in their store, they tend to view this neglect as part of a plan. In this case, the perception of



Orgacoop's ability and unwillingness to solve the problem causes workers to view the standards with cynicism.

*"I thought Orgacoop would be more honest about working conditions and compliance because it questions consistency. Are they as serious about certifying organic products as they are about the suffering they cause to workers, basically".*

*"We're called Orgacoop, it's too easy for Orgacoop to say 'It's your business'. For me, they have a duty to act. If they impose constraints on the fact that all products have to be certified, on the other hand, they have to certify that our store managers and bosses are also certified on the fact that they understand the pain of the job, the constraints. They have to find out how. When you can find out what's happening in Bolivia in a coffee field, I don't understand why you can't certify that the workers in Strasbourg have real social demands that lead them to strike".*

Thus, some workers are skeptical or have no real opinion about the real intention of Orgacoop to act for the internal workers through social norms. They do not attribute the well-being of employees to the Orgacoop's social standards, but to particular internal rules or informal functioning, and to the employer's ethics. Perceiving their bosses as sharing the hardship of the work for example greatly tempers activism for oneself and definitely seems to be a dividing line between workers who accept their working conditions and those who do not. *"I would prefer that the wage disparity is always 1 to 1, but ... our boss is paid twice the salary of a new employee, but he works hard, so it's hard to complain. You can't say "you're comfortable in your office with your radiator", most of the time it's cold where he works".*

This blind trust is therefore fragile and limited: workers are inclined to believe in a system that comforts them in managing their tensions when they are relatively satisfied with their own conditions. Otherwise, they still oscillate between the willingness to believe that it is the fault of local management (saving meta-organizational trust) and disbelief or cynicism in the face of the powerful network that does not react.

#### 4.5.2. Standards as instruments for resistance and emancipation

The analysis makes it possible to connect knowledge and resistance: the only employees who have really studied the entire specification are those who have used it in a conflict with their employer, for themselves or as an employee representative. In this case, the specifications serve as a basis for negotiation, whereas recourse to the labor code and collective agreements is more likely to create conflict. The social agreement appears as a summary of these heavy rules, dimensioned to fit on a few pages that the employer agrees to sign when he wants to join the Orgacoop network. *"It is easier to talk about values than rights" - "At Orgacoop, we can use the following argument: "We have the right to ask for good working conditions" without being in confrontation, therefore rather in negotiation, in argumentation. The fact that the store is an Orgacoop, you can use this argument more easily than if it were a place where it is not the norm. "*

Employee representatives use the specifications as a motivating factor for employees to assert their rights, while the latter tend to stifle their demands, weighing them against the economic constraints that the organization is undergoing. Standards put a definitive end to these dilemmas and frame this awareness, protecting employees from this empathy, understanding and benevolence towards the organization. They moderate the tendency to accept the sacrifice of working conditions to the higher purpose the store stands for. *"I think very few employees have ever read the job description, even for the social section. I tried to pass it on through my role as staff representative. It helps me to communicate. For me, it is a basis".*

Some respondents are store managers who have worked as employees in Orgacoop's stores. At the time, they used a set of specifications to assert their rights in social conflicts. Therefore, to be consistent with their activist identity in their new position, they use the Orgacoop standards as a basis to work on a more ambitious social project, and to get employees to express themselves.

*"We will work on recommendations with the team, the optional part of the specifications. Our goal is to implement all the recommendations step by step. But we will ask employees to decide which ones they*

*want us to implement first. It's too easy if the bosses choose, they'll choose the easiest ones that don't cost much but are not important to the employees".*

We noticed that in the same stores, the specifications were being used as a local management tool that had been enriched, customized collectively to make the standards higher for the different sections. For example, a store in northern France decided that even though the Orgacoop calendar allows tomatoes to be sold in April, given the local climate that would force the tomatoes to travel a long way from Italy, they would only sell them in June. Solutions to make up for this shortfall and customer dissatisfaction are discussed. In this case, the workers still benefit from the standards resulting from the Orgacoop project in which they believe, but in which there are actors, not passive beneficiaries.

The workers, if they find functionality in the ignorance of the standards, still mention the potential benefits that a better knowledge would bring them. *"What is most lacking in the specifications is the obligation to know them".* One worker who described a particularly friendly working atmosphere in a workshop with a very militant positioning explained the feeling of missing the opportunity to rely on a tool that unifies the team around values: *"If we knew the specifications better, we could argue better about how we should feel about the products. It could provide us with words. Words about how we feel. We know we share values, and they bring us together. Working on the specifications could strengthen our bonds".*

## 5. Discussion

The main result of our empirical study is to highlight how CSR standards can dissipate the tensions between idealism and pragmatism. We show that activist workers use CSR standards to frame tensions when they feel they could not find better coherence. We point out that compliance with the norm puts an end to internal conflicts arising from confrontation with reality. Thus, CSR standards are resources for workers to wage a viable struggle for their ideal. Workers agree to delegate this

arbitration between ethics and other constraints to the organization. They have to assume that the standard makers are very competent because workers have to mitigate the tensions. CSR standards appear as a reification of the organization's image. In fact, it is the existence of standards rather than standards that really plays a role, as most workers are not really familiar with them. The lack of valid alternatives makes blind trust and justifications preferable. However, this externalization of identity tensions to the organization has limits, and this imagery is a double-edged sword: if workers are disappointed by the organization's ethics regarding their own working conditions, they become cynical and distrustful of CSR standards, and tend to use them as a resource in a struggle for their own good.

### 5.1. CSR standards as a resource in the management of tensions ensued from activist orientation

The first contribution of this work is to highlight the potential of standards to ease tensions between idealism and pragmatism. Offering an alternative perspective to the critical approach to CSR standards, which mainly presents CSR as a means of ensuring socio-ideological control, it suggests that organizational devices can be resources, especially for activist workers who are particularly prone to strong occupational tensions.

Indeed, the critical literature documenting the effect of CSR standards on workers has denounced this instrumental approach, describing these tools as a form of post-political governance ensuring socio-ideological control (Costas and Kärreman, 2013) and domination (Helin, Jensen and Sandström, 2011; Helin and Sandström, 2010), following in the footsteps of Foucault (1977) who demonstrated the potential alienating power of material practices. While few researchers have suggested the potential resource that management tools can constitute for workers (Gilbert, 2012), many are especially critical and suspicious of the dynamics created by CSR standards among workers. We supplement this knowledge by showing that workers can resort to these material practices, which the organization has not designed for this purpose, in order to frame pre-existing tensions.

Standards thus emerge as potential resources that the organization can provide to help workers manage tensions in a variety of contexts where the balance between idealism and pragmatism must be found. So far, the literature on identity work has focused on the role of the individual and individual managers in managing tensions, leaving the role of the organization in the shadows. Professions such as those of priest (Kreiner, Hollensbe and Sheep, 2006) or CSR consultant (Bardon, Brown and Pez , 2016; Ghadiri, Gond and Br s, 2015) have provided interesting cases to observe how workers use tactics, narrative or discursive strategies to manage identity tensions. Individual strategies in a context prone to paradox, ambiguity or contradictions have been explored (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003; Creed, De Jordy and Lok, 2010, Mallett & Whapshott, 2012). Besharov (2014) has shown that management practices promoting and implementing the social mission of the organization can confirm the identity of workers with an " idealist " profile, and limit the " violation of identity ", which is corroborated by our conclusions. We complement this literature by showing how individuals can also limit the appropriation of identity misalignment by using organizational support. This gives us insight into the potential support that organizations can offer through material practices in a context of ambiguity prism. By focusing on how workers perceive a management tool, we understand that the tool, or more precisely the narrative that workers make of it, allows them to externalize identity work to the organization.

This study allows us to conclude that, far from being alienating, CSR standards help to determine "how much is enough" in terms of efforts to give the best, and to put an end to internal conflicts. Social standards regarding internal working conditions also set a minimum for workers who are prone to excessive commitment and sacrifice, thus helping to preserve personal identity that can be invaded by professional identity. These internal social standards appear to be the missing resource in other research contexts where workers with a strong professional identity share the same propensity to sacrifice in the name of a higher goal, but use only their own cognitive abilities to create boundaries and frame their engagement (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Kreiner et al., 2006; Schabram & Maitlis, 2017).

Such support is particularly needed in the care professions, where the pro-social aspect and idealism of work can lead to harmful behaviours. Literature on vocation suggests the risk of over-commitment,

burnout, and burnout threatening these workers (Newell & MacNeil, 2010), while studies in specific fields such as health care or social work show the risk of "compassion fatigue", vicarious trauma or burnout. In this case, the organization has to deal with the pre-existing sensitivity of workers, making them particularly ethically demanding and willing to make sacrifices.

## 5.2. Cultural- symbolic aspect of CSR standards and relieving mechanism

However, we take a more critical perspective on the underlying mechanisms arising from the CSR Standards.

In effect, this study reconfirms the socio-ideological dimension of CSR standards that CMS have demonstrated (Costas & Kärreman, 2013). This is an extreme case: these workers are particularly well educated (see Appendix 5 level of education: 22 out of 27 respondents have more than a bachelor's degree, and 13 have more than a master's or doctorate), and have chosen their jobs in order to align their working life with their personal values, even if this involves economic and social sacrifices. While the literature has already highlighted that one of the paradoxes of CSR standards was the potential erosion of individual responsibility (De Colle *et al.*, 2014), we expected these activist workers to be more attentive to and critical of CSR standards. Surprisingly, while the existence of this tool is very important to these workers, the vast majority of them have never seen the document properly.

To date, the literature has allowed us to clarify the properties that CSR standards should have in order to generate the best organizational results. To be successfully implemented, CSR initiatives must be communicated (Du, Bhattacharya, Sen, 2010), integrated (Aguinis and Glavas, 2013) and compatible with the organizational culture (Lee, Park and Lee, 2013). Employee commitment to CSR would also depend on the organizational culture, the design of interventions and the observed benefits of CSR (Hejjas *et al.*, 2019), as well as the profile of the CEO (Godos-Diez *et al.*, 2011). In hindsight, and to our surprise, we discovered that the mere existence of such a tool, and what workers think, is actually more important than its actual content. This existence may be enough to create attractiveness, retention and buy-in among workers who, although, are initially very sensitive to ethical issues. What

is more important is what workers think of CSR standards rather than its actual content. Thus, one might ask, if the most educated and interested workers do not read this document, what about others?

However, in order to counterbalance the total lack of interest that workers would show in these CSR initiatives, we would like to link this finding to other psychological mechanisms that occur when there is a gap between perception and reality (Glavas and Godwin, 2013) and that might be more pronounced in this specific population. This study demonstrates the "biblical" aspect of a document that is omnipresent in organizational culture and the backbone of a system, but that almost no one really knows (hence the biblical aspect). CSR standards appear to be an artefact, embodying the organizational cultural myth (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Murray, 1959) of the "ethical organization". In this case, this myth not only fosters the public legitimacy necessary for the organization's survival (Hallett, 2010): its maintenance is also crucial for workers who use it to save their psychological well-being throughout the process of adapting to organizational reality. Academics who have studied the case of the Walt Disney Company have demonstrated how mythologization allows one to cope with an unstable situation and provides a basis for management (Boguszewicz-Kreft, Kreft, & Żurek, 2019). According to Boje, Fedor, and Rowland (1982), myths are a form of delineation, allowing for meaningful organizational behavior, while ignoring excessive complexity, turbulence, or ambiguity. *"Mythologization affects the origin of an organization, models underlying its foundations, its first loss and victory. Myths give some meaning to operations and organizational life, help to clarify complex situations or to motivate the participants in their joint pursuit of particular objectives."* The Orgacoop myth is based on stories, for example about the creation of the cooperative by consumer activists or about the president, a farmer and environmentalist. The creation of CSR standards also appears as something mythological, a pioneering project at a time when nobody really cared about CSR. This type of mythologization is found in many hybrid organizations, where the social mission is legitimized by a similar story about the creation and founders. In this study, we observe that this myth is not only passed on to clients. It is also used by workers to deal with ambiguity, who need to believe in an ambitious and authentic organizational project. The myth reduces the willingness to know and to take a critical stance. In this situation, workers combine the use of the standard created by the organization as a definitive and comforting solution with relative ignorance of the document, of how it is developed, applied and controlled.

The concept of organizational identification (Mael and Ashforth, 1992), because of the cultural-symbolic dimension of norms, is very useful in understanding this phenomenon. We already know that CSR is a factor in organizational identification (Kim *et al.*, 2010; Turban and Greening, 1996). We demonstrate that the relationship is a virtuous loop: identification is not only a result of CSR initiatives, but also an antecedent of workers' perception, evaluation and use of CSR: these individuals choose to maintain a positive perception of CSR *because of* organizational identification. We suggest that the lack of alternatives forces the individual to rethink the situation and the image of the organization, which could generate identity tensions. In the absence of a perceived opportunity for a more ethical workplace, the individual prefers to save the perception of the organization as an expert and creator of reliable CSR standards, and maintain the level of identification throughout the integration process.

When workers join the organization, CSR performance gives these activist workers the promise of a self-concept that will reduce internal conflict arising from ethical concerns (rather than the "enhanced self-concept" highlighted by Turban and Greening, (1996)). Workers identify strongly with the organization, feeling that they have finally found a fit with their personal values in an organization they can trust. However, by joining the organization and working alongside clients and fellow activists, awareness of CSR increases. Thus the potential for internal conflict arise. Workers experience satisfaction in working there, but also more anxiety.

In response, the individual reacts with social and psychological mechanisms. The rules already established by an organization perceived as powerful mitigate this anxiety. The feeling that the best alternatives are rare reinforces this dependence. Finally, the lack of time and resources requires limited rationality (March and Simon, 1958): one of our respondents illustrated this perfectly, thanking the organization's machine that "spoon-feeds" them information in the event of a crisis on complex subjects. This relative ignorance (or more precisely, this limited knowledge) appears to be a relief mechanism (Bakken & Wiik, 2017). Torn between the desire to defend their values and the complexity of decision-making, workers choose to use the CSR system of an organization with which they identify and in which they place their trust. Thus, despite the obvious failures or discrepancies that workers



notice with respect to CSR standards, they prefer to maintain confidence in the system. The literature has already demonstrated the propensity of workers to espouse a system and turn a blind eye to its divergences and failures, but because it responds to the project of individual identity and offers rewards (money, power...) (Kärreman and Alvesson, 2007; Costas and Kärreman, 2013). By observing a similar mechanism, we complete this knowledge by highlighting other motivations: CSR standards, before providing rewards, can simply help manage internal conflicts. In this way, we agree with the authors of system justification theory, demonstrating that individuals preserve their beliefs in the system because it reduces cognitive dissonance (Jost *et al.*, 2003).

Incidentally, this process reflects the propensity of responsible consumers to rely on labels or applications, faced with the amount of information they would have to process to be sure to spend their money ethically. Workers use the same process to be sure to make the right choice in devoting their workforce to an organization, even though CSR standards are generally part (so far) of a system that was not designed to manage internal worker conflict, but to target customers or public authorities.

### 5.3. Worker-subject versus worker-object of CSR standards: a calling for a particular consideration of the social dimension

This study documents this phenomenon of blind trust, but also its limits. We have noticed a clear distinction between the dynamics created by social standards on the one hand, and environmental standards on the other hand. In this respect, concurring with Bansal *et al.* (2014), Gond *et al.* 2010 or Dögl and Holtbrugge (2014), we suggest that research on CSR studies should definitively dissociate the type of CSR concerned when we analyze the dynamics arising from it.

Foucault's work provides a theoretical framework for understanding these distinct reactions. CSR norms appear as devices allowing workers to be moral subjects (Gros, 2002), that is, conscious human beings acting within a system to be consistent with their beliefs. "Subjectivation" (becoming a subject) is achieved through adherence to the organization, the alignment of values and actions through work.

Work is part of “the ethic of care for the self” (Foucault, 1984), not in a return to the self, cut off from the world, but by continuous vigilance in order to control if coherence and harmony are achieved between thoughts, principles, speech and actions. Standards would participate in the “ethic of care for the self” as “technologies of the self”, *“enabling individuals to carry out, alone or with other individuals, interventions on their body and soul, thoughts, behavior, to modify themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immorality”* (self-translation) (Foucault, 2001). Ethical standards, in this Foucauldian vision, can be considered as a control tool allowing quantifying the efforts made to achieve coherence between moral principles, discourse and actions. Conforming to norms is not just about respecting a rule, but about achieving a “quantified (moral) self” (Lupton, 2016; De Moya & Pallud, 2017).

Nevertheless, we can isolate the social part of the CSR standards that govern the working conditions of employees, in which the worker is not a subject who makes decisions, but an object, an organizational resource affected by the decisions of the managers. This distinction echoes the different emotional and behavioral reactions that these social standards create. Therefore, as long as workers are not really affected by non-compliance with the specifications or their weaknesses, they seem more inclined to trust them blindly. On the other hand, we have noticed that the vast majority of workers who really know the specifications notice are those who have used the social part for staff representation. In this case, CSR standards are tools for living out their individual activist orientation and regaining subject status by playing the role of “whistleblower” in an organization that the various stakeholders trust too much.

In this way, our study is also a potential follow-up to Endrissat's study on “enchanted work” (2015) in a very similar research context (organic supermarkets in the United States). This study demonstrated how the need for meaning at work was exploited to strengthen commitment and annihilate criticism. We show the limits of this “enchanted work” by exploring what happens when workers feel exploited and lose the trust they had placed in the organization. In this case, we can see a kind of “self-stupidity management” (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012) that protects workers from considerations that jeopardize their own well-being. By using standards to assert their own rights, workers stop worrying about the constraints weighting on the organization. They resort to another kind of stupidity, a blind but

salutary selfishness to think of themselves first. In this respect, CSR standards can serve the organization's interest, but also become a resource in the struggle, reminding workers of their ability to resist and use the organizational settings for emancipation as shown in previous studies (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002; Fleming and Sewell, 2002). Indeed, some dissatisfied workers report how CSR standards are used in a subtle form of resistance. This study confirms Foucauldian theory that any rationality in which power is exercised has already triggered a corresponding modality of resistance (Chan, 2000).

#### 5.4. Managerial implications: from compliance to consent

We have seen that under certain circumstances, workers are inclined to blindly trust CSR standards. But that trust is limited when it comes to internal social standards. In this final section, we will examine some management practices through which organizations can manage, in practice, this symbolic dimension of CSR standards. Based on our first contribution, some interesting practices exploiting the cultural-symbolic aspect of CSR standards can be implemented. We have detailed some of the examples cited by interviewees in section 4.5.2 of this Chapter II. In order to suggest the preferred circumstances in which these CSR Standards should be implemented, we will use the concepts of "compliance" versus "consent" (Ricoeur, 2017).

This study demonstrates that activist workers in hybrid organizations can benefit from CSR standards, which help them to ease the tensions between idealism and pragmatism. As a result, workers have a propensity to blindly trust the organization that provides them with these CSR standards. If the process of matching individual standards to CSR standards is based on blind faith and ignorance, it could be called "compliance" (Ricoeur, 2017). Indeed, compliance is linked to the idealization of the organization, emotional trust and need to believe in something more powerful. Yet, compliance is fragile and plays on individual anxiety. It is fast but irrational, based on the charisma of icons and immediate emotional benefit (here, psychological relief). As a result, in the long term, feelings of dissonance may develop in the face of deviation from initial expectations. If CSR has the capacity to generate "functional stupidity" by promoting certainty, it remains a mixed blessing (Alvesson and

Spicer, 2012) that involves risks. Indeed, as Paulsen (2017) pointed out, stupidity is not a personality trait, but a transitory and unreflective mode of compliance. Consequently, this mode of conformity is not stable, and may give rise to doubts about the meaning and objectives of the individual's working life. Dissonance can foster cynicism, decreased motivation and commitment when reflexivity returns, leading to organizational risks. Indeed, the literature on organizational cynicism clearly demonstrates the impact of such feelings on motivation, turnover and reputation (Fleming & Spicer, 2003; Alvesson & Willmott, 2002, Andersson & Bateman, 1997). Moreover, the organization's influence remains limited, especially when compensation is low and working conditions are difficult.

Thus, management practices should exploit the capacity of standards to alleviate tensions, but without coupling it with ignorance and blind faith. This would be in the spirit of what Ricoeur (2017) would call "consent" as opposed to "compliance". In order to separate consent from compliance, Ricoeur (2017) demonstrates in his reflection on ethics and politics that true consent is coupled with recognition, in a different temporality, and implies rationality. This philosophical work on consent can be applied to organizational contexts, (Chappuis, 2017), where the role of managers would be to reintroduce conflict by reopening the space for discussion in order to set up conditions conducive to the decision-making process. According to Brunsson *et al.* (2012), the standardization process is supposed to be highly participatory. In order to avoid the paradox of the erosion of individual responsibility, learning must also be central to the process of developing and implementing CSR standards (De Colle, 2014).

A regular and collaborative work on CSR standards is necessary to convert emotional trust into rational trust, and "pseudo-knowledge" (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012) into a deeper understanding of the issues. In view of all this, we recommend that all hybrid organizations work locally on CSR standards, regardless of their size or the completeness of the meta-organizational standards posted, and even if these standards come a priori from a democratic and participatory process. This work gives a real position on the subject in a philosophical sense, which is particularly important for activist workers. It constitutes an opportunity to build the organizational project by adapting CSR standards according to the vision of activism.

In terms of managerial practices, building on our second contribution, we suggest that special attention must be paid to certain aspects of social standards. First, although the literature on organizational justice shows that third parties act on perceptions of organizational injustice even if they are not directly involved (Skarlicki and Kulik, 2005). However, we point out that concern for workers who are "far" ahead of those who share their working conditions can also foster cynicism and disbelief in CSR standards. Thus, determining who should be the primary beneficiary of social initiatives also challenges CSR. Second, this study also suggests that poorly chosen standards (such as those that are no better than the labor code) can encourage cynicism. Third, satisfaction with the ethics of the local organization and especially with the leader seems to be the key factor in keeping the CSR discourse ambitious. Otherwise, the perceived power of the organization turns against it, as the individual does not always see powerlessness, but also collusion and lack of consideration for the workers.

To conclude, we emphasize that careful consideration must be given to the social aspect of CSR standards regarding the treatment and working conditions of internal working people (and not only producers), acting as a confirmation of global CSR initiatives and organizational ethics. Researchers have highlighted that the social dimension of CSR regarding internal practices is often peripheral, or ignored in traditional contexts (Allouche, Huault & Schmidt, 2004), but this also seems to be the case in hybrid organizations. We can hypothesize that giving a central place to social norms can be tricky in organizations such as our research context, where the internal social dimension and especially the "workers' question" has historically not been a topic of discussion, and needs to be included later on in the agenda. Orgacoop, like many hybrid organizations, has been built on a hybrid workforce, a mix between volunteer members of the cooperative, vocation and entrepreneurship, later supplemented and then replaced by working relationships. However, this reflexivity on the type of employment they offer to internal workers would support the legitimacy of these hybrid organizations, which have authentically defended values throughout their history, in the face of competitors who do green and social washing.

Our work helps to demonstrate the usefulness of management tools in hybrid organizations where the conflict between idealism and pragmatism can be a real challenge in the decision-making process and

for the psychological well-being of workers (Elangovan *et al.*, 2010; Ashforth and Reingen, 2014). Rules help to manage paradoxes, to spend the day at work without falling into the vacuum of endless reflection and discussion. Our study shows the interest for workers to formalize values in the form of rules, numbers or ratios in hybrid organizations. The role of standards in alleviating mechanisms can be generalized to other contexts where idealism and pragmatism compete, such as health care, culture, crafts or education (Battilana and Lee, 2014; Glynn, 2000; Fiol, Pratt and O'Connor, 2009). While the situation described is very specific, we also believe that our findings can be extended to many other organizations that want to be sustainable and truly involved in a CSR approach. Our findings will therefore be of interest beyond the specific field of hybrid organizations, especially since workers, even if they are not fervent activists, are increasingly informed by the media on environmental and social issues.

## 5.5. Limitations and further research

Since our sample deliberately excluded workers who work there by chance, "to pay the bill," and not to align their work with pre-existing values, we were unable to explore the impact of CSR standards among them. For another study, we could ask whether CSR standards eliminate tensions as they develop with the knowledge and experience in that particular workplace, and whether they encourage workers to become involved in a project they were not initially interested in. Do they take a less critical stance than activist workers because they have no expectations, and are they less inclined to denounce if they disagree with ethical practices? Or on the contrary, since they do not identify so much with the values of the organization, do they benefit from more distance? The study of the link between the level of activism, attitude towards CSR and reactions deserves further study. This will be the subject of the next chapter.



## Chapter III

*“Hey! What did you expect?”*

### **The impact of job satisfaction and workers’ social engagement on satisfaction regarding CSR and whistleblowing intentions**

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*“My shop is now in competition with mass retailing that sells organic food, so now we have in our shelves products that we refused a few years ago. That’s a shame, we feel threatened by mass retailing, and we adapt to customers, offering more instead of sticking to row products and relying on local. Raising public awareness makes the difference, that’s our shop floor workers’ duty: to make customers think.”*

Feedback from an anonymous worker at the end of the survey





## 1. Introduction

Facing the restructuring, rationalization and budget cut of public service in various sectors such as health, education or culture, we observe many social movements among workers, denouncing the impossibility to work in line with the values that led to their job. This questions the balancing point between idealism and pragmatism and the match between an organization and its members considering that issue.

In this study, we focused on workers' activism regarding environmental and social issues as an example of idealism that creates nowadays a new challenge for various and numerous workplaces. The workers' growing interest and concern for environmental and social emergencies that goes along with the current global ecological crisis make the question of workers' activism (Comning and Myers, 2002) highly relevant for all organizations. That question is even more crucial for hybrid organizations, which often showcase particularly their distinctiveness regarding their social responsibility.

This paper is the third empirical study of this thesis that explores the way individuals who live out an activist orientation at work cope with occupational tensions resulting from personal values, and the organizational practices that can be implemented to support them. We came to question the real impact of personal social engagement hearing the following recurrent speech from shop-floor workers during the previous study, in an organic shops cooperative network that combines an historical "activist identity" with a commercial identity. We could sum it up that way: according to workers, nowadays, some of the shops would still hire people really involved in environment protection or solidarity, and really know the products and share consumers' values. At the opposite, other shops would say that activist people are a source of trouble, always questioning everything. Consequently, they would prefer to hire people from mass retail with no particular interest for the environmental protection, more docile and happy to work there. We wished to check scientifically if this strategy is justified: does social engagement in private life make people more critical towards the organization practices, less satisfied, and prone to create conflict? Is the idealism more problematic, or precious for an organization? How does it affect struggles and conflicts?

This discourse echoes the literature that underlined the importance of a careful recruiting process in the success of hybrid organizations, highlighting in particular the risk of subgroup identities that stress tensions between logics (Besharov, 2014; Battilana & Dorado, 2010). More specifically, according to those authors, hybrid organizations should favor “pluralistic” members (who attribute importance to societal and economic values) in manager roles, because they would help mitigate the tensions between “idealists” and “capitalists” (Besharov, 2014; Dutton *et al.*, 2010). Those pluralist members would build the “bridger” category of our Chapter I typology, those narrators who considered contradictions as means for action. Hence, according to this literature, we can conclude that it is better to avoid recruiting staff with an idealist profile, at least for manager positions.

At first, we can think that obviously, the vegan supporter of convivial degrowth and localism will be more inclined to be cynical than happy with a CSR program consisting only in collecting paper and switching off lights at night. But the strategy to avoid idealist people in a hybrid organization questions its legitimacy, image and reputation. Furthermore, research in a similar context has also highlighted the positive outcomes of the cohabitation of workers with an idealist identity and workers with a pragmatist identity in a hybrid organization (Ashforth and Reingen, 2014), by means of intergroup and intragroup processes. In a similar field, Besharov (2014) demonstrated how the organization can benefit from the multiple identities of members (idealist, capitalist, pluralist and indifferent), in the presence of pluralist managers that implement practices supporting identification among frontline workers. In macro-finance organizations studied by Battilana and Dorado (2010) the hiring process also aims at choosing workers with distinct skills resulting from different backgrounds (social work, anthropology or sociology versus finance, law, economics or accounting) and who can demonstrate different levels of social orientation. Hence, including members with an activist tendency, coupled with certain practices in day-to-day work, recruiting and socializing processes could even represent an opportunity.

Besides, literature documenting organizational dynamics created by Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs suggests that many other variables, such as organization commitment, organization identification or quality-of-work life interact with the outcomes of a CSR program. However, so far, the

impact of workers' personal involvement for environmental and social values on workers' response to CSR remains undocumented.

Considering this gap, in this paper we propose to test empirically the impact of social engagement on two outcomes: satisfaction regarding CSR and intentions to resist in case of dissatisfaction regarding CSR practices. Data collected by a survey among employees in the cooperative organic-shops network where we performed the previous study will enable us to answer that question.

## 2. Background and hypotheses

### 2.1. Positive outcomes of CSR among workers

Organization scholars have explored various organizational settings that would explain the perception of CSR initiatives by workers and their reactions: authenticity (Alhouti, 2016), fit with corporate culture (Lee, Parke, Lee, 2013), embeddedness of CSR (Aguinis and Glavas, 2013), communication (Du, Bhattacharya, Sen, 2010), organizational culture, intervention design and observed benefits of CSR (Hejjas *et al.*, 2019) or the profile of senior level staff have for instance proved to be decisive (Godos-Diez *et al.*, 2011). CSR features also impact employees' attitudes: for instance perceiving it as substantive or symbolic will have a different impact (Donia *et al.*, 2019).

Another part of this research field focuses on the personal level to explain attitudes and reactions related with CSR. In this sense, Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1974) (S.I.T.) has often provided a fertile theoretical frame to understand the positive outcomes of CSR programs. S.I.T. proposes that the groups (e.g. organization, social class, family, football team etc.) which people belong to are a major source of pride and self-esteem. Groups provide "social identity", that is to say a sense of belonging to the social world. CSR, one associate with positive values, enhances the pride and self-esteem that members can find at work. Organizational social prestige that derives from CSR, in particular, could boost emotional implication (Carmeli, 2005). CSR would foster organizational identification, through the perceived external prestige and organizational pride that it contributes to enhance (De Roeck, El

Akreimi and Swaen, 2016). This phenomenon of identification have multiple positive outcomes: for example, it would increase trust, commitment and job satisfaction, good corporate citizenship, that all favor organizational performance (Gond, El Akreimi and Swaen, 2010).

By contrast, so far the individual antecedents of CSR perception have not been abundantly documented. Notably, little is known about the impact of personal concerns, values and beliefs regarding social responsibility that logically enhance organizational attractiveness ensued from CSR that prospective workers feel.

Also referring to Social Identity Theory, Turban and Greening (1997) demonstrated that corporate social performance attracts prospective workers who would expect to achieve an « enhanced-self », by joining the organization. However, we can suspect that prospective workers could pursue a job driven by the desire to find congruence with personal values, rather than an “enhanced-self”. This might especially be the case along the last decades, as the growing awareness about environmental and social issues has shaped the expectations of job seekers regarding corporate social performance. For instance, the Generation Y (people born after 1982) has been pinpointed as a social group that would be highly-sensitive to CSR issues (Klimkiewicz & Oltra, 2017) and would pursue a job or *au contraire* reject a job offer on the base of perceived CSR. Those individuals would be inclined to join an organization that they perceive as “sufficiently good” to meet their expectations regarding ethics. CSR would constitute a signal sent by an organization to individuals who display concern for social and environmental issues, promising the possibility to work in congruence with their personal values. In that way, CSR and Corporate Social Performance (CSP) contribute to a better reputation, that favors commitment (Brammer *et al.*, 2007), attraction and retention of employees (Judge and Cable, 1997). On the opposite case, incongruity between an organization's CSR orientation and its employees' CSR orientation has a negative impact on employees' quality-of-work life (Singhapakdi, Lee, Sirgy and Senasu, 2015).

## 2.2. The impact of personal expectations on perception of CSR

The positive outcomes of CSR are explained by the match or mismatch between individual and organizational values. However, this potential match depends on perception of CSR, and personal expectations. Coldwell (2008) suggests that personal expectations would notably vary with the personal level of moral development (Kohlberg, 1981). Coldwell's model (2008) suggests that *"mismatches occur between individual perceptions and expectations of specific ethical corporate reputations and organizational ethical climates. In other words, individuals perceive organizations differently on the basis of different ethical expectations."* People that attain the highest level of development, characterized by *"...an understanding of social mutuality and a genuine interest in the welfare of others"* (Barger, 2000, p. 1) would have higher ethical expectations and be more prone to experience a gap with their perceptions. In that case, those misfits between individual ethical orientations and organizational ethical climates generate negative attitudes and behaviors among employees. Hence, the authors recommended testing the validity of this model empirically.

## 2.3. Behavioral responses in case of misfit

Testing turnover intention or retention in relation with CSR practices has indeed been the subject of various studies in that field (Nejati, 2020; Lee, Lee, Li, 2012). However, we will argue for a different choice in that research project. If staff turnover is costly and problematic, this is not the worst behavioral outcome that an individual characterized by this high personal level of moral development can adopt in case of misfit. An employee that is driven by an urge to act for the welfare of others could be inclined to adopt responses other than exit. Besides, many individuals, depending on their education and constraints have a limited propensity to quit a job for the mere reason of values mismatch, remaining in the job in a state of discontent or even outrage. While scholars in that research field have often explored the impact of moral development or personal beliefs among a population of managers (Rahim, 1999; Peterson, 2004), there are other populations of workers, more economically constrained, for which satisfaction regarding organizational ethics is even more crucial for the reputation. That is particularly the case, for instance, of front-line workers, who are dealing

directly with the client, and remain the “prime marketer” of ethics (Edinger-Schons *et al.*, 2019; Helm, 2011). If turnover of that workforce is particularly costly for the organization, other reactions in case of values incongruence can also be much more problematic. Instead of leaving, workers can resist by different activities to express their disapproval. Kärreman and Alvesson (2009), acknowledging that the meaning of resistance differs depending on the perspective of power suggest that “*Almost everything related to subjectivity and not fully in line with a prescribed response may then be labeled ‘resistance’*”. Resistance, notably, can take various shapes, from the most passive (e.g.: conditional effort), subtle and underlying (e.g.: sabotage) to the most explosive (e.g.: leaks, strikes) (Thompson & Ackroyd, 1999).

Hence, responding to the call for further research to explore antecedents to CSR perception and the dynamics ensued, notably at the employee individual level (Gond, El-Akreimi, Igalens and Swaen, 2010) and to Coldwell *et al.*'s call for testing their model empirical validity, (2008), we chose to explore the impact of personal values and concerns for issues addressed by CSR, first on perception of CSR, and secondly on response of resistance.

#### 2.4. Measuring “personal social engagement”

Studies that have explored predictors of reactions linked with ethical concerns have often adopted measures regarding personal beliefs, awareness, or psychological profile (Singhapakdi, Vitelle and Franke, 1999; Peterson, 2004). But there is often a gap between abstract statements and behaviors (Brunsø, Scholderer, & Grunert, 2004). For instance, even if people have environmental knowledge and awareness, this will not always lead them to display pro-environmental behaviors (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). This gap has been particularly highlighted in marketing studies on ethical consumption (Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2014). Testing the level of personal engagement for environmental and social concerns with scales regarding declarations on personal beliefs could be biased, as it will not indicate the propensity to commit oneself to those values. As a consequence, we preferred to measure the behavioral aspect of this engagement. Hence, in that study, we will call “personal social engagement” the behaviors corresponding to beliefs held regarding individual

responsibility that one adopts in the private sphere, in order to express concerns regarding social and environmental issues and to bring a change or to reduce one's negative impact on the planet.

As suggested in Coldwell *et al'*'s model (2008), we can presume that employees with a high level of personal social engagement will have higher expectations regarding what the organization should do in order to deserve being qualified as "responsible". They should have a better knowledge on human activity negative outcomes, and on the existing alternatives. They should also have a different vision of what are wrongdoings, and feel more uncomfortable when they witness those wrongdoings. In effect, the literature shows the organizational risk of hiring workers highly involved in prosocial values. Idealism increases perceived moral intensity, perceived importance of an ethical issue and behavioral intentions (Singhapakdi, Vitelle and Franke, 1999). Hence, we can make the following proposition: employees who are very involved in social and environmental issues will be more inclined to judge CSR practices as not sufficient and to demand higher ethical standards. A higher level of social engagement can make the worker less impressed by CSR practices and can give more criticism and ability to detect greenwashing or social washing in the organization. As perceived CSR is more important than reality (Glavas and Godwin, 2013), any social performance the organization presents, the outcomes will depend on individual antecedents that will affect satisfaction, and we presume that their personal engagement will interfere in their vision of the efforts made.

➤ *Hypothesis 1a: Personal Social engagement is negatively related to satisfaction regarding CSR*

Our second hypothesized antecedent of satisfaction regarding CSR is job satisfaction. Corporate social performance would give the promise of a more meaningful job that would enhance employee's self-concept. Besides, according to Signaling theory, workers would be attracted by the organization displaying social performance as it would send the signal of better working conditions for its own workers (Turban and Greening, 1997). Hence, there would be an implicit promise in CSR programs regarding job satisfaction. In order to generate positive outcomes, CSR must be embedded (Aguinis and Glavas, 2013), integrated for employees within strategy, routines and operations. Moreover, even if employees judge the ethics of their organization considering its fairness towards other stakeholders, individuals are more attentive to treatment affecting the sub-group to which they identify (Skarlicki & Kulik, 2005). A bad perception of organizational justice regarding the fairness or internal workers



treatment could compromise the benefits of investment in CSR (De Roeck *et al.*, 2016). Thus, the perception of internal working conditions would be crucial in reaction to CSR (Erdogan *et al.*, 2015). Indeed, the impact of job satisfaction perception of CSR standards was very salient in the previous study (Chapter II). We make the hypothesis that job satisfaction, and especially items affecting the quality of working life such as managers' attitude, can also be an explanatory variable of satisfaction regarding CSR.

➤ *Hypothesis 1b: Job satisfaction is positively related to satisfaction regarding CSR*

Our second hypothesis (H2) is that satisfaction regarding CSR positively impacts Organizational Commitment (OC). We know that perceived CSR (Brammer *et al.*, 2007; Farooq *et al.*, 2014; Turker, 2009; Stites and Michael, 2011), ethical context (Valentine *et al.*, 2002) or corporate citizenship (Peterson, 2004) have proved to be positively related with OC. Those studies often refer to S.I.T. (Tajfel, 1974) to explain the impact of CSR on OC, notably on affective commitment (Rego *et al.* 2011; Farooq *et al.*, 2014; Carmeli, 2005). The same theoretical framework has also suggested other models in which this link can be indirect, mediated for instance through organizational identification, trust (Glavas and Godwin, 2012; Farooq *et al.*, 2014, Kim *et al.* (2010), or social external prestige (Carmeli, 2005). On the opposite, ethical conflict, or pressure to engage on work activity perceived as unethical would decrease OC (Schwepker, 1999; Peterson, 2003).

➤ *Hypothesis 2: Satisfaction towards CSR is positively related to organizational commitment*

Our last group of hypotheses relates to behavioral outcomes (H3a, H3b and H3c). Satisfaction is expressed through three dimensions: cognitive, emotional and conative (Llosa, 1997). Dissatisfaction creates negative feelings, followed by some reactions. Turnover is the reaction that is often explored in the literature (Nejati, 2020; Lee, Lee, Li, 2012). Another one is resistance, which is “*a response to attempts to exercise power over the resisting party*” (Chan, 2000). Among the various resistance activities identified (Thompson and Ackroyd, 1999), we will focus on, whistleblowing intentions. Whistleblowing are “*actions of employees who believe that wrongdoing by corporations should be corrected and reported to the authorities*” (Pulliam and Solomon, 2002). Here, we will consider stakeholders rather than authorities.

Several reasons explain this choice of resistance activity. First, we chose to focus on whistleblowing because this response can be particularly threatening or, *au contraire* valuable for the organization. Blowing the whistle can be an attempt to harm, or on the other hand to preserve the organization, in line with the idealism characterizing the context of our research question. Thus, this complex activity entails rich questioning on managerial practices, and organizational stakes are very high. Secondly, among the different forms of resistance, even if this remains questionable (see 5.3.), it is one resistance response that is the least subject to personal interests that could interfere with moral duties (contrary to withdrawal intentions for instance, where the employee can benefit from other advantages or have other motivations). Whistleblowing is one of the clearest expressions of the urge to bring a change.

Finally, it has been proved that for instance moral intensity relates to reporting intention measures among public accounting seniors (Taylor and Curtis, 2010), and that cognitive moral development or ideal values are predictors of whistleblowing (Street, 1995; Sims and Keenan, 1998). Moreover, *“Individual’s propensity to engage in activism is a developed, relatively stable, yet changeable orientation toward political action-taking”* (Comings and Myers, 2002). As a consequence, individuals who have an activism orientation in private life will relatively have the same orientation at work. We can hypothesize that social engagement, especially within workers with a strong activist orientation, will favor whistleblowing intentions.

➤ *Hypothesis 3a: Personal social engagement is positively related to whistleblowing intentions*

If, so far, the literature has not proved a significant impact of job satisfaction on whistleblowing intentions (Gokse, 2013; Sims & Keenan, 1998; Said *et al.*, 2017), we know that job satisfaction can foster behaviors such as general compliance (Carmeli, 2005). Thus, we chose to hypothesize that job satisfaction could still reduce whistleblowing intentions in that research context.

➤ *Hypothesis 3b: Job Satisfaction is negatively related to whistleblowing intentions*

Finally, we hypothesize that organizational commitment could also moderate dissatisfaction and reduce the risk of deviance and so whistleblowing intentions. Affective commitment, notably, has been pinpointed as a factor of compliance (Carmeli, 2005).

➤ *Hypothesis 3c: Organizational Commitment is negatively related to whistleblowing intentions.*

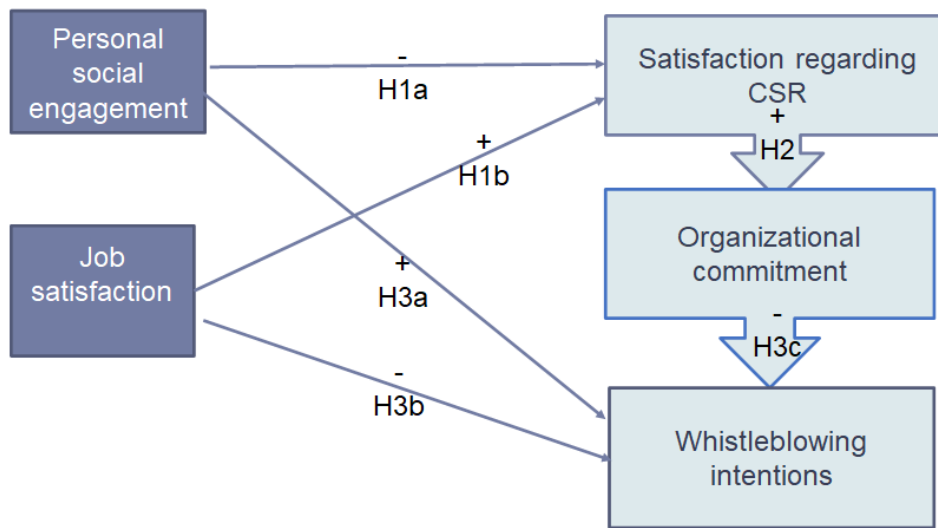


Figure 3: Theoretical model

In this study, we will answer to the following general research question:

**What is the impact of personal social engagement on satisfaction regarding CSR and whistleblowing intentions compared to other antecedents?**

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Sample and data collection

As we needed a relatively large sample of workers with various levels of social engagement, but experiencing the same CSR practices, we chose to submit the project to Orgacoop (a pseudonym), a cooperative network of retailing shops (560 shops in 2018), selling organic and fair trade food products, eco-label cosmetics and cleaning products. In the Western European country where Orgacoop operates, it constitutes the only national network with a militant identity and alternative organization governance. Orgacoop bases its communication on key concepts such as involvement, activism, meaningfulness, solidarity, fairness.

The organic food industry has provided a fertile context to study the tension between idealism and business in organization studies (Farias, 2017, Endrissat, 2015, Ashforth and Reingen, 2014; Besharov, 2014). Front-line employees' satisfaction with CSR is crucial, because they are “part-time marketers” (Helm, 2011) or “ambassadors” of CSR (Edinger-Schons *et al.*, 2019) A significant part of customers who adopt responsible consumption expect their purchase experience to be more than transactional, and wish to give their money to an organization sharing their values. They prefer to engage with employees committed to ethical principles as a means to see that their vision of ethical consumption is functioning in real life. They also expect a selling team to fill an educational role (Geysmans *et al.*, 2017). At the opposite, workers' disillusion regarding ethics can be dramatic for those shops. For instance, staff turnover in that population is very costly (Alexandrov *et al.*, 2007; Helm, 2011)

Orgacoop was created in the 80s as a non-profit organization structuring the initiatives of consumers' cooperatives that had appeared since the 70s. The pioneers' ambition to create a militant network enabling customers to fight for a different economy through their everyday purchases is still decisive in the commercial strategy: a range of basic products with a reduced margin or loose products aims for the democratization of consumption of organic products. Orgacoop builds partnerships with farmers to insure them a decent salary. The network takes some strong positions like banning certain products of the shops notwithstanding their profitability (notably water bottles).

In the 90s, the “Orgacoop charter” was created, getting together independent cooperative or non-cooperative shops on specifications, framing the choice of products, and the economic and social management of the Orgacoop shops. Shops have to comply with a charter and specifications, and give a percentage of their turnover. In exchange, they benefit from the access to bulk-buying, logistic support and communication strategy of Orgacoop. Through specifications, in particular, CSR is commonly experienced as a part of all workers' daily routine, as this management tool impacts various aspects of work, for instance the products that they are allowed to sell, pricing or working conditions. All employees are supposed to attend a training session within the first year where they are told about the existence of those distinctive CSR standards. Hence, we expect all workers to have at least an opinion on CSR.

If this research context seemed particularly well-adapted to the present research project, our experience displays the ongoing tensions between the original activist identity of the cooperative network, and the new choices made in order to adapt to the growing competition on a booming market. Notably, the network has recently recruited head managers from mass retailing with a more business-oriented profile. Orgacoop has also started to communicate on mass media such as cinema and TV about its distinctive social performance. The research project was supported by employees' representatives, which enabled us to meet the facilitator of employees' cooperative members and to present the project to the vice president. All seemed very enthusiastic to include this research project in the "Quality of working life" (QWL) agenda. Hence, our interlocutors proposed to pre-test the survey in their QWL program "pilot stores", then to distribute it through the internal newsletter, which is monthly sent to the 5200 employees of the shops. However, a few weeks later, a new board of directors was elected and drastic changes were made in the headquarters: this study coincided with a transition period. Five months later, the new human resources manager gave up the project that had not received a "political approval" and preferred to resort to consultants. That was not a big surprise for the workers representatives who considered it as a strategy to stifle the debate about shop employees' working conditions. According to insiders that are still in touch with me, the social issue is now considered not as an ethical necessity, but from a strategic point of view regarding Orgacoop's reputation. Indeed, whistleblowing of employees constitutes a real threat. For instance, a video from shop-floor workers on strike entitled "*Employees disclose Orgacoop's practices and lies*" put online on Youtube on in August 2020 was watched 110 000 times within a week.

As the HR director did not oppose the distribution by our own means, we contacted the almost 600 shops individually by email, Facebook or contact forms. The survey was transmitted with Qualtrics© by an anonymous link or a QR code, ready to complete on a computer, a smartphone or a tablet. In order to avoid any blocking policy of Orgacoop, we presented the project as a research on idealism and defense of values at work (see Appendix 8). We opened the survey to all the workers of organic shops networks, only adding the question "*Do you work in one of these networks?*" That allowed us to publish the link in social networks. Orgacoop withdrawal enabled us to gain more freedom, notably on the choice of quality of work-life scale (see section Introduction – Epistemological posture). We have also

eliminated the questions that were specific to Orgacoop, related to our collaboration but not useful or exploitable for an academic research project.

Despite the complete absence of any retribution, and the difficulty to reach shop-floor workers with a simple message to a shop, we obtained 229 responses, collected in Fall 2019. 167 were entirely filled out. This moderate drop off rate under the circumstances (27%) can be easily explained by the length of the survey (an average of 27 minutes was recorded by Qualtrics). As partial responses were saved during a month enabling respondents to start and continue later, this maximized the will to answer the survey, but also the risk to forget it and never finish.

The survey was pre-tested on 5 workers from the previous qualitative study who gave feedback on problematic questions regarding the emotions ensued, or the understanding of some questions.

155 complete responses were officially declared made by Orgacoop workers. Some people contacted me directly to get more information, suspecting hidden manoeuvres of their manager, journalists or competitors, or only showing interest in the research project. An open question at the end enabled respondents to express themselves or give feedback about the survey. That was precious in the understanding of the limits of my measurement model, and why some items from validated scales could not work in this present case.

As Orgacoop does not publish any statistics about the social status of the shop or gender, age or education of the employees, it is impossible to really assess the representativeness of our sample with descriptive statistics.

Categories	Sample statistics		
Gender	Male	64	41%
	Female	91	59%
Social status of the shop	Association	1	1%
	Others	4	3%
	SA Consumers cooperative	39	25%
	SAS/SARL	60	39%
	SAS/SARL ESS	7	5%
	SCEA	1	1%
	SCIC	10	6%
	SCOP	33	21%
Job tenure	1 - 3 years	35	23%
	3 - 5 ans	42	27%
	5 - 10 ans	31	20%
	Less than a year	21	14%
	More than 10 years	26	17%
Age	18-25	12	8%
	25-35	62	40%
	35-45	49	32%
	45-55	19	12%
	55 and +	13	8%
Education	Baccalauréat (A-level)	34	22%
	Bachelor	53	34%
	Master	54	35%
	Professional qualification	11	7%
	PhD	1	1%
	None	7	5%
Function (can be cumulative)	Manager	30	19%
	Staff representative	16	10%
	Coop member	43	28%

Table 8: Descriptive analysis of the sample

### 3.2. Operationalization of study variables

The withdrawal from the project of Orgacoop's heads considerably reduced the potential of responses and excluded the possibility to pre-test. Hence, this task was done at the same time as the measurement model validation. We kept a large number of questions in the survey in order to be sure to have enough items that work, but according to Chin (1998), the number of items measuring a construct cannot exceed 10% of the number of responses (that is to say 15 items). As some constructs

required several dimensions, we selected items in accordance with the validation tests of the measurement model.

Some constructs were initially measured with a 7-point Likert scale, that gives more reliability (Maydeu, Olivares *et al.* 2017), but made the survey completion even more heavy. As this academic study was already very long for voluntary respondents, we made the choice of a 5-point Likert scale at most.

### 3.2.1. Social engagement

Social engagement in environment issues has often been broached with concepts such as environmental activism, pro-environmental behaviors (Stern *et al.*, 1999), attitudes or beliefs (New ecological paradigm (Stern *et al.*, 1995)). The limits that we found in most of those measurement scales is that they often seem out-to-date, considering the quick changes we have experienced and awareness spread. Secondly, well-known scales such as the pro-environmental behaviors scale (Stern *et al.*, 1999) use different subscales: Consumer behavior, Environmental citizenship and Willingness to pay. This constitutes a formative construct: that means that you cannot suppress a subscale, as all the dimensions contribute to measure the main construct. Hence, it was impossible to use properly those scales validated by the literature because some dimensions of formative construct were not operationalizable on my sample (see “Willingness to Pay” in the section Convergence validity). Finally, those scales focus only on concern for the environment, while Orgacoop also communicates on social aspects and solidarity that are crucial for workers, according to our previous qualitative study.

Hence, we decided to focus on two aspects of social engagement that will operate as two different independent variables: activism orientation and consumer behaviors. This brings another advantage: as Dono, Webb and Richardson (2009) demonstrated that pro-environmental behaviors and environmental activism are not always related and could have different impacts, separating those constructs will also enable to assess their respective impact on the latent variables.

#### 3.2.1.1. Responsible Consumption (RC)



Many scales seemed out-of-date to me considering the general growing awareness and the evolution of general practices. For instance, recycling or buying organic products in one of the 4 items measuring the Consumer behaviors (Stern *et al.* 1999): this is much more common today than in 1999 and would not indicate a particular level of social engagement, especially within shop-floor workers in an organic shop. In order to have a scale that is more adapted to the context, we reviewed the literature to find particular scales that are deeper and more relevant to measure nowadays involvement and selected the Environmentally Responsible Consumption (ERC) scale (Gupta and Agrawal, 2018).

ERC scale has been presented by its authors as particularly suitable in combination with scales of related constructs such as environmental activism or environmental beliefs. It has two specific features. The first advantage of this scale is that it measures actual behaviors and not just intentions or attitudes, as a gap often exists (Vermeir and Verbeke, 2006). Secondly, it measures frequency of behaviors at three stages of the consumption process: purchase, but also decision to buy, usage and disposal. This approach is relevant, considering that nowadays, through zero-waste, deconsumerism is also part of responsible consumption. As this scale is very deep and too long (38 items) for this context where many other variables are measured, we needed to reduce the length of the questionnaire and thus increase response rates (Yammarino *et al.*, 1991). Following the literature on judgmental criteria (Wieland, Durach and Kembro, 2017) we identified redundancies to eliminate certain constructs. By this means, we reduced the scale to 17 items before statistic tests optimizing scale's parsimony while preserving a minimum of 3 items for each dimension and the 3-stages of consumption process that was the core aspect of this scale. We adapted some items to consumption behaviors that are specific to the French context, identified in the previous study. Individuals indicated the frequency of behaviors by responding to items such as *"I do not purchase things that I do not need, even if they are on discount"* or *"I buy products in refill packaging"* Answers were provided on a 5-point Likert scale. Besides, the "Willingness to sacrifice/to pay" that was initially measured remained in consumption choices measured by the ERC scale. For instance, buying products with a label (Organic, Demeter, Max Havelaar) often corresponds to the third item *"I'm willing to pay much higher prices in order to protect the environment"*.

### 3.2.1.2. Activism orientation (AO)

We use the Activism Orientation Scale (Corning and Myers, 2002) that measures the propensity to involve in social actions that can be high-risk (HRAO)/low-risk (LRAO), repeated or not. Items have been designed to focus on activist behaviors rather than on a particular activist issue, that was adapted to the research context where workers can be involved in other causes than environment (solidarity, children work, animals...) Hence, activism orientation is a formative construct with high-risk and low risk first-order constructs. This high-risk dimension which is measured with items such as “*Engage in a political activity in which you knew you will be arrested*” or “*in which you fear for your personal safety*” makes this scale more efficient to catch high level of activism that can be specific to a part of our sample, enabling to really differentiate the various level of social engagement. Examples of low-risk activism activities include for instance “*Invite a friend to attend a meeting of an activist organization or event*”, “*Donate money to an activist organization*” or “*Wear a t-shirt or a button with an activist message.*” This scale was validated in the literature as a 4-point scale (0- Extremely unlikely, 3- Extremely likely). We have kept this 4-point scale. Using the same ratio of high-risk/low-risk actions, we reduced the scale from 38 to 15 items that were adapted to the current context, keeping the dissociation LR/HR for deeper analysis.

### 3.2.2. Satisfaction regarding CSR (SATISCSR)

Satisfaction is ensued from a cognitive and affective process, resulting from a gap between the perceived performance and the expectations. For Westbrook *et al.* (1991), satisfaction is an evaluative response (cognition) that creates feelings and emotions (affect) and influences behaviors (conative). In order to respect the modelization of satisfaction around this triptych, we used 6 items to measure satisfaction (or dissatisfaction), like commonly used in marketing literature on satisfaction (Valentini & Casteran, 2016). These questions allow us to assess the cognitive, affective and conative dimensions of the concept of satisfaction (Llosa, 1997).

The cognitive aspect was assessed with two questions related to a general evaluation of CSR actual practices and actions compared with expectations (what the worker expected from Orgacoop before joining it). Two items have a more conative approach of satisfaction with a behavioral reaction: advising a friend to work or a customer to make shopping in Orgacoop. Items such as «*How do you feel when you think about the corporate responsibility approach of Orgacoop*» (1- Furious 5- Thrilled) caught the affective and emotional part of satisfaction. We added a graphic scale (emoticon) that is not academic but made the survey friendlier to measure the emotional aspect. As this item passed the measurement test model, we chose to keep it.

Three single items that do not meet reliability criteria were added in order to outline further research: they inquire the level of satisfaction regarding environmental, external/internal social practices.

### 3.2.3. Job satisfaction (JS)

Job satisfaction was measured with a reduced and adapted version (15 items) of INDSALES developed by Churchill *et al.* (1974). Originally applied in a sales force setting, this scale remains widely borrowed for measuring job satisfaction in recent empirical study of salespeople (Cho *et al.*, 2017; Onyemah *et al.*, 2018; Román *et al.*, 2018; Schwepker, 2001). Job satisfaction (JOB) and its facets, namely satisfaction with fellow workers (FELLOW), customers (CUSTOM), supervisor (SUPERVISOR), promotion possibilities (PROMO) and pay (PAY) were measured with five-point Likert-type scale items. As our previous study demonstrated how much components such as relationships with colleagues and customers or benevolence of supervisor provide satisfaction, considering job satisfaction as a formative construct with those dimensions seemed particularly suited to the research context.

Job satisfaction can match up different meanings. The risk of that measure is to have a circular or causal relationship, as the impact of perceived CSR on job satisfaction has been demonstrated (Valentine and Fleischman, 2008; Glavas and Kelley, 2014). The other advantage of this INSALES scale, in comparison with other ones, is to minimize job satisfaction linked with needs for meaningfulness or fulfillment, which can present a reverse effect with satisfaction towards CSR practices. In contrast,

INDSALES scale maximizes other components that are completely independent from CSR: for instance SATI CSR cannot make your colleagues more pleasant, or your pay higher. Thanks to that, we would really observe if working conditions really have an impact on satisfaction towards CSR. “Job” dimension with items such as *“I am really doing something worthwhile in my job”* is the only dimension that could really be impacted by SATI CSR: A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1=strongly agree to 5=strongly disagree) disagree was used.

#### 3.2.4. Organizational commitment (OC)

OC was measured by means of the nine-item version of the Organizational Commitment questionnaire (Mowday *et al.*, 1979), a scale that has demonstrated a good validity and is still often used as a reference in recent organizational literature (Gray, Knight & Baer, 2020; Anicich *et al.*, 2016). Contrary to scales measuring other construct that can become out-of-date (see section 3.2.1.1. about Responsible consumption), Mowday *et al.*'s scale, like the other conventional scale measuring Organizational Commitment widely used (Meyer, Allen and Smith's scale, 1996) is timeless and thus still widely used nowadays. Among those scales, we selected Mowday *et al.*'s scale due to its one-dimensionality that reduced the number of items, while multidimensionality would have unnecessarily complicated the model in that present study. Sample items are *“I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this network to be successful”* or *“I talk up this network to my friends as a great organization to work for”*. The measure was assessed on a five-point scale (ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree)

#### 3.2.5. Perceived external prestige (PEP)

Considering the subject of this study, we focus on the social aspect of PEP (Fryxell and Wang, 1994). The respondents were asked to assess their network's external prestige with 4 items adapted from Mael & Ashforth' s questionnaire (1992), assessed on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree to statements such as *“People in my community think highly of my network”* or *“My network is considered one of the best organic shops network.”*. This PEP variable will be just used for explorations in the perspective of further research.

### 3.2.6. Whistleblowing intentions (WB)

As is common in research on ethical perceptions and reactions (Park, Rehg and Lee, 2005; Singhapakdi, Vitelle and Franker, 1999), whistleblowing intentions were operationalized in this study by means of two scenarios. In those two hypothetical situations, the worker experiences practices that are not in line with the perceived organizational CSR promise.

Some scholars have called for a dissociation of CSR practices, as they can generate different outcomes (Dögl and Holtbrügge, 2014). We chose to build two scenarios S<sub>1</sub>/S<sub>2</sub> involving different practices. S<sub>1</sub> is a situation where the worker has to sell a product that he/she considers unethical and inconsistent with the declared ethics of the network: this situation raises an ethical conflict related to environmental issues or an unknown and a distant stakeholder (producer, animals...). S<sub>2</sub> is a situation where the worker witnesses some treatments towards colleagues that he/she considers unfair and inconsistent with the declared ethics of the network: this conflict has a greater proximity and relates to a social issue.

Using the same approach as Park, Rehg and Lee (2005) who dissociated internal (INTWB) and external whistleblowing (EXTWB), we adapted the items to the organizational context (activity and governance) and our time: for instance external whistleblowing intentions is measured through negative word-of-mouth intentions (a main outcomes in retailing context, (Brown, Barry, Dacin & Gunst, 2005)) or bringing public awareness through social media.

Examples of internal whistleblowing intentions are involving the headquarters, the staff representatives or engaging oneself in representation function. A 5-point scale (1= surely not, 5=certainly) was used to assess the probability to engage in internal or external whistleblowing.

We added other reaction intentions as an exploration for further studies: a “no-action” response (acceptance) (1 item), resistance (organizing a resistance action in the shop, such as a protest or a strike) (1 item), turnover (2 items) and sabotage (passive resistance) (1 item). Even if the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach we use can work with them, single item constructs are only acceptable in

restricted cases (Hair *et al.*, 2016). Hence, those intentions will not be integrated in the model as the number of items would be insufficient to measure properly those variables.

### 3.2.7. Control variables

We used control variables that have been pointed in the literature as having a potential impact on the perception of ethical problems (Singhapakdi, Vitell & Franke, 1999, 1998; Brammer *et al.*, 2007), values congruence (Posner, 2010) or external whistleblowing (Sims and Keenan, 1998) : education, age, gender, job tenure, family responsibilities and living as a couple. We added status of member of the cooperative (Coopmember), manager or staff representative (DELEGATE), and if the shop has a cooperative form (COOP)(association, workers-owned company...) (0=No 1= Yes for all those variables)

## 3.3. Measure assessment

### 3.3.1. Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach

We used a PLS approach that seems the most adapted to our case and the constraints we have. According to Hair *et al.* (2011, 2012), this approach is particularly suitable for exploratory study (Henseler *et al.*, 2014) and able to operate with small sample size. PLS approach can also deal with the formative construct that I use, or with measurement scales that have not been largely validated (Sosik *et al.*, 2009)

### 3.3.2. Distribution of data

In general, data must have a relatively normal distribution (Hair *et al.*, 2014), that can be checked with the Skewness (asymmetry of distribution) and Kurtosis (width of distribution) indicators that must be between -1 and 1: this could be represented graphically with a bell curve. Otherwise, this would mean that a major part of the respondents has given an extreme response to a question (for instance,

*“Completely agree”*). As shown in Appendix 9, we see that we do not meet those criteria, but that can be easily explained by the specific features of our sample for which the scale has not been designed. For instance, the statement *“I segregate my household waste before disposing it”* that constitutes nowadays a banal “pro-environmental behavior” has of course received “often” or “always” as a response for most of the participants. However, as those items measure reflexive constructs that use other items, we did not consider this deviation as problematic and hence, did not suppress those items. Moreover, one of the benefits of PLS is that normality criterion does not need to be met.

### 3.3.3. Reliability and validity of measurement scales

In order to validate the construct in the PLS approach, we measure convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity enables to check if the items measure the same construct, while discriminant validity verifies if those items are correlated to other constructs. For instance, the item *“My organization has a good reputation”* is supposed to measure Perceived External Prestige. We will check if it measures the same construct as the 3 other items of PEP, and that it does not measure other constructs, especially as some constructs (Organizational commitment for instance) can be relatively close.

This is a consequent task, as no pre-test has been performed. The sorting must be made in order to suppress the weakest items to meet the 10% criteria (Chin, 1998): as we have 155 responses, we can keep a maximum of 15 items for a construct. Literature on statistical and judgmental criteria for scale purification (Wieland, Durach and Kembro, 2017) helped at this stage: statistical criteria assess quantitative data using standardized techniques. Judgmental criteria are built on the intellectual interpretation of qualitative data (e.g.: ambiguous or not sufficiently readable items, redundant constructs). Both approaches are complementary and mutually supportive. Respondents’ feedback was an important input to our thinking, as it enriched our understanding of problematic scores concerning certain items.

### 3.3.3.1. First order versus second order constructs

In this model, we have two kinds of constructs: first order constructs and second order constructs.

- First order constructs are measured with items that are interchangeable: they are called *reflexive*. They all measure the same thing, like a different way of asking the same question. For instance, all the items of Organizational Commitment are related to the same concept. Logically, a respondent's responses should be similar for all the items of this construct.
- Second order constructs, on the opposite, are *formative*. They present different components that measure different things, and each component is a first order construct. Second order constructs in this model are Job satisfaction, Activism Orientation and Responsible Consumption. For instance Job Satisfaction is composed of the first order constructs Pay, Supervisor, Fellow workers, Customers, Job and Promotion (Figure 3). All these different elements contribute to the general job satisfaction, but they are not interchangeable. The items measure satisfaction related to each component. They are interchangeable inside the same dimension. A respondent can be very satisfied with his/her colleagues (that are pleasant (FELLOW<sub>1</sub>) or very friendly (FELLOW<sub>2</sub>), but not with the pay (PAY<sub>1</sub> and 2). But the global job satisfaction has to be measured considering all those components.

Obviously, the techniques to assess the validity will be different for first order and second order constructs



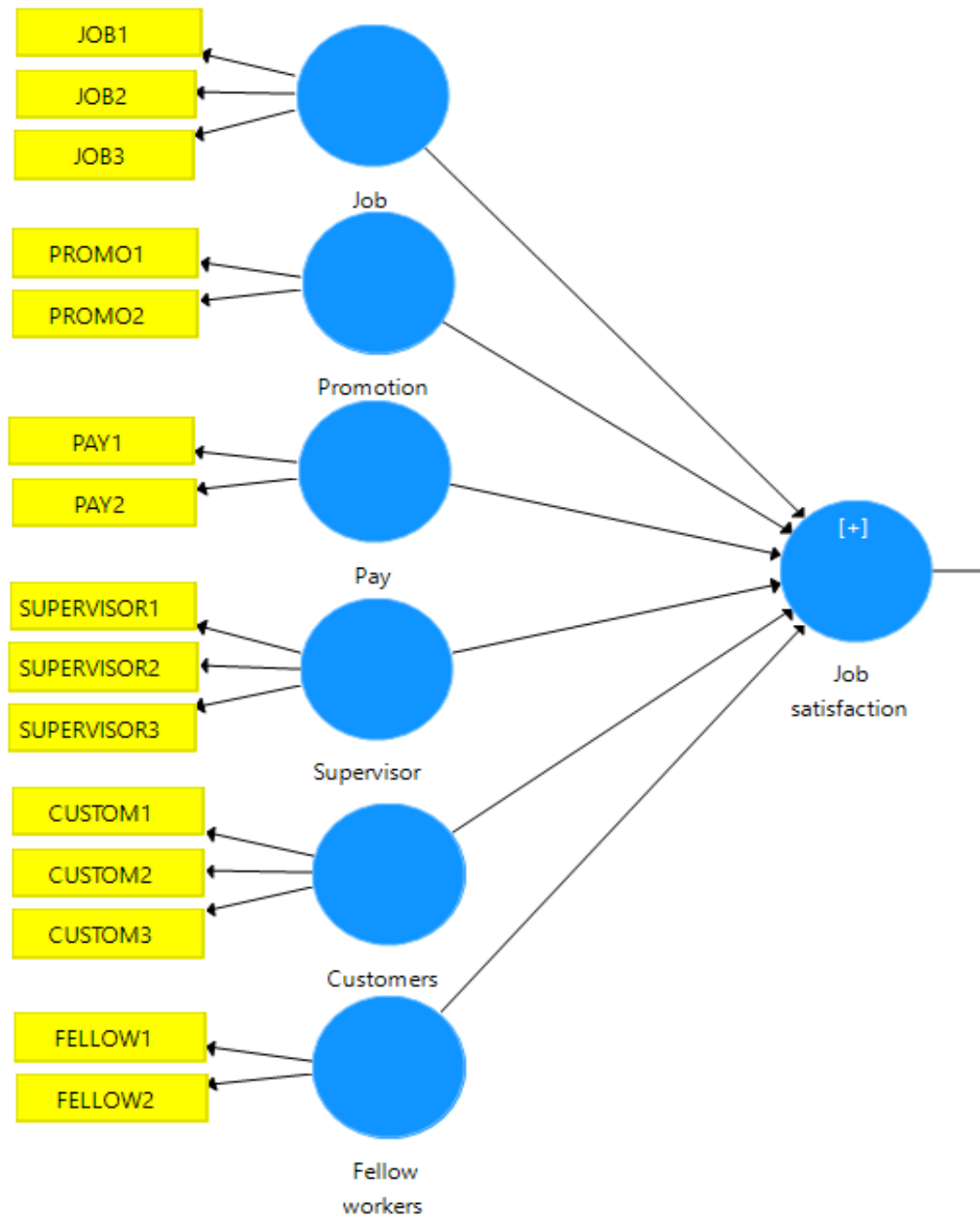


Figure 4: An example of second order construct: Job Satisfaction

### 3.3.3.2. First order constructs validity and reliability

- Convergent validity

According to Hair *et al.* (2014), statistical criteria to measure convergent validity are Factor loadings, Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance extracted (AVE). Factor loadings and CR must be over 0.7, and AVE over 0.5. Cronbach alpha must also be over 0.7.

- Factor loading criteria ( $>0.7$ )

Some items do not meet the factor loading criterion: those with a reverse score such as OC3 (FL=0.174) *“I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work is similar”*. We see that the length of the scale and the redundancy make the respondents' concentration decrease and they reply by automatism, or that the formulation was ambiguous (the mean is 4.16, similar to other items). OC9 item *«I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization”* is a much more extreme statement, which explains a different response challenging the internal convergence. The mean is 2.47, that is to say that the average answer is negative.

PEP3 (FL=0.639) was perhaps problematic as it refers to « community » - a concept that is not very meaningful for French people in this context compared to the context of American university alumni for which the scale was made.

As some items had to be removed, the number of items left for some constructs was not sufficient, constraining us to suppress the entire construct at this stage. Luckily, those constructs initially present were not essential in the model, and we were able to redesign it (e.g.: see section 3.2.1. Social Engagement). For instance, the pro-environmental behavior scale (Stern *et al.*, 1999) integrated the dimension “Willingness to Sacrifice”. However, the items seemed not adapted to the context, which was corroborated by the measurement model validation procedures. The reluctance to respond was explained by feedback from respondents. For instance the item *“I would be willing to pay much higher taxes in order to protect the environment”* (1= completely disagree, 4= completely agree) provoked several reactions from respondents that do not trust the government regarding that issue.

- Cronbach alpha ( $>0.7$ ), CR ( $>0.7$ ) and AVE ( $>0.5$ )

Cronbach indicator tends to understate the convergence, while CR overstates it. Hence, we chose to keep the construct Collab (Cronbach Alpha = 0.681, CR=0.823).

Whistleblowing intentions items have been inspired by the literature and adapted to the concept. However, they are not part of a validated scale. Factor loadings demonstrate the difficulty to have a sufficient convergence with very different intentions brought together in the general category of Internal whistleblowing intentions. The construct S1 and S2 Internal Whistleblowing intentions present respectively a 0.689 and 0.693 Cronbach. As this part of the study is exploratory, we decided to keep this construct with Cronbach that approximates 0.7 and present very high CR,

The different convergence indicators for the items remaining after tests are presented in Table

9. All the first order constructs have a satisfying CR (>0.7) and AVE (0.5) score. PLS approach presents the disadvantage that factor loadings can differ from a model to another: we checked that all those criteria remained met in all models.

After item suppression, combining judgmental and statistical criteria, we obtain second order constructs with a number of items that does not exceed 10% of the sample size (Chin, 1998) (15 items). We have a maximum of 15 items for Activism orientation.

Construct	Item	Loading	Mean	Alpha C	Rho A	CR	AVE
Purchase (PUR)	PUR1	0.822	4.413	0.799	0.801	0.882	0.713
	PUR2	0.853	4.245				
	PUR3	0.858	4.271				
Need (NEED)	NEED1	0.792	4.374	0.724	0.724	0.844	0.644
	NEED2	0.799	4.258				
	NEED3	0.815	4.161				
Collaboration (COLLAB)	COLLAB1	0.881	3.200	0.681	0.731	0.823	0.609
	COLLAB2	0.715	3.097				
	COLLAB3	0.735	3.245				
Waste (WAST)	WAST1	0.842	3.858	0.776	0.782	0.870	0.690
	WAST2	0.810	3.903				
	WAST3	0.841	3.968				
Activism Orientation High-Risky (AOHR)	AOHR1	0.880	2.265	0.822	0.835	0.893	0.736
	AOHR2	0.862	1.697				
	AOHR3	0.831	1.645				
Activism Orientation Low Risky (AOLR)	AOLR1	0.865	2.561	0.954	0.955	0.959	0.664
	AOLR2	0.760	2.652				

	AOLR <sub>3</sub>	0.822	3.465				
	AOLR <sub>4</sub>	0.895	3.155				
	AOLR <sub>5</sub>	0.825	2.523				
	AOLR <sub>6</sub>	0.732	1.852				
	AOLR <sub>7</sub>	0.829	3.323				
	AOLR <sub>8</sub>	0.835	2.161				
	AOLR <sub>9</sub>	0.801	2.845				
	AOLR <sub>10</sub>	0.803	2.432				
	AOLR <sub>11</sub>	0.791	2.639				
	AOLR <sub>12</sub>	0.807	2.871				
Satisfaction regarding (SATICSR)	CSR SATICSR <sub>1</sub>	0.865	4.200	0.926	0.938	0.941	0.694
	SATICSR <sub>2</sub>	0.762	3.581				
	SATICSR <sub>3</sub>	0.751	3.271				
	SATICSR <sub>4</sub>	0.878	4.039				
	SATICSR <sub>5</sub>	0.862	4.361				
	SATICSR <sub>6</sub>	0.813	4.155				
	SATICSR <sub>7</sub>	0.892	3.968				
Job (JOB)	JOB <sub>1</sub>	0.950	4.000	0.935	0.938	0.958	0.884
	JOB <sub>2</sub>	0.948	4.065				
	JOB <sub>3</sub>	0.923	4.155				
Promotion (PROMO)	PROMO <sub>1</sub>	0.900	2.826	0.805	0.826	0.911	0.836
	PROMO <sub>2</sub>	0.929	3.394				
Pay (PAY)	PAY <sub>1</sub>	0.934	2.594	0.865	0.871	0.937	0.881
	PAY <sub>2</sub>	0.943	2.981				
Supervisor (SUPERVISOR)	SUPERVISOR <sub>1</sub>	0.938	3.839	0.920	0.921	0.950	0.862
	SUPERVISOR <sub>2</sub>	0.921	3.768				
	SUPERVISOR <sub>3</sub>	0.928	3.619				
Customers (CUSTOM)	CUSTOM <sub>1</sub>	0.871	4.239	0.863	0.876	0.916	0.784
	CUSTOM <sub>2</sub>	0.896	4.123				
	CUSTOM <sub>3</sub>	0.891	4.077				
Fellow workers (FELLOW)	FELLOW <sub>1</sub>	0.912	4.426	0.836	0.856	0.924	0.858
	FELLOW <sub>2</sub>	0.940	4.400				
Organizational Commitment (OC)	OC <sub>1</sub>	0.795	3.503	0.922	0.932	0.937	0.682
	OC <sub>2</sub>	0.862	3.697				
	OC <sub>4</sub>	0.869	3.942				
	OC <sub>5</sub>	0.884	4.110				
	OC <sub>6</sub>	0.879	3.671				
	OC <sub>7</sub>	0.766	4.135				
	OC <sub>8</sub>	0.709	4.065				

Perceived External prestige (PEP)	PEP1	0.775	4.077	0.759	0.768	0.861	0.674
	PEP2	0.840	4.065				
	PEP4	0.846	3.819				
Scenario 1 External Whistleblowing Intentions (S1EXTWB)	S1EXTWB1	0.767	2.871	0.832	0.842	0.898	0.746
	S1EXTWB2	0.770	3.032				
	S1EXTWB3	0.945	2.194				
Scenario 1 Internal Whistleblowing intentions (S1INTWB)	S1INTWB1	0.780	4.271	0.652	0.689	0.827	0.614
	S1INTWB3	0.778	3.335				
	S1INTWB5	0.794	3.794				
Scenario 2 Internal Whistleblowing intentions (S2INTWB)	S2INTWB1	0.767	3.755	0.696	0.702	0.828	0.617
	S2INTWB2	0.770	3.755				
	S2INTWB3	0.945	3.477				
Scenario 2 External Whistleblowing Intentions (S2EXTWB)	S2EXTWB1	0.873	2.303	0.848	0.850	0.908	0.617
	S2EXTWB2	0.864	2.845				
	S2EXTWB4	0.880	2.052				

Table 9: Convergent validity indicators for reflexive constructs

- Discriminant validity

- Cross loading

If a specific construct shows more correlation with another construct than with its own measures, this means, there is possibility that the two constructs share the same types of measures and they are not conceptually distinct (Chin, 2010). In that case, on the cross loading, values do not have a clear loading, that is to say a difference greater than 0.20. Hence, we chose to suppress some items of OC construct, (OC4, OC7 and OC8) and SATICSR<sub>3</sub> as the loading was not clear with the construct SATI CSR. (Appendix 11)

- Variable Correlation (Root square of AVE)

We completed this discriminant validity test with the Fornell and Larcker's Criterion (1981): a latent variable should explain better the variance of its own indicator than the variance of other latent variables. The AVE of a latent variable should be higher than the squared correlations between the latent variable and all the other variables. This criterion was met (Appendix 10).

### 3.3.3.2. Second order constructs validity and reliability

- Convergent validity

The procedure concerning the validity of second order constructs is specific. Second order constructs are formative. The indicators are therefore not necessarily correlated. It is therefore pointless to want to check reliability using Cronbach's alpha type indicators. The literature suggests the following procedures for verifying the validity of formative constructs, which can be either composite variable (e.g.: Responsible consumption or Activism orientation) or causal constructs (e.g.: Job satisfaction).

AVE for Activism orientation is sufficiently high. In contrast, we observe an  $AVE < 0.5$  for Job satisfaction (0.347) and Responsible consumption (0.406). As it is done in literature (Lam, 2012), we relied on CR to validate the convergence: Fornell and Larcker (1981) consider that if AVE is less than

0.5, but composite reliability is higher than 0.6, the convergent validity of the construct is still adequate,

	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Activism orientation	0.951	0.955	0.957	0.616
Job satisfaction	0.841	0.894	0.866	0.347
Responsible consumption	0.860	0.879	0.887	0.406

Table 10: Convergent validity of formative constructs

- Discriminant validity

The measurement of formative constructs is carried out by the collinearity between the indicators and the meaning and relevance of the outer weights (Hair *et al.*, 2016). We have to check if an indicator is not redundant with another one: we measure the collinearity between indicators, namely their potential correlation. In order to evaluate it, we calculate the level of variance not explained by another, that means that the correlation between indicators (Hair *et al.*, 2016). This procedure is performed by examining the VIF (variance inflation factor), which indicates the part of variance of a variable explained by the other variables. A VIF ratio greater than 10 indicates a probable collinearity for the variable examined. The tolerable threshold is 5 (Ringle *et al.*, 2015) or 10 (Hair *et al.*, 1995). In our case, all VIFs meet these two criteria (see Table 4)

Formative construct	Indicator	VIF
Responsible consumption	Purchase	2.110
	Need	1.418
	Collab	1.256
	Waste	2.155
Activism orientation	Low Risk activism orientation	2.078
	High Risk activism orientation	2.078
Job satisfaction	Job	2.040
	Promotion	1.618

	Pay	1.154
	Supervisor	1.852
	Customers	1.196
	Fellow workers	1.361

Table 11: Collinearity factors between indicators

The second criterion for evaluating the contribution of a formative indicator is its outer weight. If this outer weight is significant, we can say that the contribution is absolute or relative. When weight is not significant but loading is, the contribution is only absolute. That means that we consider removing the construct, seeing if similar cases were reported in the literature. Collab, Need, Purchase, Waste, Low risky activism orientation, Promotion, Pay, Customers and Fellow workers do not present a significant outer weight. In this case, we check the outer loading. If it is over 0.5, we keep the indicator even if it is not significant: then, we keep Purchase, Need, Collab, Waste, Low Risky Activism orientation and Promotion. If the outer loading is  $<0.5$ , but significant, we have to strongly consider removal of the formative indicator. We need to investigate if the indicator theoretically overlaps with other indicators and could be removed. Considering that it is not the case here, we kept Pay and Fellow workers. Besides, the indicator should be removed if similar results can be observed in multiple studies (Söllner, 2014). However, the literature using this scale (Schwepker, 2001) provides evidence for the convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs with VIF and AVE without going so deep in the assessment of the relevance and significance of formative indicators.

The Customer formative indicator in contrast must be deleted, as it definitely did not contribute to measure Job satisfaction even if that seems surprising. While an abundant literature in marketing field investigates the impact of employees' job satisfaction on customers (Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004; Homburg & Stock, 2004), the opposite effect seems to remain unquestioned, even if our previous qualitative study showed strong evidence of the contribution of contact with clients to the job satisfaction of shop-floor workers.

This validity procedure lets us suspect that some aspects of this scale do not fit the specific population of workers we study, as only Job and Supervisor dimensions clearly contribute to job satisfaction.



Actually, researchers who borrowed Churchill's INDSALES scale (1974) have frequently selected from the facets that best fit their particular research context (Onyemah *et al.*, 2018). Indeed, that result is also not surprising considering the previous study that showed that pay or promotion were not crucial in job satisfaction for those workers for whom meaningfulness at work and esteem for their management matter most versus career opportunity or money.

Formative construct	Formative indicators	Outer Weights	Outer Loadings	Weights T-stat (P value)	Loading T-stat (P value)	Weight significance	Loading significance	Contribution
Responsible consumption	Purchase	0.453	0.886	1.440 (0.150)	22.907 (0,000)	No	Yes	Absolute - Kept
	Need	0.173	0.626	0.669 (0.504)	3.484 (0,000)	No	Yes	Absolute - Kept
	Collab	0.355	0.706	1.140 (0.140)	4.059 (0,000)	No	Yes	Absolute-Kept
	Waste	0.287	0.835	0.892 (0.372)	5.779 (0,000)	No	Yes	Absolute - Kept
Activism orientation	Low Risk activism orientation	0.421	0.867	1.205 (0.228)	5.954 (0,000)	No	Yes	Absolute - Kept
	High Risk activism orientation	0.669	0.949	2.118(0.034)	9.612 (0,000)	Yes	Yes	High relative and absolute
Job satisfaction	Job	0.620	0.935	4.393 (0.000)	22.079 (0.000)	Yes	Yes	High relative and absolute
	Promotion	0.070	0.607	0.542 (0.588)	6.984 (0,000)	No	Yes	Absolute - Kept
	Pay	0,000	0.210	0.000 (1)	2.045 (0,041)	No	Yes	Absolute - Kept
	Supervisor	0.416	0.858	3.582 (0.000)	15.431 (0,000)	Yes	Yes	High relative and absolute
	Customers	0.019	0.138	0.248 (0.804)	1.085 (0,278)	No	No	Suppressed
	Fellow workers	0.045	0.391	0.310 (0.757)	4.373 (0,000)	No	Yes	Absolute - Kept

Table 12: Weights and loadings of indicators

We present the measurement model with the items that were finally used after all the validity and reliability procedure detailed in that section in Appendix 12. The translations of the items retained are presented in Appendix 13.

### 3.4. Analysis

We used Smart PLS software to test the hypotheses, resulting in 5 models. We tested the hypothesis, refining the models to maximize the explanatory power in accordance with the principle of parsimony, keeping the most significant relationships and going deeper by exploring the first-order constructs or control variables' influence. Model 1 explores the significant relationships regarding Satisfaction toward CSR. Models 2 and 3 show the significant predictors of Internal whistleblowing intentions in scenarios 1 (M2) and 2 (M3). Models 4 and 5 will explore the latent variables explaining External whistleblowing intentions in scenarios 1(M4) and 2 (M5)

For each assessment of inner models, we checked the absence of correlation with a VIF test: 5 is the maximum level of VIF (Ringle *et al.*, 2015). VIF were always less than 5 in this study. In addition, the VIF being less than 3,3, we can consider our model free of common methodological bias (Kock, 2015).

	OC	S1EXTWB	S1INTWB	S2EXTWB	S2INTWB	SATI CSR
<b>Activism orientation</b>		1.129	1.129	1.129	1.129	1.351
<b>Job satisfaction</b>		1.942	1.942	1.942	1.942	1.409
<b>OC</b>		1.941	1.941	1.941	1.941	
<b>PEP</b>						1.355
<b>Responsible consumption</b>		1.136	1.136	1.136	1.136	1.429
<b>SATI CSR</b>	1.000					

Table 13: Collinearity factors in the structural models

Then, we tested the hypotheses. We examined the relevance and significance of coefficient. We used 5000 bootstrap samples. As this study is exploratory, we retained a p-value of 10% to assess significance.

Secondly, Effect size and Predictive relevance helped to identify the key constructs with the highest relevance. Effect size ( $f^2$ ) indicates the relative effect of a particular exogenous latent variable on endogenous latent variable(s) by means of changes in the R-squared (Chin, 1998). It is calculated as the increase in R-squared of the latent variable to which the path is connected, relative to the latent

variable's proportion of unexplained variance (Chin, 1998).  $f^2$  above 0.35 are considered large effect size;  $f^2$  ranging from 0.15 to 0.35 are medium effect size;  $f^2$  between 0.02 to 0.15 considered small effect size;  $f^2$  values less than 0.02 are considering with NO effect size.

Thirdly, we used the blindfolding procedure for assessing predictive Relevance ( $Q^2$ ) of the path model. The path model had a predictive relevance for a selected reflective endogenous construct if the  $Q^2$  value is above zero.

Finally, we assessed the model with the coefficient of determination, also called Rsquared value ( $R^2$ ) that is an important criterion for assessing the structural model in PLS-SEM (Hair *et al.*, 2011; Hair *et al.*, 2012). The  $R^2$  gives the part of the independent variable (SATI CSR or Whistleblowing intentions) that is explained by the latent variables (Responsible consumption, Activism orientation, Job Satisfaction, OC, PEP and control variables). Adjusted  $R^2$  is more accurate, as it considers the number of latent variables, arguing for parsimony. Although the acceptable level of  $R^2$  value depends on the research context (Hair *et al.*, 2010), Falk and Miller (1992) proposed an R-squared value of 0.10 as a minimum acceptable level. Meanwhile, Chin (1998) suggested that the values of  $R^2$  that above 0.67 considered high, while values ranging from 0.33 to 0.67 are moderate, whereas values between 0.19 to 0.33 are weak and any  $R^2$  values less than 0.19 are unacceptable. PLS approach does not use GoF to determine model fit (Hair *et al.*, 2016): we did not use that criterion.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Model 1: Satisfaction regarding CSR and the hypothesized antecedents and impact on organizational commitment

#### 4.1.1. Hypothesis 1a: Social engagement is negatively related to satisfaction regarding CSR.

We chose to explore the impact of social engagement through two constructs: activist orientation and responsible consumption. None of them have a significant impact on SATI CSR. Going deeper in the construct, we see that the relationship is significant for low-risk activism orientation only: LRAO is

**positively** related to SATI CSR: we reject hypothesis 1a. The opposite effect is only partially supported. This means that workers with a greater propensity to involve in low-risky activist behaviors are **more** satisfied with CSR. There is no empirical evidence supporting the idea that people who are involved in their private life are more critical and demanding regarding CSR. *Au contraire*, the interest in and pro-social concerns demonstrated through behaviors increase their satisfaction.

4.1.2. Hypothesis 1b: Job satisfaction is positively related to satisfaction regarding CSR.

The analysis validates the hypothesis 1b. The more people are satisfied with their job, the more they are satisfied with CSR.

The impact of social engagement is minor (coefficient =.166) compared to job satisfaction (.663), that is corroborated by the Effect Size (Large for job satisfaction).

“Delegate” is the only control variable that influences SATI CSR: workers who have (or had) function as staff or union representatives are less satisfied by CSR.

To sum up, job satisfaction is the main determinant of satisfaction towards CSR. However, social engagement will also affect positively (and not negatively) satisfaction.

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Stat	P Values	Hypotheses
<b>Hypotheses</b>						
Job Satisfaction -> SATI CSR	0.661	0.665	0.068	9.691	0.000	<i>Supported***</i>
LRAO -> SATI CSR	0.146	0.140	0.068	2.138	0.033	<i>Supported** (opposite effect)</i>
<b>Control variables</b>						
Delegate -> SATI CSR	-0.141	-0.137	0.070	2.004	0.045	<i>Influences**</i>
*p < 0,1   **p < 0,05   ***p < 0,01						

Table 14: Path coefficient and significance for hypotheses 1a and 1b

$$\text{Satisfaction regarding CSR} = 0.661 * \text{Job satisfaction} + 0.146 * \text{Low-risk activism orientation} - 0.141 * \text{Delegate}$$

We obtain a final model with an adjusted R<sup>2</sup> adjusted of 0.520 giving a moderate value. Job satisfaction has a large effect size, while LRAO has a small effect size.

*N.B.: For each model, path coefficient, p-value and R<sup>2</sup> are summarized in a figure at the end of the section.*

Effect size	SATI CSR	Effect size
Job satisfaction	0.798	<i>Large</i>
LRAO	0.051	<i>Small</i>

Predictive relevance	SSO	SSE	Q <sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO)
SATI CSR	1085.000	685.737	0.368 (>0)

Coefficient of determination	R Square	R Square Adjusted
SATI CSR	0.551	0.520

#### 4.1.2.1. Minimizing the reverse effect of satisfaction regarding CSR on Job satisfaction

INDSALE scale enables us to dissociate the various causes of job satisfaction. Thanks to this, we can suppress the "Job" dimension, related to the need for meaningfulness that could be met with CSR, only considering the working conditions (pay, promotion, supervisor, fellow workers). We see that the relationship remains significant: if we measure job satisfaction only through satisfaction with working conditions or career prospect, we see that **it still has a positive impact** on the perception of CSR (see

Table 15) Some dimensions have a major impact: if we only test the impact of the "Supervisor " dimension, the effect is large (path coefficient: .557\*\*\*), while "Pay " has only a small impact (.073).

In the following table, we present the path coefficient in the same model, but without the dimension "job" to assess job satisfaction, that can present a reverse effect with SATI CSR. We see that it does not change the significance of relations, except that the control variable Education has a significant negative impact on SATI CSR.

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Stat	P Values	Hypotheses
<b>Hypotheses</b>						
Job Satisfaction (without "job" dimension)-> SATI CSR	0.572	0.577	0.069	8.272	0.000	Supported***
LRAO -> SATI CSR	0.141	0.138	0.077	1.837	0.066	Supported* (opposite effect)
<b>Control variables</b>						
Delegate -> SATI CSR	-0.166	-0.165	0.083	1.999	0.046	Influences**
Education -> SATI CSR	-0.104	-0.102	0.062	1.672	0.095	Influences*
*p < 0,1 **p < 0,05 ***p < 0,01						

Table 15: Path coefficients and significances for hypotheses 1a and 1b without Job dimension

#### 4.1.2.2. Perceived External Prestige (PEP) as another possible variable impacting SATI CSR through direct and indirect effect

As the PLS approach is not able to assess reverse effect, we preferred to renounce adding Organizational Commitment (OC) or PEP as latent variables: PLS approach only shows the

correlations between two constructs, but not which one impacts the other. Literature suggests that Perceived External Prestige increases satisfaction regarding organizational practices in general. But it is also possible that Satisfaction regarding CSR increases the Perceived External Prestige. However, with that PLS approach, we observe that PEP as a significant direct effect and an indirect effect mediated by Job Satisfaction.

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Stat	P Values	Hypotheses
<b>Hypothesis</b>						
Job satisfaction -> SATI CSR	0.582	0.581	0.093	6.264	0.000	Supported***
PEP -> SATI CSR	0.199	0.196	0.082	2.426	0.015	Supported**
LRAO -> SATI CSR	0.193	0.190	0.069	2.817	0.005	Supported***
PEP -> Job satisfaction	0.444	0.458	0.080	5.520	0.000	Supported***
<b>Control variables</b>						
Delegate -> SATI CSR	-0.139	-0.139	0.065	2.132	0.033	Influences***
Education -> SATI CSR	-0.112	-0.109	0.060	1.862	0.063	Influences*
Coop Member -> SATI CSR	-0.105	-0.101	0.062	1.689	0.091	Influences*
<b>Specific indirect effect</b>						
PEP -> JS -> SATI CSR	0.258	0.266	0.062	4.172	0.000	Supported***
*p < 0,1 **p < 0,05 ***p < 0,01						

Table 16: Path coefficients and significances for hypotheses 1a and 1b with Perceived External Prestige

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \text{Satisfaction regarding CSR} = \\
 & 0.582 * \text{Job satisfaction} + 0.193 * \text{Low-risk activism orientation} + 0.258 * \text{PEP} - 0.139 * \text{Delegate} - 0.112 * \\
 & \text{Education} - 0.105 * \text{Coop member}
 \end{aligned}$$

In that case, we obtain a higher  $R^2$  for SATI CSR ( $R^2 = 0.581$ ,  $R^2$  adjusted =  $0.555$ ) that increases slightly compared to the precedent model. We see that PEP has a direct positive impact on SATI CSR, and an indirect effect by increasing Job Satisfaction. Besides, more control variables influence SATI CSR: education and functions of staff representative or cooperative member negatively influence satisfaction regarding CSR. In that model, we see that some specific profiles can be more critical towards CSR actual practices: workers with a high level of education, involved in staff representation. This will suggest a need for further investigations with a different statistical approach. However, job satisfaction remains the only variable with a large effect size.

Coefficient of determination	R Square	R Square Adjusted	Value
Job satisfaction	0.197	0.192	<i>Weak</i>
SATI CSR	0.581	0.555	<i>High</i>

Effect size	Job satisfaction	SATI CSR	Effect size
Delegate		0.040	<i>Small</i>
Education		0.026	<i>Small</i>
Job satisfaction		0.582	<i>Large</i>
LRAO		0.074	<i>Small</i>
PEP	0.245	0.073	<i>Small</i>

Predictive relevance	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
SATI CSR	1085.000	666.686	0.386 (> 0)
Job satisfaction	930.000	876.984	0.057 (> 0)

4.1.3. Hypothesis 2: SATI CSR is positively related to Organizational Commitment.



We see that satisfaction regarding CSR has a significant impact on Organizational Commitment. Hence, we validate our Hypothesis 2. Satisfaction regarding CSR clearly increases Organizational Commitment. Besides, the effect size is large, and the model has a high value, as 68.5% of organizational commitment variance can be explained by satisfaction regarding CSR (see R<sup>2</sup>). In that organization, perception of CSR is crucial for workers' engagement in their workplace. Workers who have or had a management role, or who are members of Orgacoop cooperative are more committed.

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Stat	P Values	Hypotheses
<b>Hypotheses</b>						
SATI CSR -> OC	0.767	0.768	0.048	16.115	0.000	<i>Supported ***</i>
<b>Control variables</b>						
Manager -> SATI CSR	0.162	0.159	0.051	3.170	0.002	<i>Influences***</i>
Coop member -> OC	0.165	0.165	0.049	3.330	0.001	<i>Influences***</i>
*p < 0,1 **p < 0,05 ***p < 0,01						

Table 17: Path coefficients and significances for Hypothesis 2

$$\text{Organizational commitment} = 0.767 * \text{Satisfaction regarding CSR} + 0.162 * \text{Manager} + 0.165 * \text{Coop member}$$

Coefficient of determination (R <sup>2</sup> )	R Square	R Square Adjusted	Value
OC	0.685	0.665	<i>High</i>

Effect size	OC	Effect Size
Coop member	0.070	<i>Small</i>
Manager	0.059	<i>Small</i>
SATI CSR	1.530	<i>Large</i>

Predictive relevance	SSO	SSE	Q <sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO)
OC	620.000	305.490	0,507 (>0)

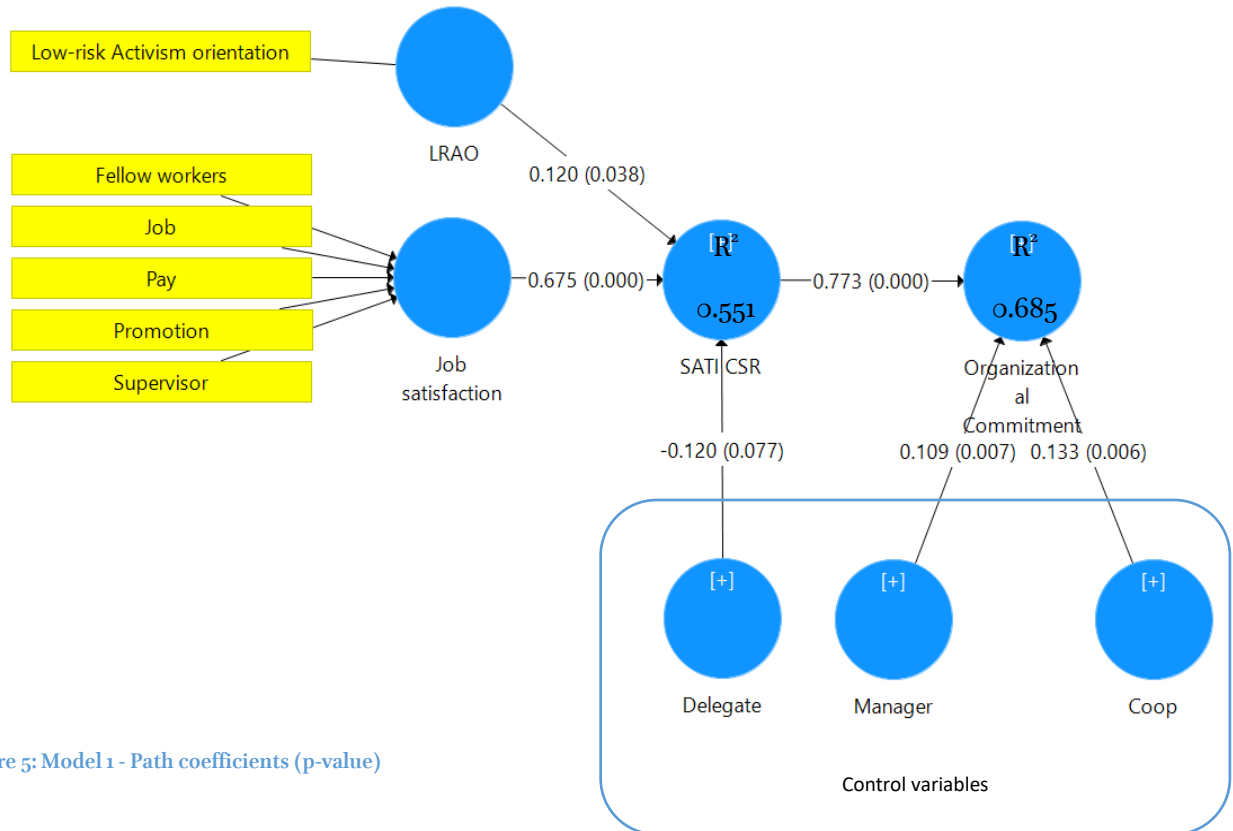


Figure 5: Model 1 - Path coefficients (p-value)

#### 4.2. Model 2: Scenario 1 - Internal whistleblowing intentions and the hypothesized antecedents

In that model, we wish to identify the antecedents significantly impacting **internal** whistleblowing intention in **Scenario 1** (as a reminder, having to list products that the worker finds outrageous to sell and inconsistent with the displayed ethics of the network)

4.2.1. Hypothesis 3a: Social engagement is positively related to internal whistleblowing intentions.

The analysis corroborates the Hypothesis 3a. Responsible consumption and activist orientation are both positively related to internal whistleblowing intentions. People showing a great involvement in their personal life through those behaviors are more inclined to react with internal whistleblowing in case of perceived discrepancies between the ethics claimed by their organization and the actual practices, that are personally judged unethical. However, activist orientation is only significant with a p-value of 10%. With stricter significance level, this relationship would not be supported.

#### 4.2.2. Hypothesis 3b: JS is negatively related to internal whistleblowing intentions.

We reject the hypothesis as the effect is the opposite: JS has a significant **positive** impact on Whistleblowing intentions (.307). Workers who are happy with their working conditions are more prone to react with internal Whistleblowing intentions, such as calling upon staff representatives or headquarters, or involving in staff representation to make a change. Being a manager increases the propensity to resort to internal Whistleblowing.

#### 4.2.3. Hypothesis 3c: OC is negatively related to internal whistleblowing intentions.

We reject this hypothesis. OC does not decrease intentions of internal whistleblowing.

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Stat	P Values	Hypotheses
<b>Hypothesis</b>						
Activism orientation -> S1 Internal WB	0.181	0.183	0.074	2,459	0.014	Supported**
Responsible consumption -> S1 Internal WB	0.258	0.252	0.070	3.711	0.000	Supported***
Job satisfaction -> S1 Internal WB	0.307	0.342	0.067	4.615	0.000	Supported***
<b>Control variables</b>						
Manager -> S1 Internal WB	0.133	0.132	0.066	2.018	0.044	Influences**
*p < 0,1    **p < 0,05    ***p < 0,01						

Table 18: Path coefficients and significances for hypotheses 3 a, 3b and 3c (S1, Int WB)

*Internal whistleblowing intentions in Scenario 1 =*

$$0.181 * \text{Activism orientation} + 0.258 * \text{Responsible consumption} + 0.307 * \text{Job satisfaction} + 0.133 *$$

*Manager*

We obtain a  $R^2$  of 0.317, which is weak. 31.7% of the variance of Whistleblowing intentions is explained by Activism orientation, Responsible Consumption and Job satisfaction.

Coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ )	R Square	R Square Adjusted	Value
S1 Internal WB	0.317	0.298	<i>Weak</i>

Effect size	S1 Int WB	Effect Size
AO	0.044	<i>Small</i>
RC	0,086	<i>Small</i>
Job satisfaction	0.125	<i>Small</i>
Manager	0.022	<i>Small</i>

Predictive relevance	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
S1 Internal WB	465.000	396.725	0.147 (>0)

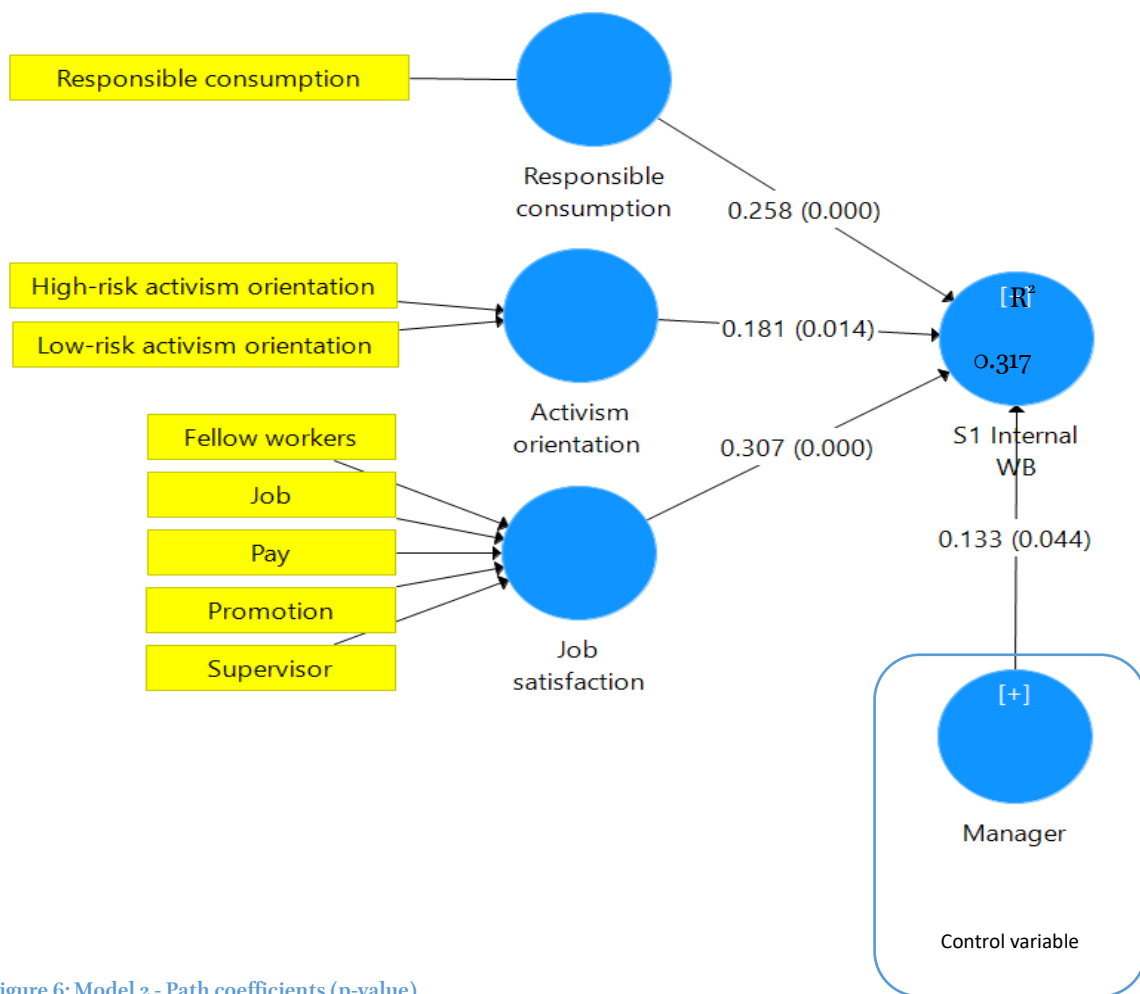


Figure 6: Model 2 - Path coefficients (p-value)

#### 4.3. Model 3: Scenario 2 (internal social practices) - Internal whistleblowing intentions and the hypothesized antecedents

In that model, we test the predictor of **internal** whistleblowing intentions in **Scenario 2**. As a reminder, this scenario implied social practices towards colleagues that are not aligned with the ethical practices claimed by the organization (witnessing practices and treatments towards colleagues that the worker considers unfair and inconsistent with the displayed ethics of the network)

4.3.1. Hypothesis 3a: Social engagement is positively related to internal whistleblowing intentions.

The analysis corroborates the Hypothesis 3a. Responsible consumption and activism orientation are positively related to internal whistleblowing intentions. People with a higher level of social engagement will be more willing to react with internal whistleblowing if they witness mistreatment or unfairness towards their peers. The impact of Activism orientation is higher and more significant in this scenario implying an internal social issue.

4.3.2. Hypothesis 3b: JS is negatively related to internal whistleblowing intentions.

We rejected the hypothesis, as the effect is opposite: in that case, JS has a significant **positive** impact on Whistleblowing intention by internal means. The more workers are satisfied with their job, the more they are prone to react by internal means.

4.3.3. Hypothesis 3c: OC is negatively related to internal whistleblowing intentions.

We reject this hypothesis. OC does not decrease intentions of internal whistleblowing.

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Stat	P Values	Hypotheses
<b>Hypotheses</b>						
Activism orientation -> S2 Internal WB	0.183	0.179	0.070	2.619	0.009	Supported***
Responsible consumption -> S2 Internal WB	0.204	0.203	0.072	2.841	0.005	Supported***
Job satisfaction -> S2 Internal WB	0.253	0.290	0.084	3.022	0.003	Supported***
<b>Control variables</b>						
Delegate -> S2 Intern WB	0.160	0.151	0.089	1.792	0.073	Influences*
Manager -> S2 Intern WB	0.171	0.172	2,375	1.898	0.018	Influences**
*p < 0,1 **p < 0,05 ***p < 0,01						

Table 19: Path coefficients and significances for hypotheses 3 a, 3b and 3c (S2, Int WB)

*Internal whistleblowing intentions in Scenario 2 =*

$$0.183 * \textit{Activism orientation} + 0.204 * \textit{Responsible consumption} + 0.253 * \textit{Job satisfaction} + \\ 0.160 * \textit{Delegate} + 0.171 * \textit{Manager}$$

We obtain a  $R^2$  of 0.271 that is weak. 27.1% of the variable Whistleblowing intentions in that scenario 2 are explained by Activism orientation, Responsible Consumption and Job satisfaction.

Coefficient of determination	R Square	R Square Adjusted	Value
S2 Internal WB	0.271	0.246	<i>Weak</i>

Effect Size ( $Q_2$ )	S1 Int WB	Effect Size
Activism orientation	0.042	<i>Small</i>
Job satisfaction	0.078	<i>Small</i>
Manager	0.035	<i>Small</i>
Delegate	0,024	<i>Small</i>
Responsible consumption	0.050	<i>Small</i>

Predictive relevance	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
S2 Internal WB	465.000	404.906	0

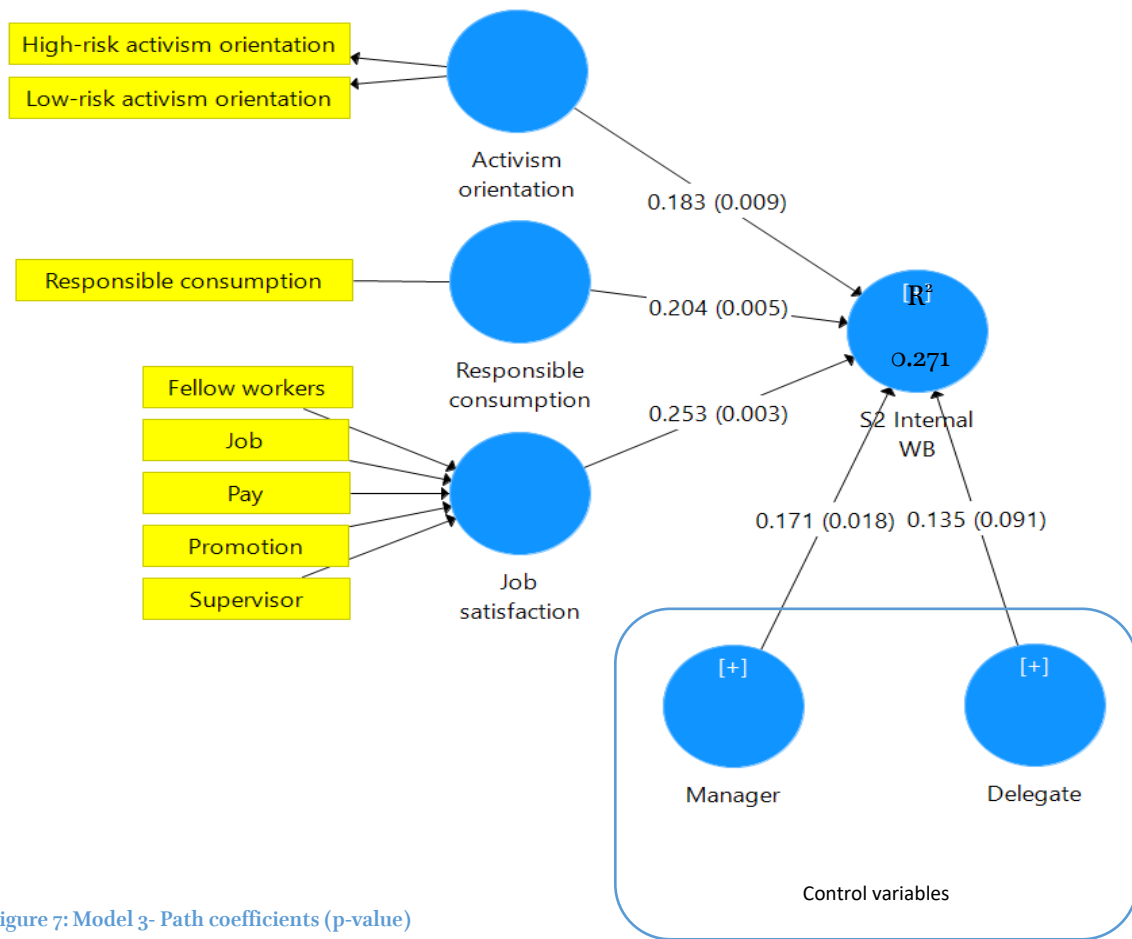


Figure 7: Model 3- Path coefficients (p-value)

#### 4.4. Model 4: Scenario 1 – External whistleblowing intentions and the hypothesized antecedents

As a reminder, we study in this model the variables related to intentions of **external** whistleblowing such as word-of-mouth or public denunciation in media or social media **in Scenario 1** (as a reminder, having to sell a product that is perceived as unethical).

##### 4.4.1. Hypothesis 3 a: Social engagement is positively related to external whistleblowing intentions.

The analysis corroborates partially the Hypothesis 2a, as Activism Orientation is the only variable that has a significant impact of External Whistleblowing intentions.



4.4.2. Hypothesis 3b: JS is negatively related to external whistleblowing intentions.

There is no significant effect of JS on External WB intentions. We reject the hypothesis.

4.4.3. Hypothesis 3c: OC is negatively related to external whistleblowing intentions.

Organizational commitment impacts negatively external whistleblowing intentions in that scenario 1. With a coefficient of  $-.217^{**}$  vs.  $.165^*$ , organizational commitment can almost cancel the effect of activism orientation on whistleblowing intentions, meaning that if an employee has a high propensity to be involved in activist activity, his/her organizational commitment will annihilate the impact of this activist orientation.

The level of diploma influences positively external-whistleblowing intentions.

The coefficient of determination is too low to give value to the model.

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Stat	P Values	Hypotheses
<b>Hypothesis</b>						
Activism orientation -> S1 External WB	0.165	0.186	0.085	1.937	0.053	<i>Supported*</i>
OC -> S1 External WB	-0.217	-0.239	0.086	2,516	0.012	<i>Supported**</i>
<b>Control variables</b>						
Education -> S1EXTWB	0.250	0.247	0.075	3.322	0.001	<i>Influences***</i>
*p < 0,1    **p < 0,05    ***p < 0,01						

Table 20: Path coefficients and significances for hypotheses 3 a, 3b and 3c (S1, Ext WB)

*External whistleblowing intentions in Scenario 1 =*

$$0.165 * \text{Activism orientation} - 0.217 * \text{Organizational Commitment} + 0.250 * \text{Education}$$

Coefficient of determination	R Square	R Square Adjusted	Value
S1 External WB	0.163	0.147	<i>Unacceptable</i>

Effect size	S1EXTWB	Effect size
Activism orientation	0.030	<i>Small</i>
Education	0.069	<i>Small</i>
OC	0.056	<i>Small</i>

Predictive relevance	SSO	SSE	Q <sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO)
S1 External WB	465.000	431.341	0.072 > 0

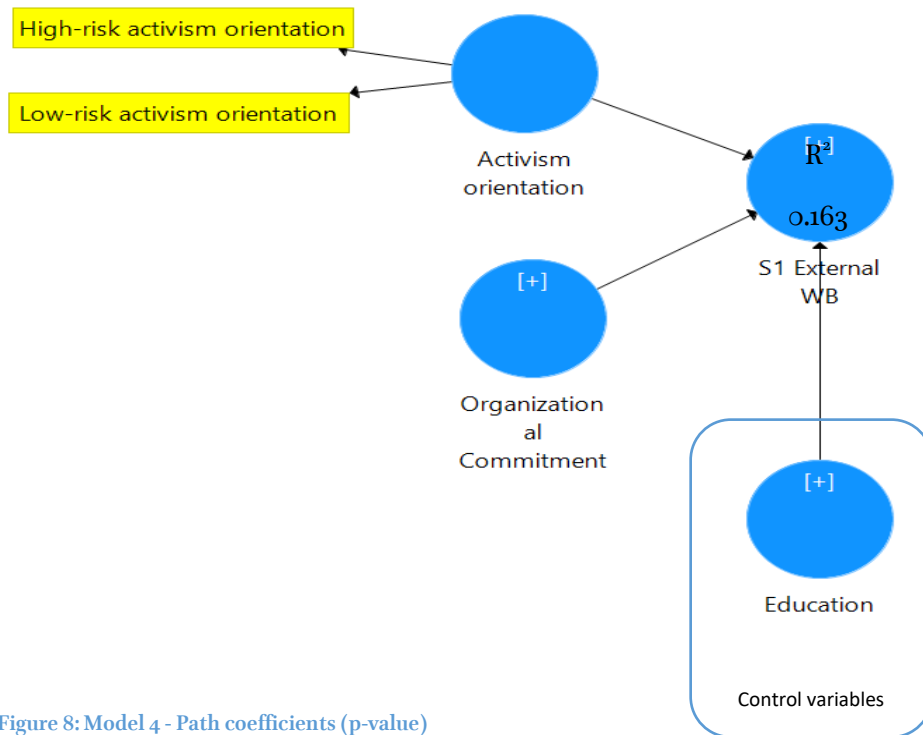


Figure 8: Model 4 - Path coefficients (p-value)

#### 4.5. Model 5: Scenario 2 – External whistleblowing intentions and the hypothesized antecedents

As a reminder, we study in this model the variables related to intentions of external whistleblowing such as word-of-mouth or public denunciation in media or social media in Scenario 2 (as a reminder, witnessing treatment perceived as unfair towards a colleague)

4.5.1. Hypothesis 3a: social engagement is positively related to external whistleblowing intentions.

The analysis corroborates partially the Hypothesis 2a, as Activism Orientation is the only variable that has a significant impact of External Whistleblowing intentions.

4.5.2. Hypothesis 3b: JS is negatively related to external whistleblowing intentions.

We confirm this hypothesis. Job satisfaction impacts negatively external whistleblowing intentions in that scenario 1. With a coefficient of  $-.428^{***}$  vs.  $.205^{***}$ , job satisfaction's negative influence is much more important than activism orientation - meaning that if a worker is happy with his/her working conditions, this will completely balance out the worker's inclination to involve in activist activity. We notice that the level of diploma influences positively external-whistleblowing intentions, while working in a shop with a cooperative status has a negative influence.

4.5.3. Hypothesis 3c: OC is negatively related to external whistleblowing intentions.

We do not observe any significant effect of OC on external whistleblowing intentions. We reject this hypothesis.

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Stat	P Values	Hypothesis
<b>Hypotheses</b>						
Activism orientation -> S2 External WB	0.256	0.251	0.068	3.795	0.000	<i>Supported***</i>
Job satisfaction -> S2 External WB	-0.467	-0.481	0.068	6,851	0.000	<i>Supported***</i>
<b>Control variables</b>						
Coop -> S2EXTWB	-0.206	-0.197	0.067	3,072	0.002	<i>Influences***</i>
Education -> S2EXTWB	0.150	0.149	0.062	2.428	0.015	<i>Influences**</i>
*p < 0,1    **p < 0,05    ***p < 0,01						

Table 21: Path coefficients and significances for hypotheses 3 a, 3b and 3c (S1, Ext WB)

*External whistleblowing intentions in Scenario 2 =*

*0.256 \* Activism orientation – 0.467 \* Job satisfaction – 0, 206 \* Cooperative status of the shop + 0,150*

*\* Education*

We obtain a R<sup>2</sup> of 0,360 giving a moderate value to this model. The effect size of job satisfaction is Medium.

<b>Coefficient of determination (R<sub>2</sub>)</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>R Square Adjusted</b>	<b>Value</b>
S2 External WB	0.339	0.321	<i>Moderate</i>

<b>Effect Size (Q<sub>2</sub>)</b>	<b>S<sub>2</sub>EXTWB</b>	<b>Size effect</b>
Activism orientation	0.091	<i>Small</i>
Coop	0.061	<i>Small</i>
Education	0.031	<i>Small</i>
Job satisfaction	0.323	<i>Medium</i>

<b>Predictive relevance (Q<sub>2</sub>)</b>	<b>SSO</b>	<b>SSE</b>	<b>Q<sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO)</b>
S2 External WB	465.000	361.302	0.223 > 0

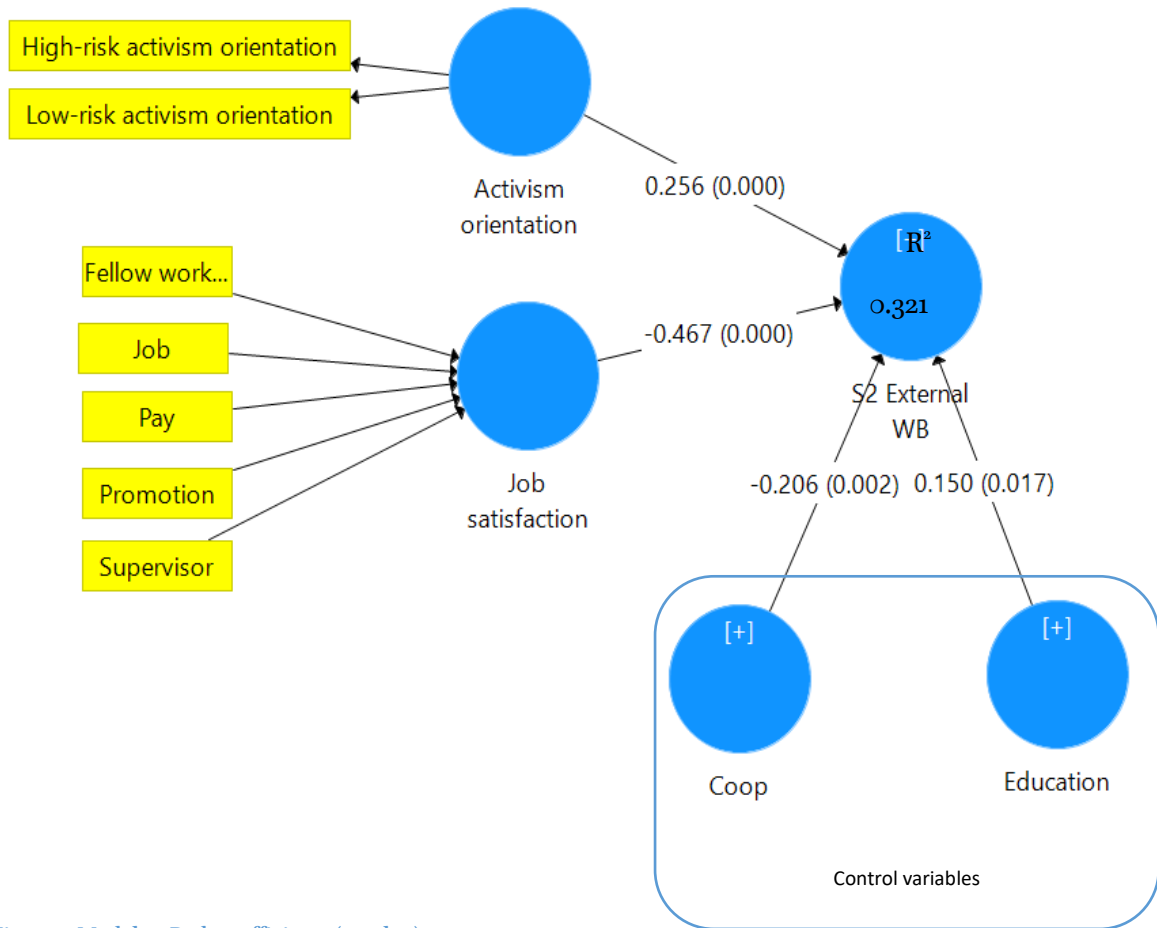


Figure 9: Model 5 - Path coefficients (p-value)

#### 4.6. Conclusion

To conclude this section, social engagement of workers through consumption behaviors and activist activities increases internal whistleblowing intentions in both scenarios, but Job satisfaction presents a similar impact.

Regarding External Whistleblowing intentions, activism orientation only presents a significant impact, and not responsible consumption. In scenario 1 (selling unethical product), organizational commitment can counteract. In scenario 2 (witnessing unfair treatment of a colleague), job satisfaction opposite effect is much more important than activism orientation.

The following table sums up the results of models 2, 3, 4 and 5.

	Internal Whistleblowing intentions	External Whistleblowing intentions
<b>S1 (Selling a product perceived as unethical)</b>	Positive impact of AO (.181**) Positive impact of RC (.258***) Positive impact of JS (.307***)  <i>Control variables : influence of Manager status (.133**)</i>	Positive impact of AO (.165*) Negative impact of OC (-.217**)  <i>Control variables : influence of education (.250***)</i>
<b>S2 (Witnessing unfair treatment towards peers)</b>	Positive impact of AO (.183***) Positive impact of RC (.204***) Positive impact of JS (.253***)  <i>Control variables : influence of status of delegate (.160*) and Manager (.171**)</i>	Positive impact of AO (.256***) Negative impact of JS (-.467***)  <i>Control variables : influence of education (.150**) and cooperative status of the shop (-.206***)</i>
*p < 0,1   **p < 0,05   ***p < 0,01		

Table 22: Summary of path coefficients and significances for whistleblowing intentions

## 5. Discussion

The PLS approach has enabled us to test the hypotheses.

Regarding SATI CSR, H1a (negative impact of personal social engagement) is rejected: in contrast the impact of low-risk activism is significantly **positive**, as well as Job satisfaction (H1b)

Satisfaction regarding CSR clearly favors Organizational Commitment. (H2)

Regarding Whistleblowing intentions, the main results stressed by the four models are the following: only activism orientation (and not responsible consumption) has a significant impact in scenario 2 (related to a social issue). Job satisfaction impact varies with the different scenarios and the kind of whistleblowing, demonstrating a significant **positive** impact on internal whistleblowing (S1 and S2) contrary to the hypothesis, and a negative impact on external whistleblowing (in scenario 2 related to a social issue). Control variables such as education or function of staff representative in particular have a significant influence.

### 5.1. Job satisfaction as the key component of satisfaction toward CSR and whistleblowing intentions

This survey among employees of an organic shops network pinpoints Job satisfaction as having a large effect on satisfaction regarding CSR practices, and the highest impact on whistleblowing intentions over the other variables tested (Responsible consumption, Activism orientation and Organizational commitment) in 3 of the 4 models. Concurring with precedent studies (De Roeck *et al.*, 2016; Erdogan, 2015), this study demonstrates that if an organization wants workers to be satisfied with CSR practices and willing to promote them, the quality of work life of its own employees cannot be overlooked.

We contrast two opposite effects of job satisfaction on whistleblowing intentions: positive on internal and negative on external whistleblowing intentions. In that study, I dissociated CSR fields through 2



scenarios. In both cases, job satisfaction favors internal whistleblowing to a similar extent. We can think that a fair or caring working atmosphere encourages workers to act in order to preserve their organization ethics, but through levers for actions that will not endanger it, like previously highlighted in other contexts (Said *et al.*, 2017; Taylor and Curtis, 2018). Thus, we could consider internal whistleblowing as an act of participation in the political life of the organization; one dimension of Organizational citizenship behaviors that job satisfaction would encourage (Bateman and Organ, 1983).

On the opposite, acts of resistance that can be seen as disobedience are dampened by job satisfaction. Better working conditions reduce external whistleblowing intentions in scenario 2 (social issue). Thus, by dissociating internal and external whistleblowing intentions, in this research context, we find significant relations that previous studies have not demonstrated regarding the impact of job (dis)satisfaction on whistle-blowing intentions (Gokse, 2013; Sims & Keenan, 1998; Said *et al.*, 2017).

Those first explorations corroborated in all cases the hypothesis that perception of their own treatment is the key component in workers' perception and reaction to CSR practices. Concerning employees, making prosocial actions for the Earth, people or animals is a waste of resources if those efforts are not preceded by policy to ensure adequate working conditions. Employees are "part-time marketers" of the organization that can influence corporate reputation among other stakeholders (Helm, 2011), and frontline employees are the primary ambassadors of a company's CSR (Edinger-Schons *et al.*, 2019): hence, they should be among the first recipients of CSR, as their satisfaction regarding their working conditions is a prerequisite to be satisfied with general CSR practices.

Job satisfaction in that study was measured by items focusing on job meaningfulness, colleagues, supervisor (fairness, benevolence), pay and promotion. More specifically in that research context, the procedure detailed in section 3.3.3 demonstrated that job meaningfulness and supervisor's attitude contributed particularly to job satisfaction. That corroborates the previous qualitative study where dissatisfaction and cynicism regarding CSR arose from conflicts with the manager, while low wages or limited career perspective were not often mentioned. In that organization culture, transactional exchanges seem secondary. They can even be poorly looked upon (Farias, 2017): training supervisors to

adopt benevolent and participative management, implementing efficient counter-power devices would be more appreciated than giving extra-money. We can notice that similar variations can be observed among young workers or generation Y (Eisner, 2005). Depending on the context, in order to maximize the positive outcomes of CSR, practitioners should interrogate what is really “good working conditions” for those employees, which dimensions really matter, and give priority to those dimensions in the social part of their CSR program. Consequently, the organization can interfere and act at least partially on those subjects through fair and ethical practices and policy.

The specific contribution of this study was also to focus on one particular risk for the organization: whistleblowing intentions. As a matter of fact, this form of resistance constitutes a real threat for the organization if it takes place in external forms (protests, public denunciation or underground mechanism (gossip, word-of-mouth) and is followed by sanctions from other stakeholders. The current context of popular social media offering a forum for the expression to anyone increases the threat of negative word-of-mouth (Vo, Xiao and Ho, 2019). In the case of a network, or a label shared by multiple organizations, by a phenomenon of contagion, their reputation can also be seriously damaged. The prevention of external whistleblowing should be a meta-organizational concern and responsibility. For this purpose, considering my results, making sure that internal workers have good working conditions in all the small organizations that belong to a network should constitute a priority, especially when network bases its distinctiveness on social responsibility.

We see in model 5 that job satisfaction contributes to reducing drastically this kind of resistance action. Contrary to what we could expect, results suggest that workers do not react with external whistleblowing in case of mistreatment of a peer because of deontological motives, that is to say because of moral assumptions regarding how human beings should be treated: in that case, social engagement would have greater impact on whistleblowing intentions. Even if the literature suggests that employees are influenced by the way others are treated in the organization and not only by how they are treated personally (Rupp *et al.*, 2006), in that present case workers seem to act first because of rational self-interest, a cost/ benefit calculation. As long as workers are satisfied with their own fate, they would be less inclined to take risks to defend someone else.

However, this relation could be more complex. Third-Party's perspective (Skarlicki and Kulik, 2005) has explored the various factors that explain why an individual (the "third party") reacts in case of perceived unfair treatment of an employee by an organization. Notably, the level of identification with the organization versus the victim interferes: a great organizational identification can decrease the attribution of responsibility to the organization project (Kim, Lee, Lee and Kim, 2010). Then, workers can use various strategies to attribute responsibility of ethical failure to something else.

However, this great identification stresses the experience of injustice, creating feelings of shame, disgrace and embarrassment (Brockner, 1992). Strong identification favors anger and disappointment if the organization treats workers unfavorably, and risk of workplace deviance (Gond, El-Akreimi, Igalen and Swaen, 2010). Identification, hence, can delay reactions to mistreatment, but increases their strength. Hence, identification is a factor that could play a decisive role in external whistleblowing intentions. Thinking that workers will always renounce to blow the whistle as long as they are personally satisfied with their own fate cannot constitute a sure and viable strategy.

Besides, the absence of employees' reaction as a Third-party feeds a self-perpetuating circle, degrading progressively the ethical climate of the organization. Hence, if job satisfaction is necessary to have satisfied workers, it should not be a means to have passive, compliant and resilient workers. *Au contraire*, it should encourage Third-party actions, by creating a supportive climate for whistleblowing. This requires a change of perspective: to consider workers as warrant of the ethical climate through their ability to act, instead of an opposite side that must be managed. To that end, the organization can multiply, enforce and provide guidance on internal whistleblowing support. Attributing functions can play a role: in that study we see that managers or staff representatives that have more access to internal actions means are more prone to perform internal whistleblowing. Belonging to a cooperative shop, in which the governance is often more participative, impacts negatively external whistleblowing intentions. Other options can dampen external whistleblowing without silencing workers: for instance, regular auditing of social climate, or meta-organizational intermediaries that can interfere in local conflicts.

## 5.2. Workers social engagement impact

By contrast, all models demonstrate that social engagement has a non-significant or small effect on Whistleblowing intentions, and against all odds, only a **positive effect** on satisfaction. Contrary to the hypothesis, Model 1 demonstrates that low-risk activism orientation *increases* satisfaction towards CSR. We demonstrate that workers who have more interest in CSR practices are more receptive to the efforts made by the organization. Hence, we can corroborate Gond *et al.*'s proposition: the more supportive are employees' individual beliefs about CSR, the higher and the more positive the influence of CSR actions on employees' CSR perceptions. Precedent studies had demonstrated the positive effect of shared values and beliefs that existed before joining the organization on the intention to remain in the job (Mael, Ashforth, 1995). Managers who are clear about their own personal values and understand their organizational values also show significantly greater organizational commitment than those that were not clear (Posner and Schmidt, 1993). It has also been proved that organizational commitment would be higher for employees who firmly believe in the importance of CSR (Peterson, 2004). CSR effects on organizational attractiveness are also stronger for job seekers who have prior knowledge of CSR or directly concerned with the issues addressed by CSR (Blackhaus *et al.*, 2002). We contribute to that literature, demonstrating the positive impact of personal social engagement on satisfaction regarding CSR. CSR practices are more impactful for workers that are already concerned by social and environmental issues than for workers who have no special interest for those concerns.

Based on those empirical facts, there are few reasons to avoid hiring people with responsible consumption or activist activities. That is good news for management practices, first because it is difficult to ask information during job interviews about behaviors in the private sphere, as long as they do not affect job performance. Consequently, it would be impossible to prevent from hiring workers with a strong social engagement without investigation. Secondly, because we can doubt that social engagement or any kind of idealism can be managed. By contrast, we can presume that people with this kind of social engagement constitute a real asset for the organizations, especially if it bases its reputation and distinctiveness on ethical values, with customers willing to interact with front-line workers that authentically share their concerns and can fill an "educational role" (Geysmans *et al.*, 2017). If we have a look at a larger perspective, considering all the jobs with an idealist dimension or a

pro-social aim (healthcare, education, art...), we realize that the value of passion, motivation and implication often exceeds by far the potential cost of idealism.

Besides, we can in theory argue that personal social engagement fosters a greater commitment in organizations with a strong ethical reputation: people who are already concerned by social and environmental issues should display a higher commitment in organizations with ambitious CSR programs than workers who do not care. Model 4 suggests that this organizational commitment reduces external whistleblowing intentions in Scenario 1, counter-balancing the impact of activism orientation. That means that militant workers are more prone to react in case of ethical conflict, but at the same time, they could be more committed in the organization. This commitment thereafter could attenuate the intention to act with resistance means which would endanger the organization. This organizational commitment can be strengthened by management practices, especially during socialization of newcomers (training, welcoming process...).

In all cases, we see that effectively, workers with a high level of social engagement are more sensitive to potential discrepancies, a kind of “detector radars” of ethical drift: as a matter of fact, we observe that activism orientation is always positively related to whistleblowing intentions. Militant workers are warrant of preservation of a good ethical climate. Concurring with Dozier and Miceli (1985), we can consider whistleblowing as a type of prosocial behavior that fosters organizational change and well-being. With that in mind, organizations should work in favor of internal whistleblowing that does not endanger the organization and prevent external whistleblowing.

### 5.3. The impact of education

In the previous study (Chapter II), some interviewees described group effects following the arrival of a newcomer who has inverted the perception of organizational practices. That was the case in one shop, where a new employee with sharper eyes, working on his free time on a PdH in sociology made his colleagues adopt more a critical stance on ethical practices. In another interview, a manager confessed

that even if people with a high diploma have more abilities and autonomy, he refused to hire those prospective workers, as they were too difficult to manage for this kind of job.

Indeed, education has been highlighted in Models 4 and 5 as a control variable that increases external whistleblowing intentions in both scenarios, perhaps because those people are more able to organize struggles, or less anxious about losing their job. That corroborates the idea that Third party's resources (times, skills, knowledge, exercise, resources) increase the likelihood that a third party acts to help the victim (Skarlicki and Kulik, 2005). That is a reality that organizations must integrate when they recruit workers with high diploma: it constrains to "walk the talk" more seriously. This is an important issue to consider for all those new organizations that are built on pro-social values and need young recruits with high diploma in order to develop their project. Those members may look for meaningfulness and coherence with their values before money and career, but will be more prone to react with threatening behaviors.

#### 5.4. Limitations and further research

My study suffers from several theoretical and methodological limitations that open research perspectives.

##### 5.4.1. Exploring other antecedents

Model 1 presents a relatively high coefficient of determination and helps to identify Job Satisfaction as a key component of whistleblowing intentions. Models 2, 3, 4 and 5 have a moderate, weak or unacceptable value and explain only a small part of whistleblowing intentions. We can wonder which other antecedents can foster the different outcomes between employees who experience similar practices. Keeping in mind that our contributions should imply potential managerial practices, and relying on previous qualitative studies, we can recommend to explore the impact of other components for further research.

### *Identification*

As we suggested previously, identification with the organizational principles could play a role in reducing whistleblowing intentions. Considering our precedent qualitative study in the same organization, we know that Orgacoop is a particular context where we observe a strong identification that often predated before joining the organization, linked with the original militant organizational identity. It would be interesting to repeat this study in other contexts where the cause of identification is not so linked with ethical values and observe the impact of this variable. Does identification reduce whistleblowing intentions in organizations that have a strong reputation and image that is not linked with ethical values (e.g.: Apple)? We can also question the impact of a preexisting organizational identification, which can be assessed during a job interview. Organizations often look for a recruit who are strongly attracted by the culture or reputation, but is it really preferable? Brockner (1992) suggested that *“the higher they are, the higher they fall”*: prior commitment would accentuate reaction in case of perceived unfairness. In the same way, regarding CSR, are people more prone to react if they are disappointed by CSR when they held the organization in high esteem and already identified to it?

### *Internal whistleblowing channels*

Orgacoop is also a particular context, as this organization offers multiple internal whistleblowing media to its employees, which is not the case in all the organizations. The diversity of internal whistleblowing means could also be an explanation of external whistleblowing intentions.

### *Perceived constraints*

Finally, employee resilience facing discrepancies can be influenced by their perception of the financial health of the shop or the level of constraints weighting on it. For instance, in a shop that is in a delicate position because of the arrival of a competitor with lower ethical standards next door, workers can be more inclined to forgive breach of ethics. Thereby, the scenario approach could be extended to more complex cases. For instance what would happen if employees were asked to make a sacrifice in order

to overcome an economically difficult period in the market? Would this lead immediately to an exit strategy, a search for alternative plans, or a reluctant acceptance since it is better to work in an environment which values the employee?

In link with that variable, communication and governance design can also explain differences. Being more aware and involved in organizational decision-making can enforce resilience: we see in model 3,4 and 5 that workers in a shop with a cooperative form which generally adopts an alternative governance are less inclined to do external whistleblowing.

Perceived constraints weighting on workers can also influence reactions. We can question the existence of barriers to external whistleblowing, which is particularly risky for employees. Control variables such as having children or living as a couple (that could influence the responsibility weighting on the employee's shoulders) did not show any significant effect, but personal constraints could be more investigated. We could also explore the perception of better alternatives regarding the ethics of other organizations (especially competitors). Do employees have a feeling that their organization is still "not the worse"? Previous professional experiences can also shape workers expectations: that could be the hidden motives for shops hiring people who used to work in the demanding industry of mass retailing.

### 5.3.2. Exploring other outcomes

We measured satisfaction towards CSR practices. However, my precedent research project detailed in the previous section demonstrates that this satisfaction can hide a certain ignorance of the real practices, as long as workers are satisfied with their own treatment. The questionnaire only measured satisfaction, but not knowledge of ethical standards. If we wish to explore deeply the antecedents of criticism towards CSR practices, we should also measure workers' level of knowledge regarding CSR practices, and not only their satisfaction.



Secondly, beside whistleblowing, other meanings of resistance highlighted in literature (Thompson & Ackroyd, 1999) which were mentioned in qualitative studies could also be explored as behavioral responses, but would need adequate measurement tools : turnover (silent or with expression of reasons to leave), actions engaging stakeholders (strike, protest), subtle counter-resistance (for instance foot-dragging, sabotage, simulated omission). For this purpose, studying previous employees and not only current ones would bring another light.

Finally, some scholars exploring dynamics ensued from CSR called for dissociating social and environmental practices as they would present different outcomes (Bansal *et al.*, 2014; Gond *et al.*, 2010; Dögl & Holtbrugge, 2014). Echoing results from my previous study, first analysis corroborates quantitatively that social internal social practices have a large impact on general satisfaction (.412\*\*\*), more than external social practices (.316\*\*\*) or environmental practices (.0.210\*\*\*). A tetra-matrix class (Llosa, 1997) which was part of the initial project would help to identify more specifically which practices weight in the general satisfaction, which ones should be the priority in a CSR program in order to be impactful for employees who relay the organization reputation among various stakeholders.

### 5.3.3. Reverse and circular effects

Another limitation concerns the possible reverse effects that could exist in the theoretical model that we tested, considering the contrasting perspectives in the literature. As a matter of fact, we chose to consider satisfaction regarding CSR as an antecedent of organizational commitment. Many studies have adopted a similar perspective, demonstrating that CSR is positively related to various valued employee attitudes such as job satisfaction (Glavas and Kelley, 2014), or affective commitment (Brammer *et al.*, 2007). However, some scholars (particularly resorting to qualitative methods) have chosen an opposite view that can be logically supported.

Indeed, the literature has demonstrated the pride that members may feel of belonging to an organization that is believed to have socially valued characteristics (Dutton *et al.*, 1994): they can feel inclined to “basking its reflected glory (Cialdini *et al.*, 1976), moreover when important stakeholders

(in this organization, the community of “responsible consumers”) see the organization positively (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991; Dutton *et al.*, 1994). In that case, workers can adopt ego-defense mechanisms to ignore discrepancies regarding organizational practices and preserve the boosting of their self-esteem. In the event of decoupling between discourse and practices, workers would experience cognitive dissonance, but would employ strategies in order to preserve their initial perception and maintain identification level (Glavas and Godwin, 2013). Alvesson and Kärreman’s study (2007) also suggests that organizational identification could be an antecedent in the workers’ perception of organizational practices. CSR initiatives particularly have a cultural-symbolic dimension and take part in worker’s identity project. They would create complex dynamics among workers that would adhere to a system, even if they perceive inconsistencies.

That allows us to suspect that certain relationships between the constructs may be causal or circular: CSR fosters PEP, that will enforce organizational identification and commitment (Kim, Lee, Lee, Kim, 2010), that will in return enforce satisfaction with perceived CSR. In effect, my previous study, based on interviews of workers of the same organization showed in details those ego defense mechanisms: a great organizational identification and the perceived reputation modified the perception of organizational practices, workers preferring to believe blindly in an organizational myth which allayed their internal tensions, and to ignore discrepancies. Indeed, this particular context is characterized by a strong and distinctive organizational identity. Association with very positive values favors adherence to the organizational project and identification can refrain criticism (Endrissat, 2015, Kenny, 2010). Hence, organizational commitment, organizational identification, affective commitment, subjective person-organization fit or perceived external prestige could also have an effect on satisfaction regarding organizational practices such as CSR. For reasons that we previously stated, we chose a PLS approach with which causal or circular relationships cannot be modeled (Hair *et al.*, 2014). As we should be careful not to over-interpret results, we preferred not to use these relationships that presented this risk.

Other analyzes with CB-SEM (ex. AMOS) can treat this case in the future: we could explore the mediating and moderating effects of these constructs on the relationships corroborated. For instance, as mentioned in the results, there seems to be a direct effect of Perceived External Prestige on

Satisfaction regarding CSR, and an indirect effect mediated by Job Satisfaction (see section 4.1.2. and Table 9). If it has already been demonstrated that CSR favors PEP (Carmeli, 2005), another statistical approach would enable to see to which extent this effect can be reverse: this would mean that perceiving the organization as prestigious in the eyes of external stakeholders would make internal workers perceive more positively the organizational practices that they experience. This would imply that in some ways they are locked in that positive image shared by the reference group, which gives an enhanced self-concept, like suggested by the previous qualitative study (see Chapter II)

Likewise, based on first exploration with PLS, Organizational Commitment would accentuate the impact of job satisfaction on internal whistleblowing intentions. That could make sense, as a worker who feels committed at work should be prone to struggle to preserve the ethical climate and moral integrity of the organization by peaceful and loyal means.

In all cases, so far, this study really demonstrates how qualitative approaches (especially narratives), coupled with quantitative analyses can enrich each other, bring a critical stance on results and catch subtle dynamics.

#### 5.3.4. Sample features

The other limitations are methodological. This study benefits from the freedom of an independent research project, that is precious when we broach some touchy subjects such as job satisfaction. However, the absence of support from the organization reduced the number of responses. Having a larger sample would have also enabled to exclude respondents that were not attentive or too quick to fill the questionnaire. This cancelation prevented us from conducting a pretest that would have enabled us to improve the questionnaire, cutting its length by selecting the most significant items and identifying the problematic ones. We could have kept some interesting constructs that we wanted to use initially, such as the impact of organizational identification on whistleblowing intentions. Some

hypotheses cannot be supported, as a small sample does not enable to get significant relationships that would appear with a larger one. With more respondents, it would also have been possible to conduct statistical analysis on sub-groups, with different levels of activism, and to explore the intention to react with external rather than internal whistleblowing. In our sample for instance, only 15 individuals really present a high-risk activism orientation profile.

We can also suspect a bias in the distribution of the survey: shops with a more activist identity and a good social climate have certainly been more inclined to transmit the survey to their employees. Secondly, workers who spent their free time to complete the survey can be motivated by the need to express their dissatisfaction, or on the opposite their deep enthusiasm, as shown in the open question at the end. Figures in Table 8 demonstrate that respondents of our sample have more interest in involving in the network future: while all the employees have the possibility to become Orgacoop cooperative members: 7.8 % of the 5200 employees have this status, contrasting with 28% of our respondents. This also makes us suspect that the part of the employees that only works there to “pay the bill”, and not motivated by a high level of social engagement is relatively missing in the sample. We did not study the average satisfaction regarding CSR practices, but the link between social engagement and satisfaction, hence this lack of representability does not constitute a major problem. However, it limits the potential analysis we can make from this data.

For all those reasons, this study would deserve to be repeated in collaboration with an organization that really helps spreading the survey and ensures better conditions for collecting data.

#### 5.3.5. Calling for new scales

We reviewed the most recent literature in order to find the best scale to measure nowadays responsible consumption behaviors among a sample of employees that earn quite limited income in average. We found a scale that considered various behaviors that show social engagement (reducing its needs and consumption) beyond purchase behaviors that can be costly (buying organic products for instance) or nowadays banal (sorting domestic wastes). However, in comparison with practices

mentioned in interviews in the previous studies, we observe that some practices that were important for respondents were lacking: for instance self-production or 0-waste products, vegetarianism, veganism, refusal to use air transportation or cell phones. Some of those practices are becoming major tendencies. Hence, it is crucial that research goes on regularly creating new measurement scales to assess responsible behaviors, in response to the quick society evolutions. Likewise, activism or whistleblowing take new forms, using social media rather than petitions on the street or strikes. Our society faces great challenges that involve attitudes and behavioral changes among many of us. As researchers in organization studies, we need tools in order to explore optimally the impact of those personal features on organizational behaviors. The synergy between different research fields is here necessary.

## 6. Conclusion of the chapter

In that study, we demonstrated that personal social engagement, measured through behaviors in consumption or activism, is partially positively related with a higher satisfaction regarding CSR practices, but also favors whistleblowing intentions in case of perceived ethical conflict. However, the impact of that variable is negligible compared to job satisfaction. Perception of good working conditions and meaningfulness at work favor internal whistleblowing and reduce the resort to resistance means such as word-of-mouth or public denunciation that really endanger the organization's sake. Organizational commitment can also counter-balance the impact of activism orientation on external whistleblowing intentions.

Those results enable to rethink the priority of CSR programs, showing the utmost importance of job satisfaction, and relativizing the danger that employees' personal engagement can constitute for the organization, as long as the latter "walks the talk." As the aim should not be to prevent any form of whistleblowing, but to favor channels that do not endanger the organization, we identify several factors that can foster internal and reduce external whistleblowing intentions: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, function of representation, participative governance. While we can doubt that personal social engagement could be managed at work, those factors can easily be subject to management practices.





# Conclusion





## Contributions from each chapter

In this thesis, we have tried to answer the following overall research question: How do activist workers respond at the individual level to the tensions created by the complex nature of the hybrid organizations that employ them?

In this section, we summarize the various contributions of our studies and culminate in an overall discussion to answer the questions we have posed in this thesis.

In Chapter I, we attempted to answer the following two research questions: What are the interpretations employees resort to when confronting the tensions created by the complex nature of hybrid organizations? To what extent do these interpretations reflect the paradox versus dilemma mindsets of their authors?

We found many intense occupational tensions persisting at the individual level among activist workers in hybrid organizations, despite the fact that they have chosen their profession in order to align their personal pro-social values with those of their organization. Consistent with the previous literature on hybrid organizations, we find tensions emanating from the dual nature of these organizations and their joint pursuit of financial and social goals (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Besharov, 2014; Battilana, 2018). The individual approach that we use here also allows us to identify other sources of tension, related in particular firstly to high expectations regarding the solidarity of social relationships that prevail over individual interest and profit, secondly to the sometimes alienating demands for exemplarity in the professional and private spheres on the part of clients, and finally to complex family loyalties pulling the individual in various directions.

All the individuals we studied are driven by the search for congruence with their personal values. They show a hypersensitivity to contradictions, which has led to professional choices often with the price of social and economic sacrifices. However, we observe variations in the way these workers deal with the inconsistencies that persist. We have identified several interpretations depending on the individual's mindset, and his or her capacity to conceive of these contradictions as a paradox or, on the contrary, a

dilemma. Within the latter category, we identify three ways of thinking about the dilemma. We thus show that there is not one type of activist, but different types within this population in the way of thinking about contradictions. The adoption of a particular interpretive schema would depend not only on seemingly individual characteristics, but also on the organizational context. This observation opens up perspectives regarding the creation of organizational practices that can help relieve the individual tensions of activist workers, particularly through certain management tools.

In Chapter II, our research question is as follows: For the particular category of activist workers, what role do CSR standards play in managing the tensions created by the nature of hybrid organizations?

We explored the potential support offered by certain management tools in managing personal tensions among activist workers, suggested by the results of Chapter I. We explored how this particular population perceives and uses CSR standards within hybrid organizations. We find that, faced with the importance of tensions similar to those depicted in Chapter I, frontline workers have a strong need for organizational support. As a result, contrary to what one might expect from this category of individuals, they rely on the existence of CSR standards without the critical thinking and knowledge that characterizes their engagement. They rely on the organization that seems to share their values, to which they subcontract the arbitration between social and financial objectives. We highlight the importance of this need for organizational support, which can at times resemble blind faith. However, this blind faith has its limits: when workers are dissatisfied with their own working conditions, they adopt a more critical stance towards CSR standards, especially internal social standards.

Our Chapter III attempted to answer the following research question: What is the real impact of personal social engagement on satisfaction regarding CSR and whistleblowing intentions, relative to other antecedents?

This study confirms the importance of working conditions as the primary determinant of worker satisfaction with CSR in hybrid organizations. The level of activism of the individual does not make them less satisfied, but does make him/her quicker to react in the event of a perceived contradiction

with the ethical line of the organization. Job satisfaction (and especially the manager's attitude) helps to react in a more constructive and less dangerous way for the organization by promoting internal recourse to "blow the whistle".

## General contributions of the thesis

In view of this doctoral work, we will conclude on our major contributions. First, we will present activist workers as a specific population suffering from intense and multiple tensions, implying the need for different organizational practices. Suggesting the likely expansion of this population with an activist profile in the professional context, we invite consideration of the activist worker as a structuring agent of the hybrid organization. Finally, we will recall, in view of the results of Chapters II and III, the importance of working conditions in hybrid organizations.

### Activist workers: a specific population to be integrated into hybrid organizations

The literature suggested that individuals within hybrid organizations were threatened by the tensions generated by dual goals (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Besharov, 2014; Battilana, 2018). Our findings in Chapter I confirm the individual and organizational risks associated with these tensions. They also show the multiplicity of individual tensions experienced by activist workers that go beyond those related to the hybridity of the organization. Activist workers thus form a specific population within hybrid organizations.

The particularity of this population also relates to the responses adopted in the face of tensions and to the practices implemented by the organizations to ensure their multiple missions. For Besharov (2014), who was mainly interested in the cohabitation of profiles with divergent values, the responses of these workers to organizational practices form a kind of "black box". She observes that the members she qualifies as "idealists" react in a specific way, forming a category of workers apart, hermetic to the identity conversion into "pluralist", "capitalist" or "indifferent" profiles. The phenomenon of dis-identification, corresponding to disillusionment and distancing from the organization, also occurs

more among the "idealistic" members, leading them to reduce their efforts, and sometimes to leave the organization. This reaction would be linked to the perception of a 'moral violation' of the values carried by these 'idealistic' members, of an unacceptable 'sacrilege'.

Among the three sets of practices which, according to the author, allow the emergence of a common identity and good cohabitation within these organizations, we find the practices of ideology routinization, development of integrative solutions, and ideology suppression. Indeed, our results in Chapter II allow us to conclude that the practices of routinization of ideology that allow the recognition of the values they cherish are undoubtedly useful for the category of activist workers. The implementation of CSR standards on very "down-to-earth" subjects, whose positive impact on militant workers is demonstrated by our Chapter II, is indeed an example of such practices. However, one may doubt in view of our work the positive responses that militant workers may have towards practices to "remove ideology" or even certain "integrative" practices that may put them in tension (Chapter II), as shown by the following two points of view.

*«Customer service is about giving the customer a choice. If our customers want plastic bags, they should be able to have them, and not feel bad about it. »*

(Interview M34, Besharov, 2014, p 1497)

*«In the relationship with the customer, what bothers me a little bit is that some people are really careful, they always bring back their used bags, or they have their own cloth bags, sometimes hand-sewn, and that's good, you can see that they are committed, that they are sensitive to that, and others who have been coming for years who still want new bags every time, even for potatoes! Being on assisted sales allows me to pass on my militancy, really. I realize that if I ask if the customer needs a bag for a certain product, most are embarrassed to say "Yes of course". »*

(Interview of an Orgacoop's worker, Chapter 2)

Our work demonstrates that, without a doubt, militant workers intend to use their labor force to defend their ideological values (Chapter I). They experience significant tensions in the face of

contradictions (Chapters I and II), and react more strongly to inconsistencies between organizational practices and social mission (Chapter III).

The easy solution would be to avoid recruiting militant workers, limiting to those with a "paradox" mindset (Chapter I), who are more likely to find meaning in the contradictions they encounter. This solution would be favored by some hybrid organizations that prefer, for example, to recruit young graduates who have not yet developed a professional mental schema, and who are easier to socialize (Battilana and Dorado, 2010).

However, the integration of militant workers is likely to be a major issue in the coming decades. General awareness of social and environmental problems is leading a growing part of the population to seek to align their work with their concerns, particularly among Generation Y, for whom the meaning of work is paramount (Eisner, 2005) and who are very sensitive to CSR (Klimkiewicz & Oltra, 2017). The next generation, known as Generation Z, which is beginning to enter the labor market, seems to be even more sensitive to CSR through its consumption (Dabija, Bejan & Dinu, 2019). According to Frimousse and Perretti (2019), "*demands for well-being in the workplace, social justice, the environment and equity will undoubtedly make the ethical dimension an important part of their professional choices.*" The question of the integration of workers with 'idealist' profile in the workplace is thus a major question that will be posed in the long term because of the future predominance of these generations.

Moreover, as Besharov (2014) points out, the categories of workers are not static: in contact with other members, 'indifferent' individuals can become 'pluralist', and the 'pluralist' 'idealist'. External factors also develop the sensitivity of members already belonging to the organization to social and environmental issues (having children, travelling, illness, media awareness etc.). Individuals who are already members of the organization can thus develop a certain activism *a posteriori* and question organizational practices.

Additionally, since the 1990s, social enterprises had emerged as a response to social and environmental concerns (Hoffman, Badiane & Haigh, 2012; Smith, Gonin and Besharov, 2013). We are

currently seeing a proliferation of companies that want to provide social added value, including traditional companies that have set up very ambitious CSR programs, adopting a kind of hybridity late in the game, *a posteriori* (e.g. Velux, which intends, among other things, to be carbon neutral by 2041 and to reimburse all the carbon used since 1941). This ethical turnaround generates promise, expectations and changes in outlook among workers who were not particularly sensitive to that matter. A general increase in awareness of the issue of CSR in organizations can therefore be expected.

The solution of avoiding recruiting workers with an activist profile appears in this context to be a partial response at best, including relying on the employment of young workers with no previous work experience. The challenge of integrating workers with an activist profile is a fact that all organizations, and even more hybrid organizations, must deal with. Hybrid organizations must therefore take heed of the multiplicity of tensions experienced by activist workers, and integrate this characteristic as a particularity of this population. From an ethical point of view, precisely, it seems logical that an organization claiming to be solidary, ethical and putting forward its social interest acknowledges the occupational tensions experienced by a particular category of its members, endangering their physical and psychological integrity, all the more if this organization also takes advantage of these characteristics (notably in terms of organizational commitment or expertise). In the same way that the artistic milieu must deal with the sometimes irrational anxieties and whimsical demands of its virtuosos, if an organization is nourished by the militant workers' quest for an ideal, it must take into consideration the particular tensions they experience, and work to imagine practices that alleviate them. If tensions can be exacerbated by certain individual predispositions, they also depend on the context (Zheng *et al.*, 2014). The mindset adopted by the worker may depend on organizational practices and on the tools available to him, (Chapter I), which is confirmed by our second study (Chapter II) demonstrating the capacity of organizations to relieve the worker in the management of these tensions, for example through CSR standards. It can therefore be considered as the responsibility of the organization to not only integrate the fragility of these activist workers, but also to introduce into its CSR program practices that provide them with organizational support in the management of tensions.

To this end, CSR standards are particularly useful. Far from being tools of domination, they can constitute a resource for the individual activist. They allow them to objectively evaluate whether they are putting their work force at the service of the right project. Above all, they make it possible to alleviate occupational tensions by subcontracting part of the management of these tensions to the organization and by providing workers with limits to their personal investment (Chapter II). We therefore show that beyond the functional aspect for the organization, the interest of these tools is also to improve the well-being of the workers and their capacity "to hold up", taking into account this quest for the ideal, which can be cumbersome, and to fulfil their different roles in the organization in the long term. In this sense, our work rather contradicts the vision of certain critical authors, by showing that the organization is not necessarily a place of exploitation of the individuals' quest for meaning, but rather a refuge for these individuals who sometimes struggle to live in harmony with their activism.

The risk, however, lies in the fact that workers only achieve pseudo-knowledge of CSR standards, nurturing a blind and precarious faith in the organization and its tools, faith which can turn into disillusionment and cynicism, as observed in Chapter II. We therefore stress the need for a real knowledge and appropriation of CSR standards to obtain lasting positive effects on workers in terms of organizational commitment and understanding of competing issues. In view of our empirical results, we agree with De Colle (2014), who highlighted the paradoxes underlying CSR standards, particularly the individual responsibility erosion. This author insisted on the importance of learning in the process of developing and implementing these standards, which must always raise awareness, leave room for human judgment and be built upon it.

The workers of this study suggested examples of practices around the creation and evolution of these standards: "customization", adaptation to the local context, to economic constraints, to the mode of governance, to the activity, to the specificities of the members of the organization... According to the managers, this work, especially when it is collaborative, would make the employees aware of the constraints, especially economic constraints, that the organization has to face. In this sense, the work on standards makes it possible to avoid the adoption of a confining idealistic posture, which in the end sometimes proves to be as alienating for the activist as it is dangerous for the organization. It could



also make it possible, in line with the democratic ambition of the organization, to anchor the long-term organizational project in daily practices that concern everyone's work and do not leave the leaders alone with the privilege and responsibility of thinking about the company's CSR vision. Contributing to the creation or evolution of standards enables militancy to be lived authentically at work, by giving everyone the opportunity to take political action in the professional context.

## The activist worker, structuring agent of the hybrid organization

Besharov (2014) suggests that « *Something may be lost when organizations lack distinct representation of the values they embody* » (Besharov, 2014). Indeed, the literature demonstrates the value of the cohabitation of different groups within hybrid organizations, due to the intra- and inter-group dynamics created by conflicts, negotiation and reparation rituals (Ashforth and Reingen, 2014), ultimately improving the functioning of the organization. The choice to integrate profiles with different levels of social orientation is therefore the strategy adopted by many hybrid organizations (Battilana and Dorado, 2010; Besharov, 2014).

Our work supports this point, demonstrating the interest of the activist worker in terms of risk/benefit calculations. According to the statistical analyses of our third study, the brakes on the employment of activists in a hybrid organization would not be justified. Hiring activist workers would not lead to more conflicts, provided that the company brings its practices into line with its discourse: these workers are potentially even more satisfied with CSR practices, which in turn feed their organizational commitment (Chapter III). Workers have a natural tendency to trust the company they perceive as sharing their values, and sometimes choose to join at the cost of personal sacrifice. Faith in the organization's political project would also give them certain resilience in the face of the contradictions linked to the duality of objectives. (Chapter II)

Consequently, and in light of the results of these three research projects, we could suggest that hybrid firms regard the activist worker not as a potential source of trouble, but rather as a structuring agent of the organization, and adopt practices that allow him or her to fulfill this role. Activist workers can be

valued as detectors of incoherence. They can be considered as safeguards that keep the firm from drifting off course in the mission. These workers are a valuable resource, both for the reputation and legitimacy of the organization and for the preservation of the organization's guidelines and ethical climate.

In that matter, if only for the sake of pragmatism, in reviewing our data, we particularly emphasize the role of the "front-line" worker on whom we focused in this doctoral work. Maintaining consistency with the company's ethical ambitions requires continuous learning, and constant monitoring of internal practices and those of stakeholders. The integrity of the social mission lies in the sum of the down-to-earth details of daily organizational life, which only all "shop-floor workers" (in sales, production etc.) are capable of grasping. For example, it is the shop-floor worker who unloads pallets that are suddenly over-packed, receives returns from customers on a product whose composition has deteriorated, or is interested in the negative externalities generated by the production or consumption of a particular product on his shelf. These workers are also witnesses to social practices experienced by their colleagues who may escape the vigilance of the organization despite its desire to ensure an ethical climate, particularly when the organization is of a certain size (e.g., cases of harassment between colleagues). While we cannot systematically incriminate the organization's managers for their negligence, the organization must admit its limits and recognize the ability of shop floor workers, and in particular activists, to detect perceived contradictions. At their level, workers can use their personal expertise, sensitivity and critical stance, their interactions with stakeholders, and their knowledge of the field to report inconsistencies of which the company may not be aware, rather than imagining omniscient expert "standards-makers" who will ensure the preservation of the mission, as described in Chapter II. A real valorization of the role of the worker, *a fortiori* a militant one, in this social mission, is to be thought of.

As a result, the importance of the multiplication and reliability of the channels proposed to launch the alert internally is measured in the preservation of the hybrid organization's mission. Whistleblowing can be presented in a hybrid organization as one of the missions of every worker, instead of conceiving it as a risk linked to the employment of activists. It should be assured of the consideration that will be given to its contribution to the preservation of the ethical line of the organization. This requires

rethinking practices, for example in recruitment, job description, day-to-day management, and the design of communication channels.

Thus, the activist worker can prove to be a driving and structuring agent of the hybrid organization, forcing continuous improvement and the implementation of the duality of mission.

### The paramount importance of working conditions in hybrid organizations

Our work demonstrates the importance of satisfactory working conditions in hybrid organizations. Chapter II suggests that workers tend to have almost blind trust in the organization and its CSR practices when they are satisfied with their own working conditions. While they may be concerned about injustices suffered by their peers, workers tend to maintain trust in the organization and attribute ethical breaches to outside elements (an opportunistic project manager, clients, etc.). On the other hand, in case of social conflict concerning them, the feeling of betrayal towards the organization claiming to be ethical is all the more important as they had placed trust in the organization. Chapter III confirms the predominance of job satisfaction (measured largely with satisfaction related to working conditions) as an explanatory variable for satisfaction with CSR. This same variable favors the use of constructive internal alert channels (staff representative, head office contact...) and reduces the intention to run to those with potentially deleterious effects (negative word-of-mouth, denunciation in the media and social networks, etc.).

If the quality of working conditions appears to be obvious in the context of hybrid organizations, our work shows that this is not the case. Limited wages and career advancement, physical conditions (cold, lack of ergonomic equipment, dirt), harassment, circumvention of labor law and collective agreements, and the resurgence of domination mechanisms were commonly mentioned by respondents to our studies. The idea of fighting for a greater goal gives certain resilience to workers accepting certain sacrifices. This phenomenon, and the possible abuses that can result from it, had been identified in previous literature on the search for meaning in work, both alienating and ennobling (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). We see that the particularities of these hybrid

organizations sometimes generate other deviances (law of the jungle due to the absence of a clear hierarchy, for example). As a result, militant workers constitute a population of workers particularly prone to certain psycho-social risks. The ANACT (The French national agency for the improvement of working conditions) sees this as one of the challenges of the Social and Solidarity Economy.<sup>6</sup>

The question of internal social practices is often absent or overlooked in CSR projects in traditional contexts (Allouche, Huault & Schmidt, 2004). Our studies show that the internal social dimension is not always better addressed in hybrid organizations. We can sometimes link this absence to the genesis of certain organizations where the "worker" issue only appeared late with the need to use salaried workers, and is not part of the organization's culture. Some organizations in our field of research, due to the hybridity of resources, are the result of cooperative projects involving voluntary work on the part of cooperative members (the case of organic store cooperatives founded by consumer groups, as is still the case in some stores), over-involvement by project leaders, blurring of the boundaries between private and professional lives... The growth of organizations forces them to think *a posteriori* about the meaning given to work, the place of the employees in the structure, the way to manage, remunerate, train those employees. Some hybrid organizations therefore have to become aware of their shortcomings regarding this issue, and rethink the priority given to the social level, in the arbitration between producers, suppliers, customers and employees. This might avoid the perception reported by some participants of being "*the true payers of ethics*" which questions the legitimacy of these organizations.

This priority given to the internal social dimension is necessary from the point of view of the very *raison d'être* of these hybrid organizations with a social mission, but also, in a more pragmatic way, from a strategic point of view. Front-line workers in particular convey the organization's image and reputation (Edinger-Schons *et al.*, 2019). Disillusion and cynicism regarding the organization's ethics can have formidable effects, often measured exclusively by turnover (Andersson and Bateman, 1997; Nejati, 2020; Lee, Lee, Li, 2012), which is undoubtedly costly for the organization (Alexandrov *et al.*, 2007). However, this means forgetting the employees who stay and resist by more or less dangerous means (negative word of mouth with customers, sabotage, strikes, denunciation on social networks),

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.anact.fr/economie-sociale-et-solidaire-les-enjeux> (15/10/2020)

and also the employees who vilify the organization informally or anonymously, once they have left it, sometimes to join a competing firm. The sites where it is possible to leave online notices about certain employers, such as Glassdoo.fr or Indeed.fr, are an illustration of this.

Finally, although no marketing study can support our point in the particular field of responsible consumption, we make the hypothesis, by personal experience and from our data, that a part of the clientele is particularly sensitive to turnover and sees it as a manifestation of poor working conditions, calling into question the authenticity of the ethical positioning of the organization.

In order to illustrate the strategic importance of working conditions, we can mention the so-called Orgacoop network (Chapter II and III), which is currently in a bad position due to several strikes that have received a lot of media coverage, launched to denounce working conditions in stores. These social problems tarnish the reputation of all the network's stores, including those that have retained a genuine militant identity and practices that go far beyond the network's standards. One can assume the imminence of an internal struggle to re-establish the network's hybrid identity through distinctive practices, or a general split within the network, which in any case will cause them to lose power of action, performance and reputation.



Figure 10: Drawing from online press, September 2020

(no further information in reason of anonymity)

However, it is worth asking what good working conditions are for this category of workers, and these may vary even within this research field. Our second chapter pointed out the importance of the meaningfulness found at work, the attitude of the manager and human contacts. This is partly confirmed by the statistical analysis in our Chapter III showing the contribution of the different elements to overall job satisfaction. Initial observations in the field confirm these results. Stores offering difficult working conditions (cold, lack of space, anti-social or long hours), limited salaries and prospects for development manage to retain workers with a high level of education, sometimes for several decades. Money and comfort therefore do not seem to be paramount in what the activist worker defines as good working conditions.

The (benevolent, grateful, fair) manager, on the other hand, appears statistically crucial. The interviewees in Chapters I and II, for their part, insisted on the importance of a manager who shares the difficult working conditions of his employees, is genuinely militant while being pragmatic, and thus capable of ensuring the viability of the firm: this corresponds to the "pluralist" profile recommended by Besharov (2014) for the managerial positions of front-line workers. However, our interviews show the difficulty of thinking of the role of manager for some militant workers with a "dilemma" mindset, wishing to avoid the reproduction of patterns of domination. Managers with an 'idealist' profile have moreover been identified by Besharov (2014) as likely to give up or be stripped of this responsibility. These difficulties in fulfilling the role of manager could also lead to even more harmful situations for workers. This is illustrated by this participant's account of self-management becoming anarchy and then the law of the jungle governed by an informal dictator (Chapter I). It is therefore also necessary to recognize the occupational tensions experienced by this category of worker leaders in hybrid organizations and their consequences. For these individuals, recourse to the collaborative construction of management tools such as statutes or standards also proved beneficial. These provide these managers with an organizational support that allows them to adopt the narrative of the category of narrators that we had named "*believers*" (individuals relying on the organization's ability to resolve contradictions), potentially the least dangerous of the three "*dilemma mindset*".

## Limitations and research avenues

Although our thesis offers theoretical and managerial contributions, it also has limitations that may inspire future research.

### Shifts between profiles

Although we have not considered in this thesis that the same individual could adopt a different mindset depending on the organization and practices, we believe that this may be the case. In particular, we suggest the impact of group dynamics. Besharov (2014) suggests that workers are not fixed in a category, but could evolve, allowing themselves to be won over by the societal values defended by the hybrid organization. In particular, "indifferent" members or "capitalists" could become "pluralist". Our data in Chapters I and II suggest that positions could also be affected by the composition of the group. We hypothesize that these changes would create or maintain certain functional dynamics similar to those identified by Ashforth and Reingen (2014). Thus, a group in which only "idealistic" members would be found a priori could generate the mutation in some individuals towards a "pluralist", even "capitalist" profile, in order to ensure the survival of the organization. These dynamics seem to take various forms depending on the organizational context. In a first case, a Chapter II respondent, a staff representative and union delegate, described how the managers (former militant employees who had created this socially ambitious project) recognized its usefulness as a systematic opponent in the management of their project. They gave the resources and attention needed to carry out his task, so that they could fully exercise their role as "pragmatist" members with the assurance of a safeguard, dynamics that are not unlike those described by Ashforth and Reingen (2014). In other organizations, duality seemed to have been integrated more individually, as in the case of Dam (Chapter I), who explicitly and verbally put on his "idealist" or "pragmatic" hat depending on the circumstances. This phenomenon of shifting from one category to another in response to organizational context deserves further exploration.

Our research did not allow us to objectify the presence of militants who could be described as "terrorists" among the workers questioned, that is to say militants who could prove dangerous for the organization because of their extreme positions. While some respondents saw it as a duty to educate and change client behaviors or to advance practices, none mentioned a clearly intolerant attitude or violent opposition. This is a category that should be distinguished from that of "idealists". We would have liked, in Chapter III, to have had enough answers to be able to isolate a group of individuals with a very high level of militancy (notably the propensity to engage in very risky militant activities), in order to verify by logistic regression whether their intentions of resistance such as strikes, in-store action or denunciation to the general public were higher than in other groups, and what other factors might have had a significant impact on their reactions. In any case, we wonder about the dynamics created by the presence of these individuals in hybrid organizations, which could be the subject of another research project.

## Access to the field

One of the difficulties of any independent research project, especially in PhD, is to collect data in a limited time, with limited resources and very limited power of persuasion with organizations. While pre-existing contacts and a certain amount of tenacity allowed for satisfactory data collection, there is no doubt that the limited number of interviews (12 for Chapter 1 and 27 for Chapter 2) and complete responses to the questionnaire (155) limits the generalizability of the results.

In Chapter I, although the abundance of quality data and structural analysis allowed for real theoretical contributions, we concede that more interviews might have allowed more narrative patterns to emerge. We consider that we have broadened the field of knowledge of the management of the paradox, but not to have achieved an exhaustive typology. In any case, it is this narrative method, which allows us to explore the different facets of the individual so well, and this structural analysis, which gives so much depth to the results, that we would like to use it again to carry out another research project on idealism at work.



In Chapter III, the limited access to the field creates certain biases, developed in part 5.3. This study, whose problematic remains, in our opinion, very interesting, would deserve to be replicated in better conditions, in collaboration with an organization that ensures a better representation of the population of workers.

### Quantitative analysis approach

A PLS approach was chosen in Chapter III because of the characteristics of the data, the scales of measurement, and the exploratory nature of the study. However, one of the drawbacks of this approach is that it does not measure inverse or circular effects. As a result, it does not allow us to capture the subtle dynamics at work, including the impact of variables such as organizational identification, organizational involvement or perceived external prestige. Replicating this study with a more representative sample, more responses, other variables, and by appropriating another approach to statistical analysis could more accurately complete our knowledge of the impact of activism in the workplace.

### Overall Conclusion

Should an organization be a place for political expression? Is it its role to carry a different social project, to welcome and support those who want it? While views may differ on this question, it seems that some organizations have made the choice, believing in their capacity to bring about societal change. This thesis aimed to identify certain dynamics at work among workers in these organizations in order to propose new practices. We think they could be inspiring in more traditional contexts, where environmental and social concerns are becoming more widespread in the population, requiring the integration of workers with different values, at the same time as a growing number of market organizations intend to respond to these concerns.

The organization must take into account the tensions related to the defense of pro-social values at work, and be aware of the organizational but also psychosocial risks induced by this idealism. If the exhaustion of care or social workers, for example, has given rise to an abundant literature (Newell and MacNeil, 2010), we can see that this problem goes beyond the "caring" professions in the literal sense: solidarity economy organizations are an illustration of this. More broadly, "caring" is a potential source of tension. Moreover, tensions similar to those experienced by activist workers can be found in many other hybrid organizations where individuals work in search of a certain ideal at work, for example aesthetic, artistic and scientific. Apart from the specific field of research in which we have conducted research, the question of managing tensions related to idealism at work extends to other research contexts characterized by hybrid missions: for instance teaching (Albert & Whetten, 1985), art (Glynn, 2000) or, of course, the health sector (Pratt & Rafaeli, 1997; Dukerich *et al.*, 2002).

The recent context of the global health crisis, by disrupting working conditions, particularly in occupations where there are many people with ideals, has often accentuated these tensions: workers in teaching, care, education or the entertainment industry, for example, have had to profoundly and suddenly modify their practices. Because of an indisputable external element, and not questionable organizational orientations, workers must continue to work under conditions where the ideal they carried is being abused. How does one experience, for example, being an artist on Youtube rather than in front of an audience in a theatre, teaching with less contact with students, educating, masked, at a physical distance from young children? And in a more extreme way among caregivers, having to submit to new choices in their professional career that one never thought they would be confronted with?

In this period, maintaining the activity of many organizations will depend more than ever on the ability of workers to preserve the ideal that carries them, while giving meaning to the gap with initial expectations. Understanding how the individual can best feed off this ideal rather than being a victim of it is, in our opinion, an important future challenge for organization studies.



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# Appendices



## Appendix 1: Presentation of the sample (Chapter I)

*N.B: In France in 2016 for 35h/week, net salary before income tax:*

- *Minimum salary: about 1142€.*
- *Median salary: 1772€*
- *Average salary: 2202€*

*Poverty line: 846€*

*Sources: INSEE*

Name (age)	Profession/status	Education degree	Income	Lifestyle
Oscar (36-M) Lives with a partner – 1 child	Itinerant investment banker in N** Employee and member	Bachelor in Banking Master in Marketing and Communications	€1750/month - 35h/week	Flexitarian, Second-hand, hybrid car, ethical banking
Ben (27-M) Lives with a partner	Farmer and food truck cook in LF Association president	Advanced technician's certificate in Chemistry. Professional qualification in farming	Unemployment benefit 50 to 70h/week	Veganism, second-hand, voluntary simplicity. No TV. Voluntary work in environmental activist organizations
Nathan (43-M) Lives with a partner	Chef and restaurant manager in B2F Employee and member	Bachelor of Architecture	€530/month 90h/week	Organic, local, voluntary simplicity. Few purchases except food. Voluntary work in organic certifying body. No TV
Charlie (34-M) 2 children - Single	Computer specialist in S*** Employee and member	Bachelor in Business and Management Bachelor in I.T.	€319/month 9h/week paid employment 20h/week effectively worked	Flexitarian. Voluntary simplicity. Purchases long-lasting products. No car (bike or train). Ethical banking. No TV Voluntary work in free software movement, co-working space, local environmentalist and alter-

				globalist organizations.
Paul (37-M) 2 children - Married	Entrepreneur, fair trade shop manager in ELM Employee and manager	Master in Geology Training course in business and management	€1142/month 70h/week	90% of organic, local, fair trade food, green products, flexitarian, ethical banking, no car, second hand, fair trade clothing. Voluntary work in local activist network
Sidonie (30-F) Lives with a partner	Shop assistant in VT organic grocery shop Entrepreneur in PSorganic jar production Employee	Master in Political Science Master in local economic development and solidarity entrepreneurship	€660/month (+ family financial support) 40h/week	Organic, flexitarians, local farming subscription, few purchases except food. No travel. No TV, voluntary simplicity
Hilde (27-F) Single	Restaurant multipurpose employee and member in B2F	Master in Social and Cultural Development	€800/month 20h to 50h/week	Organic food, flexitarian, bike/public transport. No TV. Apartment sharing. Couch surfing. Few purchases except food. Voluntary work on a farm renovation project
Leo (41-M) 2 children - Married	Cooperative entrepreneurship, consultant for solidarity projects. Team leader in CP. Training	Master's degree	€1600/month 40h/week	Bike, local and organic purchases Member of a worker-owned organic restaurant (former employee)
Victor (37-M) Single	Entrepreneur, manager and multipurpose worker in EE fair trade shop, coffee shop, restaurant and wholesale distribution Freelance	Advanced technician's certificate in Multimedia Creation and Development. Professional qualification in photography	€1142/month 70h/week No dividend	Flexitarian, local organic products, bike. Few purchases except food. Apartment sharing. Free software. Couch surfing. Woofing Voluntary work in art-therapy association. No TV.
Dam (29-M)	Restaurant and bar manager in B*** (stock	Advanced technician's certificate in International	€1200/month 35H/week	Flexitarian, local products, bike. Few purchases except food. Smokes

Lives with a partner	management, human resources, purchasing, administration) Employee and manager	Business Master in Communications Master in Aid Organization Communications		and drinks coffee (considered as an issue by the respondent). No TV
Marine (26-F) Lives with a partner	Farmer, manager and marketplace seller in P*** Farm Employee and manager	Advanced technician's certificate in Horticulture Bachelor in Sustainable Farming Master in farming, local country development environmental	€1142/month 35 to 70h/week	Lives in a yurt. Flexitarian. 100% organic. No TV. Voluntary work in a land-renting institution
Daphne (35-F) 1 child - Married	Products and supply chain manager in fair-trade and organic products in GJ Employee	Master's degree in Political Science, International Cooperation Development Project Management Advanced technician's certificate in farming	€3000/month 39h/week	Organic, local food. Flexitarian. Only second-hand clothing. Green products. Auto-production. Cloth diapers. Intensive mothering (extended breastfeeding, baby porting, co-sleeping...) No TV

## Appendix 2: Presentation of the respondents' organizations (Chapter I)

Organization	Activity
N**	Ethical banking. Created in 1978, cooperative bank of solidarity finance, only funding for environmentally-friendly and social and economic solidarity projects. 90 employees. €459 million turnover in 2016.
LF	Association of organic farming, and vegan and catering service with organic and local products. Itinerant selling with a food truck. 2 self-employed workers
BzF	Worker-owned cooperative. Two bars-restaurants with local, organic and fair-trade products, vegan, vegetarian offer. 8 employees.
S**	Free software design. Worker-owned cooperative – 4 employees.
ELM	Fairtrade shop. Clothes, homeware. 2 self-employed workers and 1 employee.
VT	Two organic retailing shops and organic farming, member of the most activist organic shops in the French network. Profit shared between workers. 30 employees.
PS	Jar production of organic and vegan dishes. One self-employed worker
P*** Farm	Organic farming. Land rental. 2 self-employed workers
GJ	Fairtrade products in import and manufacturing. Retail and wholesale.
EE	Fairtrade wholesale grocery shop, restaurant and coffee shop – 2 self-employed and 7 employees.
B**	Employee-owned bar and restaurant. Local and organic products. 14 employees
CP	Consulting for cooperative project in solidarity economy. 1 self-employed worker.

## Appendix 3: An example of intra-narrative structural analysis: the narrative of Oscar (Chapter I)

### **The interview:**

The contact was made following the EM (Management School of Strasbourg) Ethics Day, which brought together local and ethical finance players around a round table. The respondent was immediately very enthusiastic about this interview in the exchange of e-mails, as his professional background was totally in line with a personal questioning. Highly motivated, he asked me if I had an interview guide in order to best prepare his answers, which was of course not the case with this method.

Oscar received me in his office in Strasbourg, where he is an "itinerant banker". It is an office in a "business center", (*n.b. a building where you can rent an office and benefit from a reception service*). His dress was very casual (hooded sweatshirt and jeans) and his welcome was immediately very friendly: proposal to be on first-name terms, tea, etc...

I presented my background (hence a few allusions in the conversation) and my research topic as the background and experiences of solidarity economy workers. The recording lasted 1 hour and 19 minutes with the questions on the indicators.

### **The organization:**

The N\*\* is a financial cooperative with 36,000 members that offers savings and credit solutions oriented towards projects with social, ecological and/or cultural utility. Created in 1988, it is authorised and controlled by the ACPR, (Autorité de Contrôle Prudentiel et de Résolution) as a Specialised Credit Institution. The N\*\* is the only French banking institution that reports on all the financing carried out each year thanks to the money entrusted to it by its members and savers.

Its mission is to provide its members and customers with the means to be players in the ecological and social transition of society. Faithful to its founding principle "So that money connects people", N\*\*



creates financial tools for citizen participation to set in motion and support new ways of producing, consuming, undertaking and living. The projects that it supports on a daily basis are for example organic and peasant agriculture, renewable energy short circuits, recycling, participative and ecological habitats, car-sharing, fair trade, social entrepreneurship etc.

### **Summary of the life story:**

Oscar is 36 years old. He comes from Lorraine, from a family mainly composed of teachers. His partner is a practitioner of Chinese medicine and opened a practice three to four years ago. He studied marketing communication, with the idea of working in sports marketing, an environment that allows him to combine work with a passion for sport. The precariousness of this environment, however, led him to turn to the circles that were hiring at the time: the bank and the army. He chose banking, thinking that he could always get out if it didn't suit him. He adapted well, however, and was trained internally to be able to evolve. He went from being a teller to sale manager. According to him, banking is a great job that is very rewarding because of the relationship with a wide range of customers, who can be helped in a concrete way. He didn't want to have the commercial side, but to focus on that aspect. Later, his promotion to key account management plunged him into an unhappy situation at work, which began to impact his personal life with his wife. The solution was initially to completely compartmentalize his private and professional life by not mentioning it at all at home.

However, learning that he was going to become a father brought this career orientation into question, but Oscar could not really see how he could continue to work as a banker. A job offer of the N\*\* came to him from a relative, whom Oscar did not immediately consider because of the financial sacrifice. A report from the N\*\* convinced him to apply. The departure was difficult, as Oscar had strong ties with his colleagues. The bank offered him a raise and did not try to understand his discomfort. What he wanted was a healthier way of working that he finds at N\*\*. He deplores the dehumanization and hierarchy of the banking environment as an employee that contrasts with the N\*\* where there are few barriers in behavior, communication and dress.

Oscar was astonished by the welcome he received on his arrival, and by the training where people were happy to get together and where it was possible to talk to everyone. His superior is younger and was not trained in the bank but in Social and Solidarity Economy. Oscar has a deep respect for him, the legitimate judge and appreciates that there is an exchange and consideration of his skills in the bank, especially in view of the transition to banking (*n.b.: the N\*\*, has operated so far as a deposit bank and will soon be managing current accounts for private individuals*).

He appreciates that the consideration of ethical criteria precedes the financial analysis of the projects, the attention that is given to the bearer, the fact of going on site. He finds it very enriching to discover the professions. It makes him evolve in his personal consumption; he surprises his partner who has been trying for a long time to give him other habits. This allows them to come closer together on their values.

The appreciation of the ethics of a project is not always obvious. However, some projects that are at the limit of the criteria due to an activity that is not part of the usual projects (culture, organic agriculture, renewable energy) are financed because the N\*\* evaluates the personality of the carrier and the sincerity of the approach. Oscar was astonished that his boss asked him for his opinion on the projects. He was encouraged to rely on his feeling, even though he can ask for the opinion of his colleagues, the local group and the cooperative. He believes that the higher cost of borrowing acts as a filter to deter people who surf the ethical trend without being sincere about it. He learned to talk about this cost as soon as he met with the holders, valuing the added value of the N\*\* in terms of values, but also in terms of personalized support and communication.

The N\*\* also enables networking between organizations in the region through events. According to him, the lack of connection is very harmful to the solidarity economy and cannot be done in an institutional way without direct contact. Initiatives such as the Stück allow this networking, and to develop the practices of professionals who are less militant but who want to improve their practices.

Oscar as the only employee of the N\*\* on the territory feels a little observed. This has no impact on his private life, given the scope of the intervention. He can't answer all the requests he is asked to make,

although he takes his free time to answer them, and this is quite heavy. He has made this career choice for his personal life but works a lot more, but without stress. He can adapt his schedule to take care of his son and is not supervised. It's all based on mutual trust.

He thinks that if he had a personal project, the N\*\* would encourage him to follow it and that it is very difficult to be in conflict with the N\*\*. He says that the training he received was not commercial, but rather aimed at managing conflict and easing tensions, which surprised him a lot. However, he can imagine wanting to see something completely different because he has been a banker for 11 years already. A project closer to the land would be a possibility.

However, he suffers from the banking environment and fears that with the move to banking, the negative side of the banking profession will return, especially account management, which is cumbersome and not always pleasant in terms of customer relations. For the moment, loan management does not have this dimension because the N\*\* is not in the threat but is trying to find solutions. He hopes that the management of individuals will be different because the N\*\* has the will to do something different. In the meantime, it is necessary to restructure the bank because there is a lack of means which gives a "craft" side to the activity. This lack of means had been underlined during the job interview, with the limitation of the salary and the need to work autonomously. There are no bonuses because the objectives are limited and are intended to ensure the operation of the cooperative. The number of projects that the structure can manage is limited. There are many small projects that are not very profitable. The N\* is also solicited as a bank of last chance by projects that become ethical in order to meet the criteria and that would be too small to be considered profitable by a conventional bank. Switching to a bank for individuals will make it possible to change scale and to find resources to finance other services. This move has been called for by activists who cannot find a sufficiently ethical offer in other banks.

It is thanks to the involvement of these members that the N\*\* works and that O has this job. It is positive for society. When he arrived at the N\*\* he thought he was going to get bored but wanted to go anyway because if he had stayed in his old bank, his personal life would logically have been sacrificed, or his work purely to pay the bill. He met some very militant people, including many young project

leaders, which encouraged him to continue. When working with students, he is always pleasantly surprised by the interest of young people, who are much better informed than he was at the same age. This proves to him that it is necessary to continue not only for the most militant but for all. The discourse must adapt but the values of the N\*\* must remain, there is no compromise to be made.

The move to retail banking has opened up the debate on what the objectives of N\*\* were and Oscar is satisfied that the guidelines remain because N\*\* must not become like the others. However, he is pleased that conventional banks, even if it is for commercial purposes, are questioning their practices and adapting their offer to the SSE. For him, it is not competition but moving forward together.

**First analysis:**

Oscar easily puts himself into a narrative. There are no closing marks, and I'm the one who ended the interview, which was already very long. The tone is very positive and enthusiastic. I could see signs of discomfort when he mentioned possible negative aspects of the N\*\*, in particular the banking process for individuals and the times when the N\*\* is solicited as a last-chance bank for projects that have been modified to become ethical.

It is noticeable that as the narrator progresses chronologically through his narrative, he uses more collective pronouns and that he and the organization become merged. He frequently uses the "tu" to distance himself or to create empathy when evoking painful memories, such as his experience at the end in the banking world.

**The agents:**

*Intégration / rejet*

	<i>Positive perception from the narrator</i>	<i>Negative perception from the narrator</i>
<i>Integration</i>	My wife (now)	My colleagues in conventional bank

	My organization The activists My boss	My generation when I was young
<i>Non integration or rejection</i>	My wife (before) The sports marketing field My family	My ex-bosses in conventional bank Key accounts customers

The sequences:

*I wish / I am compelled*

	<i>I wish</i>	<i>I am compelled</i>
<i>Before</i>	Moving to the country Working in sports marketing Customer advice Being a father Leaving my old job	Going into the bank instead of the army Key account management They're trying to hold me back Classical banking training My girlfriend's consumption habits (before) To know nothing (my generation)
<i>Now</i>	Passing on values to my son Evolving in my consumption Exchanges with the team The training Investing myself outside of work time	Checking the profitability of the project The management of individual accounts (reminders...) The organization restructuring

*It's great / It's not easy*

	<i>It's great</i>	<i>It's not easy</i>
<i>Individual</i>	Sports/passion marketing	Precariousness

	Being a father Being a banker Be integrated by the N** Working with my boss	Key account management The façade speech Individuals management Public expectations
<i>Collective</i>	The couple who meet The training courses Super activists The students The N**/Members/employees/customers collaboration Connections between actors Banks that imitate	The couple that suffers from tensions Classical banking training Restructuring Lack of means

*I'm positively surprised/I'm reluctant*

<i>I'm positively surprised</i>	<i>I'm reluctant</i>
The welcoming by the colleagues of the N** The absence of a marked hierarchy Young project leaders Student interest I work a lot more Non-commercial N** training	Producers who don't see the value of our offer Ethically reoriented projects People who surf the trend People who can't meet each other The transition to private banking

Oscar is a person who has always sought passion and human contact. Life's circumstances led him to the profession of banker, which he saw as a good thing. He is therefore in a strategy of adhesion, since he wants to continue to do his job, but doing it differently.

Up to the break with his former job, his narrative pattern is marked by rejection: either that of the professional world where he wanted to fit in, or his own, when he wanted to fit in in a world whose values were foreign to him. The narrator describes an intense malaise, a fragmentation of identities, by

no longer talking to his wife about work. He suffers from a lack of authenticity ("it's a façade") and a lack of recognition of his individuality ("you're nothing, you're a number, a line"). A trigger, the forthcoming birth of his son, gave him the will to bring his personal and professional identity into line ("what do I especially want to show my son?"). An event "fallen from the sky" made it happen. Responsible work is therefore a liberating act before being militant: the narrator opposes an alienating and depersonalizing system (and this since youth) to his new professional world. What the narrator rejects is above all coercion, which "is no fun".

His N\*\* work shifts the narrative from rejection to integration, both professionally and privately. The discourse shifts from the singular pronoun to the collective, and then in general from "it's not fun" to "it's fun", from constraint to envy.

The different actors of the narrative scheme then seem to come into harmony, and positively surprise the narrator who discovered a world different from the old bank world. His work is "what it is". He demonstrates the coherence between his personal and professional identity, in particular his taste for human relationships without barriers, based on exchange, sharing of knowledge, and conflict resolution without violence. He describes a social world where values unite the different groups, more or less militant, that advance together, each at its own level.

However, he is reticent about certain aspects: in his quest for positivity, he wanted to avoid the "dirty work" inherent in the work of a banker (especially getting people back on credit), and the move into banking for individuals casts the shadow of a threat of less rewarding tasks to the N\*\* ("I don't want to, I don't want to"). He doesn't like having to convince customers who find the N\*\* prices too high and don't recognize the value of the work in his opinion.

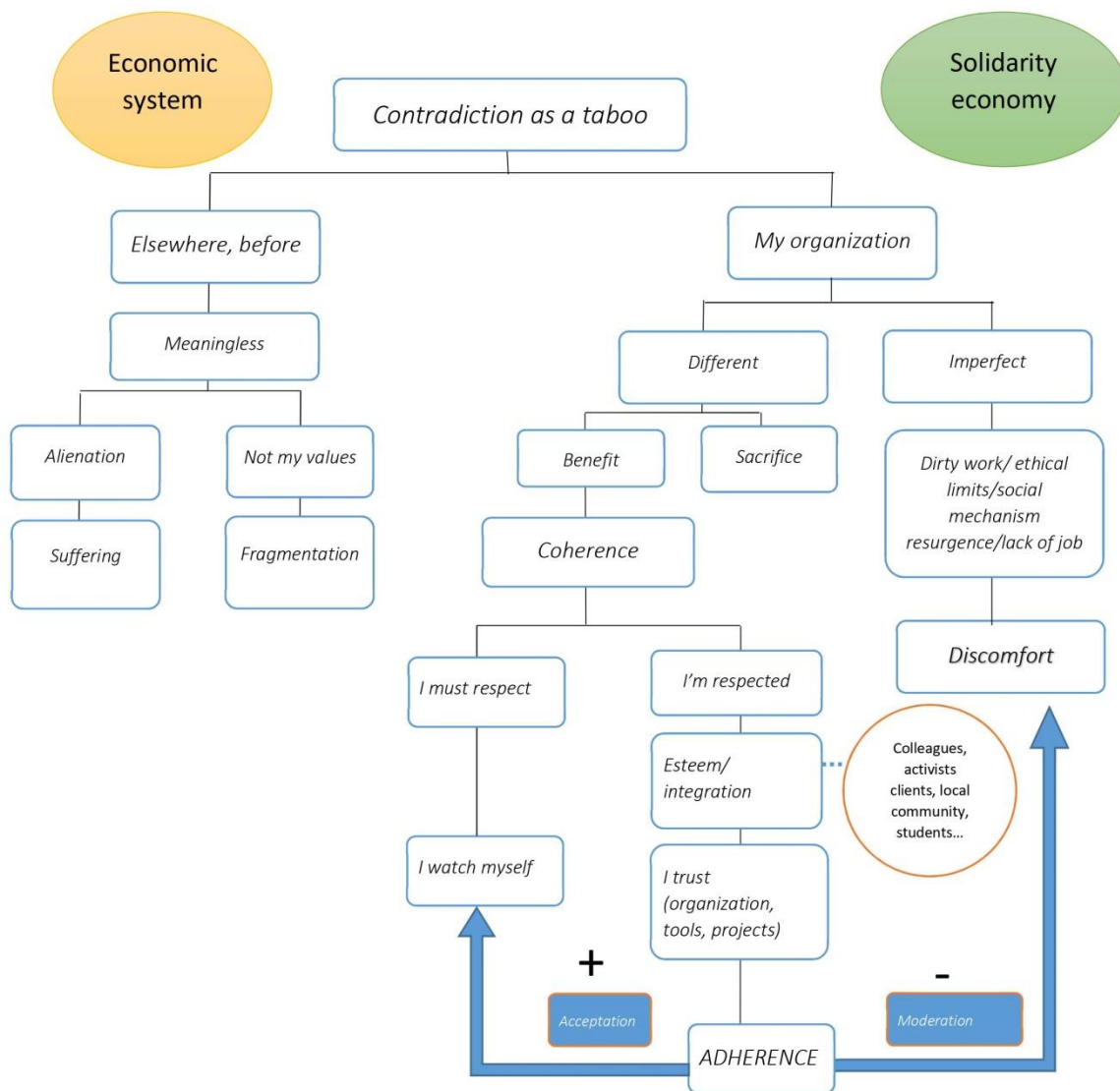
The organization's ethics and its militant image, which he is the guarantor of at the regional level, are sometimes heavy to bear, even if this positivity of his professional identity is what he was looking for. He also finds that the N\*\* is subject to a lot of expectations from the network, forcing it to be available and exemplary, impinging on his private life. The use of the N\*\* as a last-chance bank for "ethically reoriented" projects also bothers him, especially since these small projects represent a lot of work and little profitability.

He seems to refuse to see inconsistencies in his identity, never appropriating them but using the organization as an auxiliary. He trusts the organization, and in particular its governance mechanisms and ethics, to do for him the identity work that he seems to have completed by finding this job. The gain in coherence moderates the feeling of discomfort with the inconsistencies that emerge. His organizational involvement is important (work on free time, promotion of the structure) and his discourse on the world in general very positive, and based on a cohesion dynamic well beyond the stakeholders of the organization.

There is also a strengthening of her activist identity. Responsible work, which was a priori a liberating act at the grassroots level, later became a militant act, through the worker's membership of an organization that was more militant than he was.

He imagines that he can leave the N\*\* to "see something else", he gives the example of an organic market gardener. His work at the N\*\*, "it's still a banker's job". The quest for positivity and authenticity therefore seems to clash with the reality of his job. His identity as a responsible worker seems in any case stable throughout the story, even if it takes on a more militant hue over time.





- Continuous vertical lines represent associations between categories (proposals and sequences)
- Continuous horizontal lines represent disjunctions between categories (proposals and sequences)
- Broken lines represent indirect relations between categories (proposals and sequences)
- The main agents are specified inside the circles

## Appendix 4: Summaries of interviews (translation of summaries sent in French for approval to each respondent) (Chapter I)

### Sidonie

From her late teens on, Sidonie wanted to be useful. She adhered to high ideals, and wanted to do humanitarian work and "go outside the box". She did a master's degree in sociology, then a master's degree in political science in a rather humanitarian field, with semesters in Spain and Mexico. She then spent a year in Latin America where she proposed cooking workshops. However, the lack of stable relationships and roots pushes her to come back to France. Sidonie values practical work and she has a complex about being rather an intellectual person.

She looks for ways to change the world by staying close to home and becomes a volunteer at Oxfam, and employed as a saleswoman at EE. She takes a BTS (*i.e.: Technical Bachelor Degree*) in dietetics to meet her need for practical knowledge, but she doesn't like it: she sees it as a step backwards. Then, she obtained a master's degree in local development entrepreneurship and SSE in a SCOP in consulting. She feels out of place there: she finds there the flaws of politics and governance problems, as well as inconsistent missions at the ethical level. This confirms to her that she is not cut out for the life of an office or consultant.

However, she flourished in one of her missions that she considers "crazy": a comparative study of mobile kitchen solutions for an integration company. She was hired at the end of her year of study by the director, a man of great analytical ability and charisma who taught Sidonie a lot, trusts her and showed the intellectual dimension of this practical work. Sidonie was totally committed to this exhausting but exciting work. She did not renew after 8 months because of the working conditions and the atmosphere in the team, made up of strong characters with whom she now has a very good relationship.

At the end of this, she wanted to be more autonomous and started a business, creating organic recipes based on legumes sold in jars, as well as a catering activity. To do this, she is in an incubator in the rural world where she is accompanied. This allows her to invoice without having to set up a company.

To make a living, she looked for a job on the side and was hired at VT, an organic shop. Sidonie was having a hard time with the recruitment process, as she is not taken on automatically, although she thought she was made for the job. VT knew her as a client and saw her as disorganized. In the end, she was hired, but for a smaller contract than she wanted, which she found preferable in hindsight, as her catering business was already taking up a lot of her time and energy. So she does 15 hours a week, which is a maximum for her because the work is physically hard. It allows her to find a balance between intellectual and physical work, between responsibilities and absence of stress, and gives her team work and a fixed salary.

The work is difficult because of the explosion of customers in a store that has become too small, which puts people under stress. Working conditions are also physically difficult. Sidonie "supervises herself" so that this time he doesn't get more than reasonable involved in this temporary work. This is well experienced by her colleagues. Sidonie's hierarchy is based on seniority and wisdom. The person in charge, K is a very attentive, very human, activist and a good businessman. The team is made up of people in search of themselves or autonomy, often having another activity on the side, which gives a richness through the diversity of profiles. Sidonie evokes the incomprehension of outsiders who only see them as simple shop assistants, whereas her colleagues have backgrounds of great intellectual and human richness. However, rather than diversity, it is what is common to all that brings to the organization, which is what comes through recruitment. Sidonie didn't like recruitment, but it allows us to choose people capable of meeting VT's expectations, which is not given to everyone: it takes a lot of dexterity, being quick while remaining smiling.

Sidonie repeats that working conditions are difficult, especially since she works on busy days for a minimum wage. She is fed up with living on such a low salary. She can't work overtime because her catering business already takes up a lot of her time. Sidonie finds that there is a division that is often found in the solidarity economy between small contracts like hers and the others, who are mainly men

with a superhuman capacity for work but also no/more important family responsibilities. She finds it complicated to be next to them. Having the desire to have children, she knows that she won't be able to get as involved, and this is in her eyes a paradox for the solidarity economy. However, she puts things into perspective by thinking of one of her colleagues, A, who has a big contract, but who has been working longer hours because of her seniority. Sidonie acknowledges, however, that A is measuring her investment.

B, the boss of VT is very human. However, Sidonie notes a difference between K in charge and B boss: B will not tell someone to stop. As a result, they have complementary roles. B sends a weekly e-mail to the team, a kind of newsletter that allows employees to be considered and involved in the organization. According to her, B is very good at instilling the idea of being a boss, a manager, and at motivating and involving everyone at the same time. He's a bit of a superman in terms of energy and drive. He works hard and always has a smile on his face.

Sidonie is fairly well perceived by those around her, even if her mother may have sometimes been dubious about her choices. VT is a place that is perceived very positively by her entourage, an entourage that resembles her, or at least shares her values even if they work in the "conventional" way. When she compares situations, she asks herself the question of leaving the solidarity economy. She is caught up in her jar project, has no solutions to join. This satisfies her need for creativity and autonomy. However, she is relieved to start earning some money. She doesn't want to spend another winter at VT. Sidonie is therefore aware of her evolution: from giving everything for work for no pay to wanting to earn a living while remaining ethical in her values and actions. For Sidonie, the solidarity economy is nevertheless at the heart of the capitalist economy, which always puts values and the market economy in tension. She finds that, in the end, for an environment that wants to offer different working conditions, values are paid dearly. It is perhaps in the solidarity economy that we find the most difficulties. This is not illogical since it is against the tide. However, Sidonie has learned to distinguish between virtue and status, beyond the wonder that the SSE sometimes provokes: there are people who do more classical things and try to innovate in a more progressive way, not to give everything, which is more tenable in the long term. VT is an exception for her, but for Sidonie, it's only for a short time: it's a company that feeds on new energy, supported by a few superhumans whose capacities are not shared by everyone.

In its delicatessen/jar business, Sidonie has put the cursor quite high: it makes no compromises, or rather very few compromises for a few rare products that are totally unavailable organically, and pushes requirements to the maximum in terms of supply. For the time being, she could not bring herself to reduce her requirements, even if the activity does not provide her with sufficient profitability. This activity could be profitable, but then risks being too demanding. Sidonie has not found a solution to find the balance for the moment.

## Hilde

Hilde comes from a rural environment, from an Auvergne family who gave her a rather libertarian education. She was in hypokhâgne and Khâgne (*i.e.: high level preparatory class in Literary study*). She chose to give up Science po (*i.e.: a French elitist education degree in political science*) where she was accepted, because she feared not knowing how to fit in. She then got a degree in modern literature, as well as the conservatory of theatre. From that time on, she started to do odd jobs. A job in a holiday center for people with disabilities allowed her to discover a different field, the medical-social, which led her to pursue studies closer to this environment. After having built up a little nest egg, she decided to go on a trip around the world. On her return, she finds it impossible to take up the thesis she had envisaged: her preoccupations have changed too much, and she fears not being able to stick to the necessary rigour. On the contrary, she wanted to be concrete and settles back in Lille, with her friends, where she looked for a job. According to her, her master's degree did not have much value on the job market.

She was hired at the E.E., thanks to a contact in her network. She was not especially involved in this job, where she has no possibility to change the structure and participate in the decisions. Hilde felt that she is not using her potential. However, she appreciates products that correspond to her way of consuming since she was a teenager. There were periods during her studies when she was forced to buy hard discount products, which made her feel uncomfortable. Today, she tries to be as consistent as

possible with food despite her means. She can't extend this to clothing for example, which gives her cases of conscience. At work, she has always managed to find neutral or militant jobs. She explains this by a network of people who have values close to her own. She also prefers to do under-qualified jobs as home help rather than the "Mc Donalds" type.

At the end of 2013, Hilde has the opportunity, thanks to someone from her network, to join an existing SCOP<sup>7</sup> in catering to set up a kind of canteen. She describes it as "a bit of a crazy thing", which she got into without knowing where she was going. The team is made up of young women with different profiles but who are not from the restaurant business. She is salaried and associated, with shares drawn from her very low salary, in exchange for which she expects a collective organization. The financial sacrifice is a price that Hilde is willing to pay for freedom in her work. Unfortunately, the skills of the various profiles are not mobilized. Whereas Hilde thought that the SCOP was only a framework, and would be built progressively by the employees, the organization remains in the hands of the project leader, S. Communication is always informal and bad. Nobody really knows his missions and responsibilities. This anarchic functioning, in a way, satisfies the need for freedom, challenge, and the problem with Hilde's hierarchy. The problem, according to her, is the absence of co-construction, mainly due to the time-consuming nature of the project, which left them no more energy and time.

According to Hilde, this SCOP was more a dictatorship, a charismatic, exciting but sometimes dangerous character. The feeling of being indebted to him for the existence of B2F discouraged the will to take more power in the organization. In addition, the very thin boundaries between private and professional life among the associates who had had strong friendships for years gave an emotional dimension to organizational problems. Hilde did not want to mobilize herself further in the face of this, not projecting herself in the long term in the organization, which was the case for almost all the other associates, since almost all of them left, further discouraged by the precariousness and the

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<sup>7</sup> SCOP: *Société Coopérative (Ouvrière) de Production* : Workers-owned cooperative company in whose employees are the majority partners. In a Scop, the employees are majority partners and hold at least 51% of the share capital and 65% of the voting rights. Subject to the imperative of profitability like any business, they benefit from democratic governance and a distribution of results primarily assigned to the sustainability of jobs and the business plan.

working hours in this SCOP where they were not heard. This was a tiring time, where Hilde hardly goes out, and does not see his colleagues outside. However, difficult situations allow for the creation of authentic relationships with colleagues, which for Hilde differs from the "classical" working world. Hilde appreciated not having to put a "filter", not having a professional posture in this job, but on the contrary to go "as she is". This authenticity was, moreover, what set the restaurant apart from the competition. Hilde agrees with the quality of the offer and supplies, and recognizes the enormous research done to find the products that were as consistent as possible with the ethics that the SCOP defends. The prices seem honest to her, and this is also consistent with the image of accessible but different organic products that she wanted to defend. Clients are more or less militant but described by Hilde as an "Entre-soi"<sup>8</sup> which also ended up discouraging her. Indeed, Hilde would have liked to have been more proactive in raising awareness among different audiences. However, she managed to set up an internship program for young people in difficulty at the restaurant, which continues to this day, which makes her proud. But this aspect has not been developed enough according to Hilde for lack of time, ensuring the daily routine being already very heavy. According to her, she does well over the 30 hours for which she is paid (50 hours or more). This work is physical and tiring, which is not a problem for Hilde, who needs this physical side as much as the creativity and the intellectual side in a job. According to her, it is the intellectual side that is missing in this job. She would like the initiatives to be taken not only in the concrete, but also in the functioning of the organization.

Hilde talks about her inability to thrive in a traditional work environment. Working at the B2F, where she does not have a specific job description, allows the company to build itself and evolve according to its team, which Hilde finds exciting. However, this was an illusion. Seeing that she couldn't really participate in the more general running of the SCOP Hilde has decided to leave: she is not interested anymore. Added to this is the long-term precariousness associated with this work. Hilde tries to live simply, but €800 only allowed her to pay her rent in town, and her food, her consumption choices limiting the decrease of the food budget.

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<sup>8</sup> *The concept of "entre-soi", according to the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu refers to the grouping of people with common characteristics, whether in a neighborhood, a political assembly, or a cultural place.*

She believes that once you have been in this network, however, you are identified as still belonging even if you work somewhere else. People are often recruited into the network, very informally, because you would be assured of their activist values, not their work. Hilde deplors a form of understanding of professional shortcomings in the name of this belonging. She notices a kind of fascination on the part of some people who consume without working there, in the face of these atypical paths and this freedom. For Hilde, this is seductive and illusory: people don't realize the bad things, and she envies the stability of others. She also notes that having a career path such as hers can be stigmatizing in the professional world, and detrimental when she is not in front of someone sensible to her values or involved. She sometimes feels "blocked" by her Solidarity Economy background, assimilated to considering work and life in a different way, a detachment from the realities of the classical working world, and even potentially a source of problems.

## Ben

Ben is 27 years old and comes from the Haut-Rhin (Alsace, France). He obtained a BTS (nb: a technical bachelor degree) in chemistry. His work in a factory, in particular the proximity to toxic materials, made him think about his career path, which he wanted to focus on the production of renewable energies. At that age he had an awakening of consciousness, perhaps linked to the education he received from his grandfather who cultivated the land using organic methods. So he used his training entitlement to leave the factory and to train in organic market gardening, where encounters confirmed his choice. At the end of it, the return to the factory was unbearable: to the schedules was added the finality of the production constituting a paradox for B who was vegan (manufacture of dyes for animal productions). Ben has been vegetarian for 5 years, and vegan for 4 years.

This led Ben to leave everything to travel (I will learn out of the interview that he travelled to India with his girlfriend) and then to devote himself fully to market gardening on his grandparents' farm at the beginning of 2015. Administrative constraints prevented the construction of greenhouses, which caused the failure of the market gardening installation, which could not then be economically viable.



The association's project was then transformed into an organic market gardening and nomadic vegan catering, where the gardens serve the kitchen, and the products not produced by the farm come from local and organic channels. This association brings together twelve members, family and friends, market gardeners, locavores, passionate about vegetarian cooking, bringing their support and various skills. The project leaders are Ben and his girlfriend.

This project responds to the basic observation of other vegans who couldn't find in Alsace what they needed, but goes beyond that: to create local employment, a militant, different kind of work, maybe join the network of the Jardins de Cocagne (*i.e.: a cooperative market garden with social inclusion*) to make integration. The environmental aspect is based on the choice of organic, compostable products, and above all on veganism, which is much less harmful than animal production. Ben wants to be a hummingbird, do what he can, do his best. He imagines everything he could do to reduce his impact.

He would like the gardens to grow bigger. He is confident that a leader can be more of a referent who doesn't work with his ego but for the association, and agrees to leave his place if someone else can do better. Diversity of opinion can bring. He is perceived rather positively in his entourage and respects people who do not have the same opinion as him, and does not especially try to convince them. He talks about people who inspire him, who have been able to follow the thread, the one he tries to follow as well. He cannot imagine doing anything else but working the land and admires those who have been able to cut themselves off from it to become militants like Pierre Rabhi. He is part of the M landscape above all and doesn't want to fit into a box, even if the social and solidarity economy is a term he likes. He really hopes that a dynamic will be set up to find a new economic model and evokes local currencies or time counters. He thinks that there are a lot of things to think about.

The management of the association is not yet very heavy because there are no employees. They defend accessible prices, a compromise between cost price, price that people can put and good relations with the competition, the idea being that customers say to themselves that for the same price they can eat organic food. They are in the test phase on the markets, and have not made a business plan. The associative status allows this launch. They don't have a clear idea of the potential. The objective is to change things, also by training people in vegetable cooking. Ben deplors the fact that the poorest

people, who would benefit from vegetable cooking, are often poorly informed. For him, vegetable food is good for the environment as well as for humans.

Ben says that for the moment he defends but does not earn anything. He lives on unemployment until May, and is willing to do odd jobs in agriculture afterwards. He is free because he has no child; he is not afraid of anything and finds that he doesn't have to make many compromises since he has a roof over his head and food to eat. As president of the association, he can't earn a salary but would like his partner to be, but knows that it is expensive in France. He has had to give up his health insurance because he has no mutual insurance company. However, this allowed them to have a period of reflection. He fears that the unemployment allowance office for example would condemn this special status of worker for an association, which is legal but not well known. He is willing to work part-time in the market gardening sector to get by, but will no longer accept that money should take precedence over ethics. Ben hopes that we will fight to protect the rights of associations.

Ben and his girlfriend don't plan to start a family right away and trust life to put everything in place when the time comes. Working as a couple is no more awkward than living as a couple. In any case, they appreciate working with people around them and deplore the fact that people in companies have insincere relationships, and the recuperation made by companies of relationships outside of work. The work itself, whose purpose is not under control, is disturbing, while feeding people is "magical". It never gets bored and learns a lot about others and about itself, which is not always without difficulties. He talks about a difficult decision: the choice of market locations. An opportunity presented itself in a wealthy neighborhood, which would have been very profitable. Only his association wants to be present in the town, where the popular people they want to raise awareness of are located. Ensuring all the markets would have meant not being present in the garden, which is contrary to the project. Therefore, they chose to be faithful to the project and to be satisfied with the market of M and W, which is interesting and manageable. This project is clearly defined in the corporate object. The articles of association have been drafted to guarantee the continuity of the corporate purpose.

## Daphne

Daphne comes from a large family in the south of France. Her academic abilities have allowed her to make a *hypokhâgne*, thinking of going into teaching. However, she wants to go elsewhere and move towards international solidarity. She is therefore moving towards studies in Sciences Po. She decides to spend her year abroad in China, and studies Mandarin. She then went on to do a Master Degree in project management and international development, for which she will do two internships again in Asia, on microcredit and tea cultivation. At the end of her studies, Daphne carries out a European voluntary service in Tunisia, which allows her to discover the particular situation of the associative world under a dictatorial regime. She also spent a year of International Volunteer Service in Administration in China in diplomacy. Following this, she preferred to reorient herself towards the NGO world, wishing to have more concrete actions in the field, whose influence can be evaluated, which was lacking in diplomacy.

Daphne was recruited in the International Federation for Fair Trade as the person in charge of supporting producer cooperatives in Asia. She spent a lot of time in the field with her team and producers. She was trained internally, and was also doing a BTS (*i.e.: a technical bachelor degree*) in agriculture at a distance. She really appreciated this work, the team spirit and the activism of her collaborators, the contact with the producers she really feels she is helping. This is how she met the founder and manager of GJ a "love at first sight" meeting. Daphne then had a child, which forced her to reduce her travels, and pushed her to seek to relocate to France after her parental leave. She contacted B who needed a person with her profile for a position as a product manager. In addition to this responsibility, GJ had been working on the civic actions that it has always carried out at a local or national level in collectives, the Solidarity Economy etc., an important focus but one on which the company has not made the necessary efforts to formalize in order to be able to evaluate the actions and communicate on this subject. If the company was in good economic health, it must however value these actions in the face of competitors who are less committed but better communicators. The willingness to commit remains central to the company, it is a founding value, but it is also necessary to frame and set priorities. This is one of the objectives of a broader project for which the narrator is in

charge. The other challenge was to focus more on the high-end market rather than the organic market, in order to be an actor of change in this industry by showing that it is possible to work ethically.

The company is involved in many local collectives and actions to raise awareness and change: local authorities (town halls, euro-metropolis), pupils and students... this represents about 20% of working time, very often when the approach is disinterested. Daphne also takes on her personal time because it interests her, the limit being her family life. Daphne has always been involved in this way, since she was a teenager. She links this to the Christian education transmitted by her mother.

With her training, Daphne could have worked in diplomacy, as her entourage had advised her, but she did not find herself in this milieu. On the other hand, she is very interested in political action, and thinks that a company can have a lot of influence at the local level. She therefore acts as a relay to local authorities to promote fair trade. Intervening with students and pupils is consistent with being a company with a long-term commitment. The contact with this public pleases her a lot, as she liked her job as a trainer. She also intervenes internally with GJ's employees, which is a way for her to motivate them, raise their awareness and make them understand what is happening upstream of the company. The company has 70 employees, half of whom are in production: the company still works by hand, entirely in France, using ESATs (center employing only disabled workers), unlike many of its competitors who process and package in producer countries. This costly choice to promote local employment is poorly valued.

Among the employees, there are people who have been present since the company's beginnings, sharing the founder's vision, without necessarily being committed activists. In 2013, a wave of recruitment brought into the company people from industry rather than organic or fair trade, who have implemented in better working methods, which was necessary but caused tensions. It is not easy to find the right balance. Daphne shares her office with production managers with whom she tries to communicate to make them understand the ethical aspect of the activity. Although she is supported by the director who is very committed, Daphne is aware of the need to take into account the economic aspects and sometimes has to "hold back". 20% of her position exists thanks to the willingness to invest in civic actions, which is the reason why Daphne does this work. She would not accept this

position of sector manager in a traditional company, she would prefer the associative or NGO sector, an even more committed company, or she would prefer to create her own activity.

Indeed, according to Daphne, the company could be more committed to governance: it is fundamental to review it in the years to come, to be more in line with the message and values of Solidarity Economy, which is a model for the future. Currently the model is pyramidal and hierarchical, which creates a lot of blockages and misunderstanding. However, reviewing the legal structure is implied and requires a real willingness of the management to move towards participation. Daphne is very interested in the cooperative movement. There is certainly a willingness to move towards more participation, but on a rather micro scale, whereas Daphne has a more committed vision. She therefore finds herself, as in her experiences in China or Tunisia, carrying SSE values, and has to watch herself to ensure that she is not at odds with reality, and that her personal aspirations do not take precedence over the expectations of the company, which is not obvious, especially as the limits of her position are blurred. The manager trusts her, which allows her to express herself on the subject, but she cannot question things herself.

Daphne also deplors a problem at the level of commercial policy in the face of pressure from central purchasing bodies on prices, which constitutes unfair competition for resellers who share GJ's values. Moreover, some of the purchasing groups belong to supermarket groups, which is not a good experience for militant employees. Up to now, the company has not asked itself too many questions because the brand has worked well in the organic networks. It has never developed a commercial strategy. Neither should GJ be labelled as an organic network, which has led to redesigning the ranges to distinguish them and give exclusivity to certain retailers. Developing a commercial approach is not easy, because it is not in the DNA of the management. There are also significant skill shortages among the older staff, which generates tensions. The founder never imagined she would have to take on this role one day, and was above all passionate about tea, and an activist. She was very involved externally, in representation, while a deputy director, not at all militant and very procedural, provided more internal leadership. For Daphne, there is a lack of leadership when it is essential to motivate and carry out projects.

Daphne is seen by his entourage as an active, energetic person, trying to change the world. Her work has allowed her to meet people who are like her, although she also rubs shoulders with people who are not in the SSE. She wants to stay in this company for which she has a vision, but only if she has more decision-making power. She has made this wish clear to management, and is recognized for what she has already done. She likes to learn and wants to continue learning, and thinks that staying in one place for too long limits that.

## Dam

Dam comes from Lebanon, from a wealthy family. His father was a doctor and sacrificed himself so that his family would not lack anything, and he grew up pampered and protected. In France for the writing of his research dissertation, Dam used to study in a bar in Lyon, buying locally, straight from producers, the CC, where he started to work: he wanted to confront himself with the reality of the world by doing a "job", different from the environment where he had grown up, and from the professional experiences he may have had. As a volunteer in a cultural association, he enjoys working at the bar. So he quickly joined the CC, where he proposed to set up some functions that he had discovered in his previous experiences. This corresponds to the needs of the bar which is developing and needs to get organized. After a year, he resigned to go back to Lebanon and did a Master 2 in humanitarian communication. He chose to work in the Palestinian refugee camps, an issue he wanted to understand apart from what he had learned as a Lebanese. The humanitarian community "disgusted" him, particularly by the way resources are allocated, and the strategy of NGOs to attract funding, at the cost of missions of questionable usefulness. On the other hand, it subsequently invests in young asylum seekers in their procedures and in documentary training. He then returned to France to work at the CC where, with a friend and colleague, he had the idea of setting up a bar specializing in craft beers in Lyon: this would be the B, founded in the form of a SCOP.

The CC has a good profitability. It has a strong territorial anchorage in a working-class district that is in the process of gentrification. It is above all a neighborhood bar, which wants to be open to the

environment and to all customers: ethical positioning is not the argument put forward. However, supplies are made according to criteria determined in charters that are common to both places. For the B, the objective is to start on the same basis with a larger size and higher profitability, as well as a refined organization thanks to the feedback from the CC: despite the size of the team from the start, the organization was completed after 6 months, which had taken 3 years at the CC. Dam thinks that he has a good team and that it is interesting.

However, the cooperative operation is not easy to set up. It requires unlearning from people who have never been in this system, come from very different professions, and must already learn their basic skills: cooperatives imply not having a hierarchy, taking the floor, responsibilities, and finding a balance between personal and collective initiative. Dam has no desire to have a hierarchical relationship with others. Each employee is in charge of a specific area, and Dam remains available to help. A training cycle, regular meetings and informal exchanges help integration and mutual understanding.

The tricky thing is the different way people manage to get involved in the project. For some, it is just a job and they do not want to get involved in the organization. Others bring their personal problems to the team. R says that things are sometimes confusing, that he doesn't know whether he is talking to a colleague, a partner, a manager. Some people do not adapt to the work and the way things work, but the interests of the team prevail.

The fact that employees have different profiles brings added value to the company. They must be versatile. This means that the work is not monotonous; the hours are not monotonous either, which is what Dam likes. What brings people together is the search for meaning and collective work, activism as filigree, even if power relations are inevitable. For Dam, this work is almost a passion, to set an example by showing that it is possible to set up such a project, without taking advantage of it to charge higher prices. He wants the place to be open to everyone, and not to turn it into a "booby trap". The clientele is diverse, and some clients are not interested in the ethical aspect. It doesn't matter, even if the victory is to get them interested.

Experience in the humanitarian field convinced Dam that rather than big, politicized projects, it was the multitude of small actions at the local level that could make a difference. Their organization allows them to decide what they want, and not to feel threatened by, for example, the El Khomri law. In addition to the charters, the B and the CC are in the process of creating their own association of inter-cooperation between the structures to seal the ethical charters, and to create an investment fund.

Dam has invested heavily in the launch of the B. Now he tries to consider that the company belongs to the workers, and that things will evolve, even if he keeps an eye on particular aspects such as work organization. Otherwise, he sees himself more as a logistical operator, and has to follow the collective, even if he doesn't agree. There are things he would not agree to change, such as working directly with the beer producers and refusing the sales people. It is wary of salespeople. On the other hand, contact with producers allows us to enrich and enhance each other's value.

The SCOP works well according to him because it really solicits the collective, which goes in the same direction and gets people involved. The profitability of the activity also helps. He also thinks that the not too strong political positioning avoids distension. The SCOP would also have a certain maturity, avoiding ego games. Finally, capping the associates' shareholdings in the capital makes it possible to symbolically put people on the same level. They easily found the necessary financing for the project from ethical banks thanks to the reputation of the short circuit. Consistency is a concern at all levels, the black point being the emails and the fact that they do not use free software.

The employees are all at or around the SMIC (*i.e.: the french minimum salary*), with an increase in seniority, as well as some benefits in kind. The 50% of profits not put in reserve are distributed in proportion to the work share. The highest salaries can be blocked in case of economic difficulties.

The launch of the B forced Dam to work a lot (90h/week) for more than 6 months, which his girlfriend didn't quite understand. Now he is trying to spare himself more, to cut back. More than a passion, he evokes a responsibility towards the employees. Being a manager puts him at the center of criticism. Always having to collaborate and put ideas into practice is tiring.



Dam returns to Lebanon once a year. This allows him to see the reality of this country, and to put it into perspective. He also meets his former high school classmates who work in Dubai and do not understand his sacrifice without financial benefit, and ask questions about his future responsibilities towards his family. They do not understand that Dam finds that not being rich is a luxury, and that they will not participate in anything. France Active (a supporting institution for business) had asked the question why a team of highly qualified people wanted to do catering: simply the search for meaning, which is what this activity allows, speaking to everyone, and allowing them to create their own organization. Dam uses his studies every day, at different levels of his work.

The B is in the URSCOP<sup>9</sup> network and is involved in different networks linked to the activity, and to the Solidarity Economy. He prefers to create his own network, especially by imagining the further development of the company.

The solidarity economy is an economy that puts man in the forefront in his work practice. It is assimilated to a dimension of meaning in work, to the participation in a change of society by the type of organization but also by promoting it externally as they did during the mobilization against the labor law project.

He sees no negative points in the functioning of SCOP, except when it fails to integrate a person, which is a failure for him. SCOP must be able to evolve so that the work is not incompatible with the fact that people have children (for the moment this is not the case, but it is the subject of adaptability jurisprudence), or activities on the side. They try to adapt schedules for the best. It is not easy to understand that some people have different relationships at work, and this creates tensions. The biggest challenge for Dam is that people manage to communicate directly, and to separate work from friendly/personal. Dam had professional disagreements with one partner and the other doesn't understand that it is not personal. Since is in a dialogue relationship, being right sometimes becomes too much of an issue. However, Dam tends to play "devil's advocate": this creates controversy, debate, and cohesion.

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<sup>9</sup> URSCOP : association which represents, supports and advises cooperative enterprises and the bearers of cooperative projects.

## Marine

Marine is Alsatian and comes from a working class family, which has educated her to seek stability and the best possible education. Marine went on to a baccalaureate in chemistry, then a DUT (Bachelor Degree) in chemistry. She then experienced a great deal of questioning regarding the harmfulness of the products she uses and the handling of the results in the laboratories. Because of this malaise, she somatized. She failed the DUT, repeated it but preferred to leave it. She then looked for another path, thought about medical help, or the restoration of works of art, but finally moved towards working the land. The link with nature seems obvious to her today, but was not necessarily obvious at the time, and she cannot explain this sensitivity by her education.

Marine studied for a BTS (i.e.: *Technical Bachelor Degree*) in horticulture. There she met her companion, who had a similar background to hers and was in the same search for something that could correspond to her. The studies quickly seemed interesting to her, and market gardening became something close to a passion, which made Marine succeed in her studies. The idea of settling down in the distant future emerged. The internships allowed Marine to orient her project towards organic farming, where she appreciated the variability of the tasks according to the seasons and the human dimension.

However, it was too early to settle down. Marine and her companion continued in a pro-sustainable agriculture farm leaving them a lot of free time. They disciplined themselves to use this time to develop their project, doing research and visits. This farm has brought them the notion of territory and the need to be part of a local dynamic. The internships in the organic sector made her think about the social aspect and its consequences: to value the human being in her activity and to set up devices to facilitate the work.

The couple tried to settle down but was not able to find a place. They continued their master's studies in Dijon, which corresponds to their education and the search for security. Marine is happy to have done so, because it helps to understand the need for coherence of a project in relation to its environment.

To earn a living during the master's degree, Marine worked at Mac Do, which she finds terrible but interesting. For her, nothing happens by chance, and Mac Do has taught her a lot, especially about management methods. This job was only to pay the bill. It was possible to evolve but Marine preferred to find a farm job, and returned to Alsace, despite the opportunities in Burgundy. She did not want to forget her project. She found a civic mission, then a job as a market gardening trainer while her companion worked as a salesperson in phytosanitary products, a period she describes as complicated. They still wanted to settle down, and they did not want to be farm workers, because for them it is important to have responsibilities and to participate in decisions. Partnering with someone can already be frustrating, because not everyone has the same priorities. Some people want to be farm managers while at the same time having some of the benefits of an employee, which is impossible for Marine. She prefers to be responsible and deplores the inertia of response in teams where no one is responsible. This desire to combine the advantages of farm manager and employee is specific to the evolution of the agricultural world in general. The younger generations are no longer willing to sacrifice for a project that no one will take over. For Marine, one can choose one's limits between private life and work, but she admits that this work is different from a job with fixed working hours. However, she appreciates the fact that the rhythms depend on the seasons, working outdoors, as she experienced office work very badly.

One thing that bothers Marine is the special place of women in agriculture. She has repeatedly run up against the reserve of men and thinks that being a woman has closed doors for her in her search for work. She does not know if she is a feminist, but the issue of women in agriculture is important to her.

Marine and her companion were still not settled, and not satisfied with their job: her companion sold crop protection products to people that Marine does not consider as farmers. She was frustrated by the lack of involvement of the people she works with and does not see herself as a farmer. However, in her work as a trainer, she met people from Terre de Liens (*i.e.: a farm investment fund enabling organic farmers to rent land*). Initially, the couple considered that going through Terre de Liens is not for them: they wanted to be owners for more security. However, out of curiosity, Marine discovered the project of taking over the farm of R, which interested them. Marine's companion left his job to join R's farm as a trainee. Marine continued her work as a trainer for a few months, which she ended up leaving

because she was not able to get properly involved in the two projects as she liked to do. This time, the installation is close, and Marine does not want to think otherwise.

On this farm, they buy and resell, buying from a wholesaler, and from neighbors. It's R who decides about things in the short term, and the couple for the long term. The couple wants to work differently. For Marine, they are not of the same generation in terms of efficiency and priority. R, to save and use up to the end does not make the necessary investments for the practical side. It refuses certain techniques that can save time. On a commercial level, Marine doesn't think it will change much, apart from doing more home-grown and developing a range of processed products that would appeal to customers and excite Marine. The customer base is much larger than before, and the organic market is working well. The customer base is partly new, partly R's loyal customers. They welcomed the news of the takeover by the couple with joy and impatience. The relationship of trust is important.

Marine wants to make only organic, and Demeter (*i.e.;biodynamic organic farming*) as much as possible, which are more lively products. Knowing the producers is important, and it frustrates her to sell exotic products so she doesn't know the production conditions. Demeter is a guarantee of difference according to her because biodynamic farms are normally more humane. They don't have the choice: they must continue to offer these products to keep R's clientele in Strasbourg. It is also a way to win new customers. Otherwise it would be necessary to create an AMAP (*i.e.: a farm where customers are members that have a subscription for a regular*) which is interesting but Marine and her companion are not ready: the priority is to ensure the resumption correctly and to develop the production.

The couple was questioned by some customers to find out whether they were trustworthy, whether they were going to carry the same values as R and continue in the same way, including events. Marine says that people are suggesting diversification of the offer, without realizing the reality of the work. She speaks of a disconnection between farming and marketing and cites the example of the vegans, who discovered that the farm was making meat and refused to support the project. Even though Marine has many vegetarian and vegan friends and has tried vegetarianism, it does not believe in a society without animals, not because it likes meat but because animal husbandry is necessary to

maintain the landscape and for fertilization. Marine eats organic and local food as much as possible, but adapts to the family especially for the social aspect. When she consumes an exotic product such as bananas or meat, she realizes their value and the industry behind them, which she wants to know about.

## Oscar

Oscar is 36 years old. He comes from Lorraine, from a family mainly composed of teachers. His partner is a practitioner of Chinese medicine and opened a practice three to four years ago. He studied marketing communication, with the idea of working in sports marketing, an environment that allows him to combine work with a passion for sport. The precariousness of this environment, however, led him to turn to the circles that were hiring at the time: the bank and the army. He chose banking, thinking that he could always get out if it didn't suit him. He adapted well, however, and was trained internally to be able to evolve. He went from being a teller to sale manager. According to him, banking is a great job that is very rewarding because of the relationship with a wide range of customers, who can be helped in a concrete way. He didn't want to have the commercial side, but to focus on that aspect. Later, his promotion to key account management plunged him into an unhappy situation at work, which began to impact his personal life with his wife. The solution was initially to completely compartmentalize his private and professional life by not mentioning it at all at home.

However, learning that he was going to become a father brought this career orientation into question, but Oscar could not really see how he could continue to work as a banker. A job offer of the N\*\* came to him from a relative, whom Oscar did not immediately consider because of the financial sacrifice. A report from the N\*\* convinced him to apply. The departure was difficult, as Oscar had strong ties with his colleagues. The bank offered him a raise and did not try to understand his discomfort. What he wanted was a healthier way of working that he finds at N\*\*. He deplors the dehumanization and hierarchy of the banking environment as an employee that contrasts with the N\*\* where there are few barriers in behavior, communication and dress.

Oscar was astonished by the welcome he received on his arrival, and by the training where people were happy to get together and where it was possible to talk to everyone. His superior is younger and was not trained in the bank but in Social and Solidarity Economy. Oscar has a deep respect for him, the legitimate judge and appreciates that there is an exchange and consideration of his skills in the bank, especially in view of the transition to banking (*n.b.: the N\*\*, has operated so far as a deposit bank and will soon be managing current accounts for private individuals*).

He appreciates that the consideration of ethical criteria precedes the financial analysis of the projects, the attention that is given to the bearer, the fact of going on site. He finds it very enriching to discover the professions. It makes him evolve in his personal consumption; he surprises his partner who has been trying for a long time to give him other habits. This allows them to come closer together on their values.

The appreciation of the ethics of a project is not always obvious. However, some projects that are at the limit of the criteria due to an activity that is not part of the usual projects (culture, organic agriculture, renewable energy) are financed because the N\*\* evaluates the personality of the carrier and the sincerity of the approach. Oscar was astonished that his boss asked him for his opinion on the projects. He was encouraged to rely on his feeling, even though he can ask for the opinion of his colleagues, the local group and the cooperative. He believes that the higher cost of borrowing acts as a filter to deter people who surf the ethical trend without being sincere about it. He learned to talk about this cost as soon as he met with the holders, valuing the added value of the N\*\* in terms of values, but also in terms of personalized support and communication.

The N\*\* also enables networking between organizations in the region through events. According to him, the lack of connection is very harmful to the solidarity economy and cannot be done in an institutional way without direct contact. Initiatives such as the Stück allow this networking, and to develop the practices of professionals who are less militant but who want to improve their practices.

Oscar as the only employee of the N\*\* on the territory feels a little observed. This has no impact on his private life, given the scope of the intervention. He can't answer all the requests he is asked to make, although he takes his free time to answer them, and this is quite heavy. He has made this career choice for his personal life but works a lot more, but without stress. He can adapt his schedule to take care of his son and is not supervised. It's all based on mutual trust.

He thinks that if he had a personal project, the N\*\* would encourage him to follow it and that it is very difficult to be in conflict with the N\*\*. He says that the training he received was not commercial, but rather aimed at managing conflict and easing tensions, which surprised him a lot. However, he can imagine wanting to see something completely different because he has been a banker for 11 years already. A project closer to the land would be a possibility.

However, he suffers from the banking environment and fears that with the move to banking, the negative side of the banking profession will return, especially account management, which is cumbersome and not always pleasant in terms of customer relations. For the moment, loan management does not have this dimension because the N\*\* is not in the threat but is trying to find solutions. He hopes that the management of individuals will be different because the N\*\* has the will to do something different. In the meantime, it is necessary to restructure the bank because there is a lack of means which gives a "craft" side to the activity. This lack of means had been underlined during the job interview, with the limitation of the salary and the need to work autonomously. There are no bonuses because the objectives are limited and are intended to ensure the operation of the cooperative. The number of projects that the structure can manage is limited. There are many small projects that are not very profitable. The N\* is also solicited as a bank of last chance by projects that become ethical in order to meet the criteria and that would be too small to be considered profitable by a conventional bank. Switching to a bank for individuals will make it possible to change scale and to find resources to finance other services. This move has been called for by activists who cannot find a sufficiently ethical offer in other banks.

It is thanks to the involvement of these members that the N\*\* works and that O has this job. It is positive for society. When he arrived at the N\*\* he thought he was going to get bored but wanted to go

anyway because if he had stayed in his old bank, his personal life would logically have been sacrificed, or his work purely to pay the bill. He met some very militant people, including many young project leaders, which encouraged him to continue. When working with students, he is always pleasantly surprised by the interest of young people, who are much better informed than he was at the same age. This proves to him that it is necessary to continue not only for the most militant but for all. The discourse must adapt but the values of the N\*\* must remain, there is no compromise to be made.

The move to retail banking has opened up the debate on what the objectives of N\*\* were and Oscar is satisfied that the guidelines remain because N\*\* must not become like the others. However, he is pleased that conventional banks, even if it is for commercial purposes, are questioning their practices and adapting their offer to the SSE. For him, it is not competition but moving forward together.

## Paul

Paul studied geology in order to work in environmental protection. He wanted to add value to his work, to do something useful. His first professional experience in Belgium in the construction industry disappointed PM on the ethical side, especially because of the corruption in the sector. His wife, a graduate in social marketing, was also looking for work, which was complicated, being Colombian. Paul wanted to be consistent and not work in contradiction with his values, in oil extraction like his friends for example. The idea of setting up a project with ethics made its way, starting with a café in Brussels. A management training course, where a tax inspector showed the obligation to "make at least 50% black" in order to get out of it, dissuaded them. Paul and his wife turned to selling fair trade products, but they wanted to create a different concept, one that makes people want to go back, not for the ethics at first, but for the product.

They joined the A franchise, most of whose franchisees have closed down. Franchising was restrictive, expensive, and delayed referencing. They came out of it with apprehension but the customers did not



see the difference. They became more independent and could afford to hire an employee. They were also able to diversify their range towards eco-responsible and fair trade products from the North.

The couple has always had a different approach to consumption, but at the time there was not as much on offer. In the first years of the launch, the lack of income forced them to go into hard discount to keep within the budget, but little by little, as their income increased, they tried to change their consumption. Today they buy very little in supermarkets, for example, and use the car very rarely.

As early as his studies, Paul became aware of the need to consume differently, but he considers that he is not perfect, that he is looking for but will never succeed. He thinks that people might imagine that they are perfect, but Paul refutes this, because believing that they are perfect could inhibit them. You have to look at the positive, go step by step. Their role is to guide people by directing them to other stores in the network in which they are integrated. For Paul, the solidarity economy is another way of consuming. The demands of customers, vegans for example, push them to question their consumption, and to reflect on all aspects. In order to choose products, they must be pleasing and also have a social history and be ecological. Sometimes they have discontinued a product that worked because it did not meet these criteria. They do few sales except to liquidate and never have a promotion, but that is not the point, since they spend time explaining to customers that the price is fair. Their negotiating skills are limited. Paul judges their prices to be similar to unfair on average for equal quality, the distribution on the chain being what changes. If there are still people who find it too expensive (and who are not open to the approach anyway), Paul has found that the crisis, instead of holding people back, has pushed them to come to them to look for answers and ask how to change their consumption.

Today Paul and his wife have an employee, T who sent them a convincing application just at the right time. At the beginning, they were afraid of not managing the integration of a person in this company who is at the same time a couple. Paul wanted to create a job, but was afraid of the responsibility this entailed. He tries to make T independent and autonomous. It's going well, she goes to the customers and she can be trusted. T is going to go into capital. She needs to give her opinion and feel involved. The co-operative is not yet a step they have taken, the move from two to the LLC will already be a step.

They are going to be forced to recruit other employees because there is too much work, which is a good sign. They have thought of doing a franchise, but that would force a big investor to come in: they would risk losing their soul and their freedom. Paul says that the ideal would be a cooperative operation, where the concept is shared but the responsibilities in each structure, where ideas would come from the bottom up. For recruitment, Paul wants people who feel invested, a person who is both commercial and fair. He thinks that it is easier to bring a commercial person to an ethic than the other way round, and that some activists are more at home in the associative sector than in the commercial sector, where you have to know how to adapt to the constraints of profitability, clients and schedules. For Paul, commerce is something heavy without being so: of course the schedules are not always easy to adapt to.

For Paul, business is something heavy without being heavy: of course the hours are long, but working together and being independent allows flexibility, for example for children.

Paul does not know if he would have the strength to be more militant, and envies those who have a vision of society and stick to it. He questions himself all the time. However, he didn't want to make a career at Total, taking the plunge was a risky gamble, and after ten years the couple manages to pay each other a minimum wage. Being parents motivated them, they couldn't easily give up. The administrative management is heavy, and Paul thinks people underestimate it and only see the "superhero" side of the job.

Paul still hopes to evolve. The store street is changing; it makes him feel like he is no longer alone. He wants to continue to grow and be able to focus on projects rather than the day-to-day. PM tries to be as coherent as possible, and when it's too dangerous, he "takes the pressure off" and gradually takes it off again.

Paul and his wife do not want to cut their children off from the world, but he is confident that for them, normalcy is their lifestyle and business. He doesn't want to "be an island", but on the contrary, he wants to "build bridges", an exercise that he already practices in his couple with two different

cultures. The idea is to move things forward, to help the world. However, Paul sees limits: the price and the fact that not everything is fair trade. He says that we should not, under the pretext of wanting to help people, only address those who have the means. He finds himself a bit stuck because he comes from a working-class background. So he wants to have affordable products for these kinds of people. People without too much money sometimes buy, while others who do not have the means to do so refuse to do so: Paul says it's painful, but that you shouldn't brood about it.

Paul and his wife and partner are working on a master's degree in international trade with students who are not too familiar with fair trade but have to come up with an ethical project. The aim is to shake them up a bit. Paul must remain open. Solidarity Economy, for him, means not staying within a framework but thinking differently, not aiming for perfection right away, which would be discouraging, but improvement, thinking about the whole chain.

We must therefore build bridges and show what can bring us closer. The commercial is a means, which PM did not understand before. Trade did not attract him, and yet it is a means to achieve a societal objective. He believes that the wallet today has more power to change the world than the ballot.

## Victor

Victor was born and raised in Lyon. What remains of his childhood is sensitivity to injustice. It is militancy that led him to his activity, the will to fight injustice, aware of his chance to be a privileged person on Earth.

After an experience as a barman in London, he did a BTS (*i.e.: Bachelor Technical degree*) alternating as a multimedia designer and developer. After some professional experiences, in 2004 he created a fair trade products website with M, his girlfriend at the time. Already a “consum'actor”, he wanted to develop the sale of fair trade products, and the website allowed him to enlarge the clientele, which was

insufficient locally at the time, compared to an already substantial offer in the cooperatives. They started in the Monts Lyonnais, temporarily hosted by an association. They then moved to the city, to a very small place, thanks to a "self-made man" who trusted them when nobody believed in them. Victor was happy to be able to move in 2010 to larger premises where they can diversify their grocery offer: they have Southern fair trade products, short supply chains and organic.. In 2005, they were offered to open a grocery store in a indoor market in another big city. Victor, at first hesitant, quickly integrated into the region and stayed there for 9 months, before hiring G. The team has grown and the business requires staff, with quality and service allowing them to stand out from the crowd at fair prices, which are often higher. Victor is satisfied to have made the choice to prioritize the social aspect before the environmental one, because the environmental follows the social one, the opposite is not obvious. This sets it apart from organic chains. However, he thinks that these choices are less obvious to make, but the foundations of the grocery store remain coherence and integrity, the difficulty being to combine ethics and profitability. He says that they must keep their feet on the ground and integrate into today's world. Victor says he has realized that he has been "a good sucker," for example, by wanting to make the offer accessible. He wants to rationalize, also concerning hiring: he now prefers to take people who have really "worked" (in the conventional) to make them aware, as will be the case for the grocer who will arrive the following week, rather than someone from the "organic" sector. Victor has worked at Pizza Hut or in a factory and thinks it was a good training to know what he didn't want to do.

What Victor doesn't want to do is feed those he fights, which is sometimes difficult in everyday life where in order not to live outside of society, you have to enrich the system you are fighting against. In the grocery business, choices have been made to be as consistent as possible with the values defended, but Victor remains dissatisfied with certain suppliers for whom he has no alternative, or when he is legally obliged to do so.

For him, it is also the human aspect that is sensitive: they are in a limited liability company with 28 partners, the co-managers holding more than half of the capital. Victor and his business partner have made management and choice errors. They were pioneers in a market that has developed strongly and have somewhat "drowned". They made strong choices: for example, they discontinue products that

were also present in supermarkets, despite their quality and the fact that they sold well because they corresponded to a short vision of fair trade. Victor moreover questioned the president of Max Havelaar during the 20 years of the label on this partnership. He replied that he had no choice. For Victor, we always have the choice, that of making political rather than economic choices. For their part, the primary objective is not to make money, which allows them to make choices consistent with themselves. They give up selling products that would be sold ethically. But they have to take responsibility for their choices, even if they lead to run around.

The profitability of the business is limited by size and margins, but the situation is improving. Victor says ironically that last September, he "got greedy": he reworked all margins and realized that he was proud of his products. He thinks he's been too nice. The trigger was the beer festival in Lyon, which the grocery store was organizing to promote craft breweries, which was a lot of work and expense, with no special recognition from the breweries that were doing well. With Marina, he goes last in the payment of salaries, and doesn't always get money, which tires him. A mistake by the accountant caused the payment of salaries that were too high for the employees for a while. In order not to get into conflict with the accountant, Victor preferred to give up but once again sees this as an example of a "soft touch". In spite of the September trigger and the improvement in margins and turnover, the situation remains difficult. They are now problems with the *Crédit Coopératif*, a bank which at the time had been the only one to understand their activity and to be willing to follow them.

Victor is tired of always having to make choices, of not taking the easy way out. He still loves what he does and still believes in what he is fighting for but wants to change. Basically, he didn't want to be a businessman and came here out of militancy. What he doesn't like about commerce is money. He is also tired of being too well known as a fair trade grocer. He has nothing to hide because his choices are consistent, which is easy for him when working in the grocery store: he admires customers who make the effort and agree to pay more. The clientele is very varied, which he likes: traditional consumers in organic stores but also people in the neighborhood who don't care about ethics. Coffee at 1€ is a loss leader that Victor insists on: it allows him to "come out of his comfort zone" and reach out to everyone. It's the only thing he wants to "continue to be a good sucker". He has the example of people like

Nathan who have come from other backgrounds and have contributed a lot thanks to this openness to the world.

Co-management is not always obvious. At one point, Victor and M\*\* shared out the roles better, even if Victor thinks that he is still the one who decides. He's cooperative but thinks that the team needs a captain. There is, however, a global approach: that of meeting with grocers, sharing information, economic reality. In L\*\*, the grocers are rather autonomous. They have developed local partnerships, and have made the grocery offer evolve. What is complicated is managing conflicts between remote employees. However, a consultant has helped Victor by advising him to draw up job descriptions that clarify each person's tasks.

Formalizing and simplifying the activity are the objectives to improve things. Lack of time has meant that some things have been put aside, and Victor no longer has the skills to renovate the website.

The grocery store is in several networks, but Victor finds it time-consuming. It made sense at the time of the launch, before the events were picked up by commercial actors. He saw a lot of activity being born and dying. He thinks that sometimes emotions and activism take precedence over professionalism and realism, that activity is a kind of passion.

Many grocers leave the grocery store after a few months. The size of the structure means that the work is quite daily and wearing out. The grocery store allows employees to grow, but his employees have to see something else, Victor acknowledges. He is on good terms with all the former salaried grocers. However, he mentions a grocer who was in charge of L\*\* whom Victor was glad to see leave. During a surprise audit, Victor noticed several malpractices. He did not punish her but lost confidence in her. The involvement of all the grocers is necessary, even if Victor does not share all the black information: he does not see the point and thinks it will affect them more than necessary. Nor does he share all the information with M\*\* to spare her, which was the case concerning L\*\*'s grocery store for which he fought. Everybody wanted to close but him: the network and the jobs created were too important to him.

## Nathan

Nathan studied architecture, which he stopped, disappointed by the teaching: Nathan has never been very scholastic, and prefers learning by transmission, or by experience, in different fields, to have fun. He worked in construction, as a draughtsman and then in restoration where he started in service. Older people taught him the trade, which he in turn tried to do with young people, encouraging autonomy.

For ten years, he was a salaried employee at the A\*\*\*, a reception hall that offered him opportunities to enjoy his free time and good material comfort. However, a feeling of unease grew in the face of this "nonsense": over-consumption in his personal life and at work seemed increasingly contrary to the education Nathan had received, all the more so as he was beginning to approach the demonstrations of undocumented migrants at the time. He resigned from this job and remained unemployed without benefits for 9 months, and sold almost everything he had.

Having become closer as a client of the CC\*\*, he had the opportunity to work there, and to develop the catering business. The CC\*\* is a SCOP, he naturally enters as a partner after a few months. Nathan was already familiar with the cooperative system. He had been interested in the worker system for a long time, because of the place where he grew up and the meetings he had made (French teachers and then sports friends). Nathan knew about cooperatives through the readings of the time, as a means of workers' emancipation, which in his opinion no longer corresponded to the current conception of the URSCOP and those who govern.

Nathan stayed 2 years at the CC\*\* then decided with two friends with whom he worked at the A\*\*, M\*\* and D\*\*, to start a project to create a bar. According to Nathan, the world of extras is not very hierarchical and everyone knows each other. So he made friendships that lasted beyond his departure. They find a place in the "rue de G\*\*", which will later force them to turn more towards a catering business rather than a bar. This caused tensions and raised the question of whether to continue or not, but it meant giving up the money invested. They also chose to go 100% organic, direct from producers.

Nathan took a long time to get into the organic consumption approach, because he equated it with the consumption of a bourgeois clientele, or on the contrary with something too far away, very rural. It is by having to make consumption choices after his resignation that he came closer to organic, refusing for a long time to consume in supermarkets. The other associates are familiar with this approach. They decided to commit themselves to 100% organic supplies for the restaurant in order to avoid any risk of drift in a project that they want to be entirely coherent. Sourcing from producers is consistent and teaches them a lot, which Nathan likes.

Being in SCOP was also part of this coherent approach. Nathan says they had a "romantic" vision of SCOP at the time. Despite the example of the CC\*\*\* where the involvement of the 2 associates was unbalanced and the organization rather vertical, Nathan and his associates thought that the dynamic would be different with 3, or more, future associates. However, they came up against technical and legal aspects on which Urscop did not help them. As a result, they do not manage to set up the less vertical organization they would like to have in order to be able to regularly discuss major decisions with the associates. Nobody else can help them because of the specificities of cooperatives. For Nathan, there is a rather marked hierarchical drift in the SCOPs due to Urscop, a supporter of representative rather than participatory democracy. Once again the question arises of stopping, but was better to try to accommodate the existing tool. However, by moving away from the initial project, the project, according to Nathan, no longer interested anyone.

Added to this were economic complications. Nathan mentions the over-invoicing by suppliers who may or may not have consciously abused him, demanding direct prices much higher than those of wholesalers. Not receiving help from the G\*\*\* (an association supporting the development of local organic farming and business), he himself tried to find other cheaper suppliers and succeeded. He then seriously questions the G\*\* who would either be incompetent, or practice clientelism, of the suppliers listed among the administrators. Working on the products of these channels was a lot of time, energy and money, which weighed on the team and salaries. Nathan feels that he has been laughed at. He couldn't raise prices, especially given the fluctuating quality of the products, which was a problem for customers. Nathan therefore decided after 4 months of informal discussions with his



colleagues to stop some organic supplies and to replace some suppliers. Nathan deplores the inconsistency of the organic environment.

In the end Nathan feels closer to the catering service field than to SSE. He thinks that SSE is not always coherent and interesting. Some actors treat restaurateurs in a disrespectful and condescending way. They are not aware of the reality of the work in this activity, and have excessive demands.

## Charlie

Charlie currently has 3 work contracts of 46 hours per week, one of 5 hours officially for the SCOP S\*\* of which he is the manager.

Charlie was in a Business School integrated preparation course, but chose to give up this course which displeased him, notably because of the competitive spirit, a decision which led to incomprehension among the students he then met. He redirected himself towards computer science, a sector which recruited and offered advantageous working conditions, even if the salary was not very high. He got involved in the Free Software activist C\*\* association and then founded SCIL with other activists. Charlie regrets having founded a SCOP. His goal, and the basis of the company was to make free code. The rest was optional. The goal was to produce free software for small businesses, which was a commercial failure. Charlie explains this failure by their inability to sell. Subsequently, P\*\* cash register software was a success, but the financial situation of the company was too catastrophic. However, it is not liquidated. For a year, the salaries were not paid, and the pay slips certifying the salaries theoretically paid did not allow receiving social assistance. Despite calls for help, no structure came to advise Charlie, that left him feeling angry, or even "beyond anger", towards Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) structures with a subsidized culture, cut off from the economic reality, which prefers to help projects where managers spend more time forging links with politicians rather than producing and knowing their trade.

He lived at that time on the money from the sale of his house following his divorce, and was not able to pay alimony to his ex-wife and borrowed money from his father. He did not talk about his situation to those around him. His upbringing prevented him from thinking about going to the soup kitchen, and he admits that at that time he stopped buying from the local organic food network, but instead went to the supermarkets. His consumption was more consistent by being a wage earner in the capitalist economy. He knew that by starting a business he would not have too much money, but from renunciation to renunciation, it was no longer possible. He thinks that in militant circles, there are deadly sides. He has always been able to distance himself from pressures and to allow himself things that are "not good" in his private consumption, which are necessary for his equilibrium. It is a question of a cursor, which he has moved in consciousness, but he intends to rectify this "negative" evolution of his behaviour now that he has more means. He believes that building something positive through work is more important than deconstructing through consumption.

His role as a free computer scientist is to defend transparency and privacy in the face of the widespread surveillance revealed by Snowden. Something as structuring as computing has to be controlled by citizens, and even if the issue of freedom of expression or agriculture takes precedence, it is very important, and this is where Charlie can be more useful.

What is at stake for society today is the development plan, which would allow the reappearance of real full time jobs paid normally in relation to the market. Charlie does not want to fight over prices: even if the strategy is to make people believe the opposite, the important thing is to make free code above all, and that the technicians determine the orientations of the company, the commercial force having the power on a daily basis. Charlie has already got rid of this function, which he did badly because he was "too nice" to customers: it's part of his character. This is not what attracted him to Solidarity economy but transparency, an essential point for him that he defends through his membership of the Libre-entreprise network.

Locally, S\*\* is the only company producing Free Software, which Charlie now chooses to present as a market demarcation to investors for whom it is just business. The core target is the small business but

Charlie would accept to work with the mass distribution for example, even if he finds it "boring". At the beginning, S\*\* wanted to work for the SSE, but now they are indifferent to it. He thinks that free software is always an improvement. He knows that there are in the network of hacks like Victor, who would judge that he has sold his soul to the capitalists, which he has already heard. He says again that he couldn't stand not earning anything anymore, but that he wanted to live, or to be able to give Christmas presents to his children as he did for the first time this year.

In the next two years, the future of S\*\* should be clearer with the arrival of a "capitalist": Charlie will then be able to live off it and have a quiet job, or he will continue to work voluntarily, just for fun. He is tired and does not want to continue fighting in the hope of recovering his unpaid wages. He says he is the bank of the box. This is a common situation among entrepreneurs, but the difference is that no matter how much capital he has, he, like S\*\* he quotes, always have one voice, no control, no dividends. Yet he also saved the B2F restaurant from going into receivership, a gesture that he cannot explain, between solidarity, friendship and conviction. Investing in a SCOP without being a worker there is even more irrational in his view, but the levels of people's involvement are ultimately impossible to compare. It is the situations that lead to antagonisms, people were not inherently bad. For "really engaged" people like him and Nathan, saying unpleasant things is embarrassing, and hard. It's the human side that comes first in a company.

Charlie feels like a kind of "Macron" of the SSE, pushing the codes around and disturbing. He thinks that he should keep quiet sometimes, and that if he was always right, he wouldn't be in this situation. Attempts to network at the local level failed, when Charlie, like Nathan, stopped getting involved, tired of putting a lot of energy into it for everyone, and running up against the functioning that was no longer even of democracy but of "anything but", of excess debate.

## Leo

"I need to feel useful". A need that he feels is selfish, but which he shares. For him, the collective is built on individuals, and this individual dimension must be integrated when setting up a project. He

comes from a close-knit family that also favors both the collective and the individual. His father is a doctor, and his mother was a social worker. So he emphasizes the idea of caring for others. His parents also became involved in the associative sector a little later. His father made him aware of nature through hunting, which is a bit schizophrenic according to Leo. Leo was much initiated, stimulated. He grew up with people who resembled him sociologically and in ideas, and quickly realized that what was done "at home" was different from society. He was trained at the IUT (Bachelor Degree) in the field of industry, although he is more interested in literary subjects. He says that this ambivalence is a bit like him.

The change came when he dropped out of school in the industrial field. During his internship, he was told that he was weird and didn't fit in. He recalls, for example, his internship at Peugeot, where he took the liberty of pointing out to the boss his bad mood while the other workers kept quiet. He then worked in a family business in the agricultural sector, where the bosses were demanding about the work, but humane and understanding. Leo wanted to take over something he liked. He thinks he has a sixth sense about emotions. What he liked was nature and the environment, a subject in which trainings were beginning to be created. Leo found himself in a formation with very different people, with very different experiences, which made this formation an extraordinary human experience. He did his internship at the Museum of Natural History where he participated in setting up an exhibition on water and waste management. He enjoyed the diversity of the tasks. The director offered him a job, but Leo had to go to the army. So he became a conscientious objector, which allowed him to meet people who "thought like him". This work consisted of getting associations in different fields to collaborate and set up projects. Leo deplors the fact that we are in a society that favors specialists, and on the contrary encourages people to be generalists, but above all to listen to "the stomach, the heart, the head" and not just the head.

Leo stayed 6 years in the M\*\* but regretted the lack of means and especially the lack of projection of the associations. For example, they refused to communicate because they were against advertising. Leo saw this as a tool. He thinks it's an ideological stance that locks people in.

Leo had no financial choice to make because for him it is politics that influences the economy, and many problems are due to the opposite. For him, the president of the republic should not be a manager, nor a decision-maker, but a facilitator, a convener. According to him, the subject of the Labor Law is not the salary, but the place that the individual has in the company, democracy, and the sharing of the project.

Leo therefore left the M\*\* to go to the people who wanted to act in their lives without knowing how. He wants to make a showcase, go and find people where they are, listen to their needs rather than give them advice to consume. He wants to create a meeting place. Then he will discover that it is called a "Tiers lieu" (*i.e.* : *"Third place": a social environmental beside home and work*). At first, he comes up against the skepticism of others, who nevertheless trusted his room for improvement.

He created the CC\*\*\*, a coffee, bar and restaurant with organic, fair-trade and local food. The CC\*\* was certainly a collective undertaking, but one that he carried alone. He finds that the solidarity economy often gives the illusion of something collective when only one person decides. He therefore appreciates the positioning of the A\*\*: the progress approach, which consists in saying that no one is perfect, but that we all have room for improvement. Leo carried out a market study and takes the project in charge alone. He found a partner, F\*\*, who was not clear about his personal investment in the project, and was more of a follower. Leo admits that he did not insist enough, not for fear of questioning himself, but to be able to move quickly. Subsequently, F\*\* told him that it was L's project, not his. Leo insists that conflict is inevitable in a project and that in order for it not to generate frustration or violence, it must of course be resolved, but it must also be prevented by saying from the outset what one wants. In his job as a coach, he insists that people first express their personal needs and expectations, before merging. The personal interest can then join the collective interest. For Leo, values are a catch-all, elastic word. He prefers to talk about desires and needs.

It was Leo who wanted to make only organic café, because that's his vision of society, what should be done for him. As for the rest, compromises or concessions are not necessarily negative as long as you have said what you wanted to do at the outset, in order to put the compromises into practice. By expressing expectations, even if they are a priori impossible, we at least give them a chance to come

true. He finds it important to be able to express his expectations, and that it is dramatic not to let people do so, which is what we do from childhood when we shatter children's dreams in the belief that we are protecting them.

Leo has run the café for five years. He likes to launch a project, the creative side. He does not like detailed management, even if he tries to become more competent: he gets bored and his motivation drops. He cannot stay in a job just for the money or the security. He does not understand that people put up with him, and lives in fear. So Leo left, also to respect the agreement with his wife who wanted to have a child at that time.

So he looked for people to take over the management of the café, who would be authors and not just actors. He regrets that most people who pass on an activity want things to remain the same, thinking that their activity was perfect: however, the following ones must also have the right to make mistakes too. Leo wanted a person with in the coffee project. He recruited S\*\*, a motivated but probably too young woman, who could not be a leader, but locked herself up and isolated herself in a managerial role, which led to social conflict. Leo, who had a moral commitment to the broader Café collective was solicited, which was experienced as interventionism. S\*\* refused the accompaniment he proposed, and announced his departure, leaving 8 months to find another person. However, she brought the date of his departure closer, which Leo sees as the only mistake he really blames her for. For him the respect of the commitment is essential. S\*\* had also made other mistakes, such as recruiting incompetent people who were her friends. She asked for a conventional termination of employment contract, which Leo agreed to.

Leo then found G\*\* and the rest of the current team to take over the café. A lot of people don't even know it was Leo who started it, which is a good thing for him. For him, there's a great team today, with a real sharing of the project. He dislikes certain things: for example, they have removed the subscriptions to various newspapers because it didn't correspond to the political ideas of the café. For him they are a little too radicalized, anarchist, anti-system. They don't want to host political party meetings neither. For Leo, parties are part of life, and they should be welcomed on condition that they welcome all of them, even the extreme right. For him, this is not a problem: these people exist and

represent 30% of the votes, even if they are not always membership votes. Of course, Leo feels he is an environmentalist. He likes certain ideas of anarchism, because he assumes that man is good. On the other hand, he regrets that it is hyper-dogmatic: for example, selling things is inherently bad. For Leo, the market responds to a need, and where it is dogmatic is when we say that it responds to all needs. Economic Marxism can be philosophically interesting. The question of commons is a real question: water, air, education must be common goods. There is the market, redistribution and reciprocity, which are three things that go together according to Polanyi. But he often came up against a hyper-restrictive, dogmatic vision, an unscientific stance. The limit on the market side is to remain in the free market, which necessarily involved short circuits in the CC\*\*\* project.

For Leo, if we invented religion, it's because we needed a meaning to our lives. Maybe the meaning is just the need to perpetuate our species. So we must avoid destroying our habitat. So ecology is not a question of values, but of logic. Today, with the scientific knowledge we have, we can do without chemicals. Their use is the result of a lack of reflection and education.

## Appendix 5: Presentation of the sample (Chapter II)

N.B.: Information regarding age, corporate form, turnover or staff relate to the local organization (and not to the Orgacoop network), which owns one or several shops.

Interviewee number	Gender	Age	Job tenure in Orgacoop (in years)	Education	Position	Status	Wages	Working	Family situation	Consumption
1	m	45	2	Master	Manager	Founding partner	6000	70	Living as couple	95% organic
2	m	46	4,5	A-Level	Dptmt Manager	Employee - Staff representative	1693	32	Living as couple	95% organic - Flexitarian - no plane
3	f	46	3,5	Bachelor	Dptmt Manager	Employee and shareholder	1350	32	Living as couple+1 child	90% organic, flexitarian, breastfeeding CNV
4	f	54	1,2	Bachelor	Shop assistant	Employee	900	24	Livins as couple	90% organic, flexitarian, no car
5	f	27	0,9	Phd Candida	Shop assistant	Employee	780	22	Living as couple	95% organic , vegetarian
6	f	32	4	Master	Shop assistant	Employee	696	17,5	Living as couple+1 child	100% organic
7	m	30	1,2	Master	Shop assistant	Employee	1250	32	Living as couple	100% organic flexitarien no car no plane
8	m	23	1,5	Bachelor	Shop assistant	Employee	900	26,3	Single	100% organic flexitarian, degrowth, train & bike
9	f	38	14	Master	Manager	Employee	2000	35	Living as couple + 1 child+2 children	100% organic
10	f	30	0,2	Bachelor	Manager	Founding partner	1450	75	Living as couple	100% organic
11	f	43	0,25	Master	Shop assistant	Employee	1000	30	Living as couple+2 children	50% organic flexitarien
12	f	53	4	Master	Shop assistant	Employee	600	18	Living as couple	100% organic vegan
13	f	35	4	Bachelor Higher	Dptmt Manager	Employee and shareholder	1550	35	Living as couple +2 children	98% organic
14	m	31	4	technician	Shop assistant	Employee	1453	35	Single	99% organic
15	m	38	7	Master	Manager	Employee and shareholder	1500	40	Single	
16	m	39	5	Master	Shop assistant	Employee and orgacoop member	1500	35	Living as a couple+2 children	80% organic
17	f	43	4	Bachelor	Shop assistant	Employee	1150	38	Living as a couple+2 children	Organic, degrowth
18	f	21	0,5	Student	Shop assistant	Employee	700	20	Living as a couple	100% organic flexitarian - degrowth
19	m	50	12	Master	Manager	Employee and shareholder	2600	35	Living as a couple	90% organic flexitarian
20	m	39	5	Bachelor	Shop assistant	Employee	1800	35	Living as a couple	80% organic flexitarian - bike
21	m	29	0,5	Master	Dptmt Manager	Employee	1500	35	Living as a couple	95% organic flexitarian
22	f	49	11	No diploma	Dptmt Manager	Employee	1600	37	Single + 2 children	90% organic flexitarian
23	m	43	2	Phd Candida	Shop assistant	Employee	1350	35	Living as a couple + 2 children	90% organic. Vegetarian. No cell phone, no car
24	f	27	3	Bachelor	Shop assistant	Employee	1150	20	Living as a couple	70% organic. Association supporting small farming
25	m	44	0,5	Master	Manager	Employee and shareholder	1950	35	Living as a couple	80% organic
26	f	63	16	A-level	Shop assistant	Employee	1200	32	Single + 3 children	95% organic
27	m	50	4	Bachelor	Shop assistant	Employee	1400	37	Living as a couple + 1 child	70% organic flexitarian- alternative medicine

Interviewee number.	Volunteering	Shop(s) staff (full time)	Shop(s) corporate form	Shop(s) age	Shop(s) turnover (in Millions €)
1			SARL	28 years	
2	Enercoop Economistes attérées Attack	25	SCOP	3 years	4,6
3	Alternatiba	25	SCOP	3 years	4,6
4	SEL Esperanto Freinet	30	SNC	30 years	3,1
5	LPO Nord	30	SNC	30 years	3,1
6		30	SNC	30 years	3,1
7	Bike workshop	30	SNC	30 years	3,1
8	Yoga	30	SNC	30 years	3,1
9	Zero Waste	30	SNC	30 years	3,1
10		5	SARL	2 months	1,3
11	Apiculture	30	SARL	30 years	3,1
12	personal transformation	50	SA	26 years	
13		50	SA	30 years	
14		50	SA	30 years	
15		2	SCOP	4 months	4
16	Steiner school - Ethical bank member	6,5	SARL	5 years	2
17	Dance	5	SA		
18	Afro-feminist association	25	SCOP	4 years	4,9
19		25	SCOP	4 years	4,9
20		25	SCOP	4 years	4,9
21	Immigrants aid	25	SCOP	5 years	4,9
22	Greenpeace	18	SARL	11 years	6
23	Trade union	18	SARL	11 years	6
24	Association supporting small farming	15	SARL	20 years	6
25		7	ASSOCIATION	38 years	1,15
26	Treasurer in an association supporting small farming	15	SARL	11 years	6
27		15	SARL	11 years	6



## Appendix 6: Interview outline (Chapter II)

### **Who I am, what I do**

- Where I come from, my professional background before, now, later
- My values, my different roles, the tensions I feel between idealism and pragmatism
- My work in my Biocoop

### **The specifications in my organization**

- Who produces them, how, for what purpose, interest in my store, for Biocoop?
- How the specifications are communicated and discussed in my store
- How the specifications are present and applied in the life of the store, how they influence the relations between workers in my store
- How the specifications help or not in the management of tensions in my team

### **The specifications and me**

- How do I apply the specifications on a daily basis
- Important / not important aspects for me
- Aspects too developed / not sufficiently developed
- My emotional relationship to the specifications
- What the specifications provide and cost me
- How are the specifications consistent or inconsistent with who I am

### **What if the specifications did not exist...**

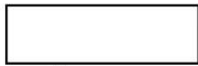
- for me
- for my store
- for the Biocoop network



Appendix 7: Overview of Orgacoop's Specifications (anonymized) (Chapter II)

[ ] Cahier des charges général [ ] avec annexes - version juin 2018

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## Appendix 8: Welcoming message for online survey (Chapter III)

Merci de prendre de votre temps pour remplir ce questionnaire. Vos réponses nourriront ma recherche sur la poursuite d'un idéal et la défense de valeurs au travail. On va parler de votre niveau d'engagement dans votre vie personnelle, de votre vécu de travailleur(se) en magasin bio et de votre perception du réseau auquel il appartient. Tous les niveaux de militantisme sont les bienvenus (c'est même indispensable !)

En bref, c'est :

- totalement anonyme
- pour tout(e) travailleur(se) en magasin bio appartenant à un réseau (plusieurs magasins avec une organisation commune). Merci de ne pas faire le questionnaire si vous n'êtes pas dans ce cas, sinon ça fausse les résultats !
- 20 minutes en moyenne
- à compléter sur smartphone, tablette ou ordinateur
- les réponses sont gardées pendant un mois en mémoire (vous pouvez laisser et reprendre plus tard, mais n'oubliez pas sinon vos premières réponses seront inutiles !)

Cette enquête m'aidera à finir ma thèse en gestion, et écrire un super article. La science vous dit merci et moi aussi !

*Marie Lemaire, doctorante à l'Université de Strasbourg.*

[Linkedin de Marie Lemaire](#)



Appendix 9: Distribution of data (Mean, median, Kurtosis and Skewness)  
(Chapter II)

	No.	Missing	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Standard Deviation	Excess Kurtosis	Skewness
Collab	1.000	0.000	-0.000	0.113	-2.360	2.256	1.000	-0.608	-0.138
Customers	2.000	0.000	-0.000	-0.296	-2.299	1.707	1.000	0.059	0.181
Fellow workers	3.000	0.000	0.000	0.145	-2.488	1.034	1.000	-0.723	-0.475
High risky activism orientation	4.000	0.000	-0.000	-0.752	-0.752	2.751	1.000	0.324	1.211
Job	5.000	0.000	0.000	-0.080	-3.393	1.024	1.000	1.974	-1.306
Low risky Activism orientation	6.000	0.000	-0.000	0.009	-1.255	1.272	1.000	-1.600	-0.118
Need	7.000	0.000	-0.000	0.130	-3.234	1.208	1.000	0.548	-0.746
Pay	8.000	0.000	0.000	0.198	-1.770	2.167	1.000	-0.628	-0.036
Promotion	9.000	0.000	0.000	-0.032	-2.121	1.843	1.000	-0.645	-0.183
Purchase	10.000	0.000	0.000	0.038	-3.501	1.222	1.000	0.574	-0.765
Responsible consumption	11.000	0.000	-0.000	0.096	-3.836	1.658	1.000	0.673	-0.691
Supervisor	12.000	0.000	-0.000	0.232	-2.502	1.143	1.000	-0.342	-0.678
Waste	13.000	0.000	0.000	0.146	-3.051	1.749	1.000	0.499	-0.534
PUR1	14.000	0.000	4.413	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.640	0.298	-0.785
PUR2	15.000	0.000	4.245	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.712	0.418	-0.723
PUR3	16.000	0.000	4.271	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.656	-0.071	-0.491
NEED1	17.000	0.000	4.374	5.000	1.000	5.000	0.788	1.984	-1.333
NEED2	18.000	0.000	4.258	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.777	1.899	-1.153
NFFD3	19.000	0.000	4.161	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.705	-0.115	-0.463
WAST1	20.000	0.000	3.858	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.774	-0.340	-0.253
WAST2	21.000	0.000	3.903	4.000	2.000	5.000	0.660	0.651	-0.436
WAST3	22.000	0.000	3.968	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.822	2.136	-1.064
COLLAB1	23.000	0.000	3.200	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.967	-0.652	-0.066
COLLAB2	24.000	0.000	3.097	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.989	-0.732	0.046
COLLAB3	25.000	0.000	3.245	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.132	-0.991	-0.065
AOLR1	26.000	0.000	1.161	1.000	0.000	3.000	1.257	-1.489	0.458
AOLR2	27.000	0.000	1.232	1.000	0.000	3.000	1.338	-1.691	0.366
AOLR3	28.000	0.000	1.852	3.000	0.000	3.000	1.409	-1.716	-0.488
AOLR4	29.000	0.000	1.626	2.000	0.000	3.000	1.383	-1.842	-0.176
AOLR5	30.000	0.000	1.142	1.000	0.000	3.000	1.247	-1.462	0.474
AOLR6	31.000	0.000	0.645	0.000	0.000	3.000	0.975	0.131	1.228
AOLR7	32.000	0.000	1.742	3.000	0.000	3.000	1.372	-1.766	-0.327
AOLR8	33.000	0.000	0.871	0.000	0.000	3.000	1.111	-0.787	0.857
AOLR9	34.000	0.000	1.361	1.000	0.000	3.000	1.295	-1.690	0.202
AOLR10	35.000	0.000	1.090	1.000	0.000	3.000	1.215	-1.374	0.523
AOLR11	36.000	0.000	1.206	1.000	0.000	3.000	1.318	-1.624	0.415
AOLR12	37.000	0.000	1.387	1.000	0.000	3.000	1.336	-1.773	0.163
AOHR1	38.000	0.000	0.935	0.000	0.000	3.000	1.168	-0.979	0.789
AOHR2	39.000	0.000	0.523	0.000	0.000	3.000	0.939	1.225	1.610
AOHR3	40.000	0.000	0.490	0.000	0.000	3.000	0.932	1.544	1.717
SATICSR1	41.000	0.000	4.200	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.883	1.393	-1.768
SATICSR2	42.000	0.000	3.581	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.040	-0.232	-0.443
SATICSR3	43.000	0.000	3.271	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.837	0.609	0.051
SATICSR4	44.000	0.000	4.039	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.810	2.429	-1.100
SATICSR5	45.000	0.000	4.361	5.000	1.000	5.000	0.802	3.051	-1.507
SATICSR6	46.000	0.000	4.155	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.971	1.831	-1.340
SATICSR7	47.000	0.000	3.968	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.868	2.882	-1.371
JOB1	48.000	0.000	4.000	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.010	0.879	-1.063
JOB2	49.000	0.000	4.065	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.948	1.996	-1.322
JOB3	50.000	0.000	4.155	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.931	1.499	-1.236
PROMO1	51.000	0.000	2.826	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.137	-0.805	0.002
PROMO2	52.000	0.000	3.394	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.075	-0.555	-0.240
PAY1	53.000	0.000	2.594	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.111	-0.809	0.175
PAY2	54.000	0.000	2.981	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.056	-0.610	-0.226
SUPERVISOR1	55.000	0.000	3.839	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.167	0.015	-0.912
SUPERVISOR2	56.000	0.000	3.768	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.146	-0.345	-0.702
SUPERVISOR3	57.000	0.000	3.619	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.235	-0.772	-0.506
CUSTOM1	58.000	0.000	4.239	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.546	-0.282	0.073
CUSTOM2	59.000	0.000	4.123	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.560	0.062	0.030
CUSTOM3	60.000	0.000	4.077	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.585	-0.091	-0.013
FELLOW1	61.000	0.000	4.426	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.567	-0.798	-0.346
FELLOW2	62.000	0.000	4.400	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.658	-0.605	-0.652
OC1	63.000	0.000	3.503	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.215	-0.468	-0.651
OC2	64.000	0.000	3.697	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.086	0.236	-0.837
OC4	65.000	0.000	3.942	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.917	2.525	-1.402
OC5	66.000	0.000	4.110	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.941	2.033	-1.302
OC6	67.000	0.000	3.671	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.084	0.185	-0.816

<b>OC7</b>	68.000	0.000	4.135	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.004	0.757	-1.088
<b>OC8</b>	69.000	0.000	4.065	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.014	1.192	-1.218
<b>PEP1</b>	70.000	0.000	4.077	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.791	2.008	-1.007
<b>PEP2</b>	71.000	0.000	4.065	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.885	0.267	-0.691
<b>PEP4</b>	72.000	0.000	3.819	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.831	0.914	-0.740
<b>S1EXTWB1</b>	73.000	0.000	2.871	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.274	-1.009	0.321
<b>S1EXTWB2</b>	74.000	0.000	3.032	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.252	-1.037	0.018
<b>S1EXTWB3</b>	75.000	0.000	2.194	2.000	1.000	5.000	0.971	0.778	0.797
<b>S1INTWB1</b>	76.000	0.000	4.271	5.000	1.000	5.000	0.979	1.160	-1.359
<b>S1INTWB3</b>	77.000	0.000	3.335	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.091	-0.663	-0.098
<b>S1INTWB5</b>	78.000	0.000	3.794	4.000	2.000	5.000	1.111	-1.229	-0.380
<b>S2EXTWB1</b>	79.000	0.000	2.303	2.000	1.000	5.000	1.086	0.282	0.898
<b>S2EXTWB2</b>	80.000	0.000	2.845	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.250	-1.148	0.117
<b>S2EXTWB4</b>	81.000	0.000	2.052	2.000	1.000	5.000	1.002	0.765	0.984
<b>S2INTWB1</b>	82.000	0.000	3.755	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.204	-0.709	-0.592
<b>S2INTWB2</b>	83.000	0.000	3.755	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.132	-0.443	-0.636
<b>S2INTWB3</b>	84.000	0.000	3.477	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.092	-0.759	-0.227
<b>JOB TENURE</b>	85.000	0.000	3.039	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.280	-1.034	0.020
<b>AGE</b>	86.000	0.000	2.735	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.048	-0.196	0.583
<b>GENDER</b>	87.000	0.000	0.413	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.492	-1.897	0.357
<b>EDUCATION</b>	88.000	0.000	3.052	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.856	-1.047	-0.100
<b>DELEGATE</b>	89.000	0.000	0.103	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.304	5.001	2.634
<b>MANAGER</b>	90.000	0.000	0.219	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.414	-0.126	1.370
<b>COOP</b>	91.000	0.000	0.581	1.000	0.000	1.000	0.493	-1.916	-0.330
<b>COOP MEMBER</b>	92.000	0.000	0.277	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.448	-1.005	1.004
<b>CHILDREN</b>	93.000	0.000	0.574	1.000	0.000	1.000	0.494	-1.933	-0.303
<b>COUPLE</b>	94.000	0.000	0.755	1.000	0.000	1.000	0.430	-0.576	-1.196

## Appendix 10: Fornell and Larcker's Criterion (1981) (Chapter III)

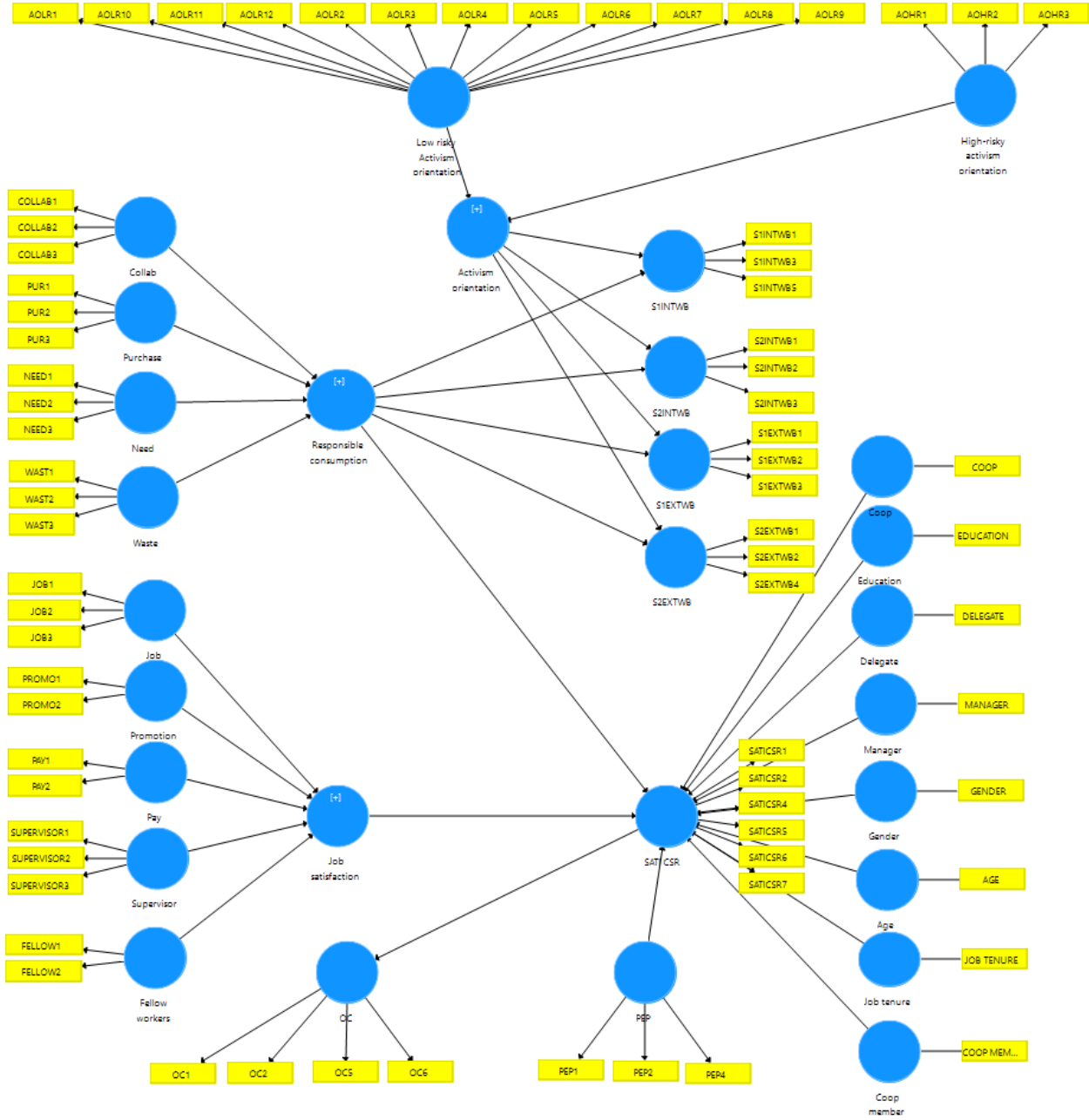
	Column1	Collab	Customers	Fellow workers	HRAO	Job	LRAO	Need	OC	PEP	Pay	Promo	Purchase	S1EXTWB	S1INTWB	S2EXTWB	S2INTWB	SATI CSR	Supervisor	Waste	
Collab		<b>0.781</b>																			
Customers	0.002		<b>0.886</b>																		
Fellow work	0.088	0.386		<b>0.927</b>																	
HRAO	0.344	0.039	0.102		<b>0.858</b>																
Job	-0.012	0.048	0.282	-0.046		<b>0.940</b>															
LRAO	0.312	0.030	0.030	0.720	0.090		<b>0.815</b>														
Need	0.244	0.045	0.188	0.175	0.078	0.163		<b>0.802</b>													
OC	-0.059	0.161	0.309	-0.010	0.684	0.112	0.045		<b>0.877</b>												
PEP	-0.017	0.182	0.229	-0.160	0.436	0.029	0.092	0.575		<b>0.821</b>											
Pay	-0.054	-0.015	0.129	-0.144	0.154	-0.029	0.017	0.060	-0.019		<b>0.939</b>										
Promotion	-0.051	0.060	0.197	0.036	0.559	0.107	-0.079	0.489	0.193	0.336		<b>0.914</b>									
Purchase	0.423	0.228	0.137	0.199	0.133	0.285	0.485	0.143	0.301	-0.083	-0.012		<b>0.844</b>								
S1EXTWB	0.023	0.095	-0.029	0.186	-0.245	0.199	0.098	-0.219	-0.024	0.017	-0.161	0.103		<b>0.855</b>							
S1INTWB	0.263	0.121	0.160	0.295	0.300	0.365	0.213	0.275	0.216	-0.107	0.217	0.391	0.049		<b>0.783</b>						
S2EXTWB	0.172	-0.007	-0.140	0.259	-0.430	0.256	0.097	-0.376	-0.164	-0.099	-0.229	0.131	0.659	0.018		<b>0.873</b>					
S2INTWB	0.248	0.067	0.097	0.295	0.188	0.308	0.219	0.119	0.164	-0.019	0.171	0.307	0.217	0.768	0.217		<b>0.788</b>				
SATI CSR	-0.052	0.099	0.277	-0.001	0.661	0.161	0.016	0.836	0.458	0.159	0.431	0.083	-0.210	0.278	-0.334	0.119		<b>0.852</b>			
Supervisor	-0.017	0.163	0.383	0.001	0.631	0.084	0.088	0.588	0.316	0.207	0.434	0.068	-0.131	0.296	-0.322	0.290	0.612		<b>0.929</b>		
Waste	0.408	0.200	0.145	0.253	0.110	0.274	0.513	0.090	0.242	-0.017	-0.052	0.694	0.154	0.339	0.124	0.290	0.085	0.143		<b>0.831</b>	












# Appendix 12: Measurement model (Chapter III)



## Appendix 13: Items of the survey used in the final measurement model (originally in French) (Chapter III)

*NB: In grey, items that are not used in the models, but mentioned in the further research section*

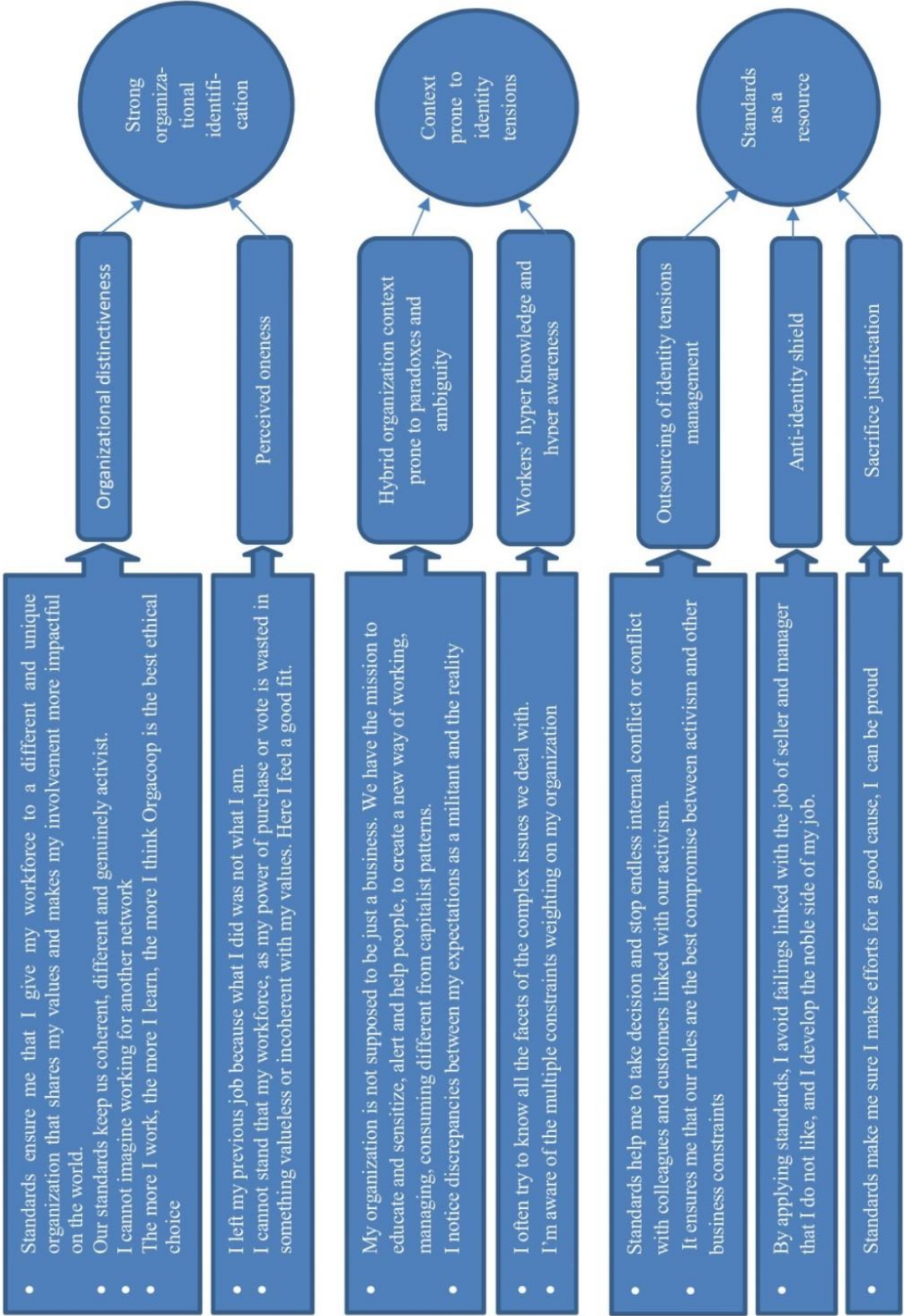
Responsible consumption	PUR1	I buy products that respect the environment, local, seasonal	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
	PUR2	I buy products with eco-labels or certifications	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
	PUR3	I buy products that are not dangerous for the environment	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
	NEED1	I don't buy things I don't need, even if they are on sale	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
	NEED2	I take care that my purchases do not lead to the accumulation of unnecessary things	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
	NEED3	I only buy the things I really need	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
	COLLAB1	As much as possible, I rent or borrow	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
	COLLAB2	As much as possible, I share or pool my objects	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
	COLLAB3	Whenever possible, I use public transport and facilities	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
	WAST1	I choose my products to aim for zero waste (durable, washable ...)	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
	WAST2	I buy products in recyclable packaging	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
	WAST3	I buy in bulk or returnable	1- Completely disagree 5- Completely agree
High-Risk Activism orientation	AOHR1	Engage in a militant activity in which you knew you will be arrested?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOHR2	Engage in an illegal act as part of a militant protest?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOHR3	Engage in any militant activity in which you fear for your personal safety?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
Low-risk activism orientation	AOLR1	Invite a friend to attend a meeting of a militant event	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOLR2	Present facts to contest another person's social or political statement?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOLR3	Boycott a product for militant reason?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely

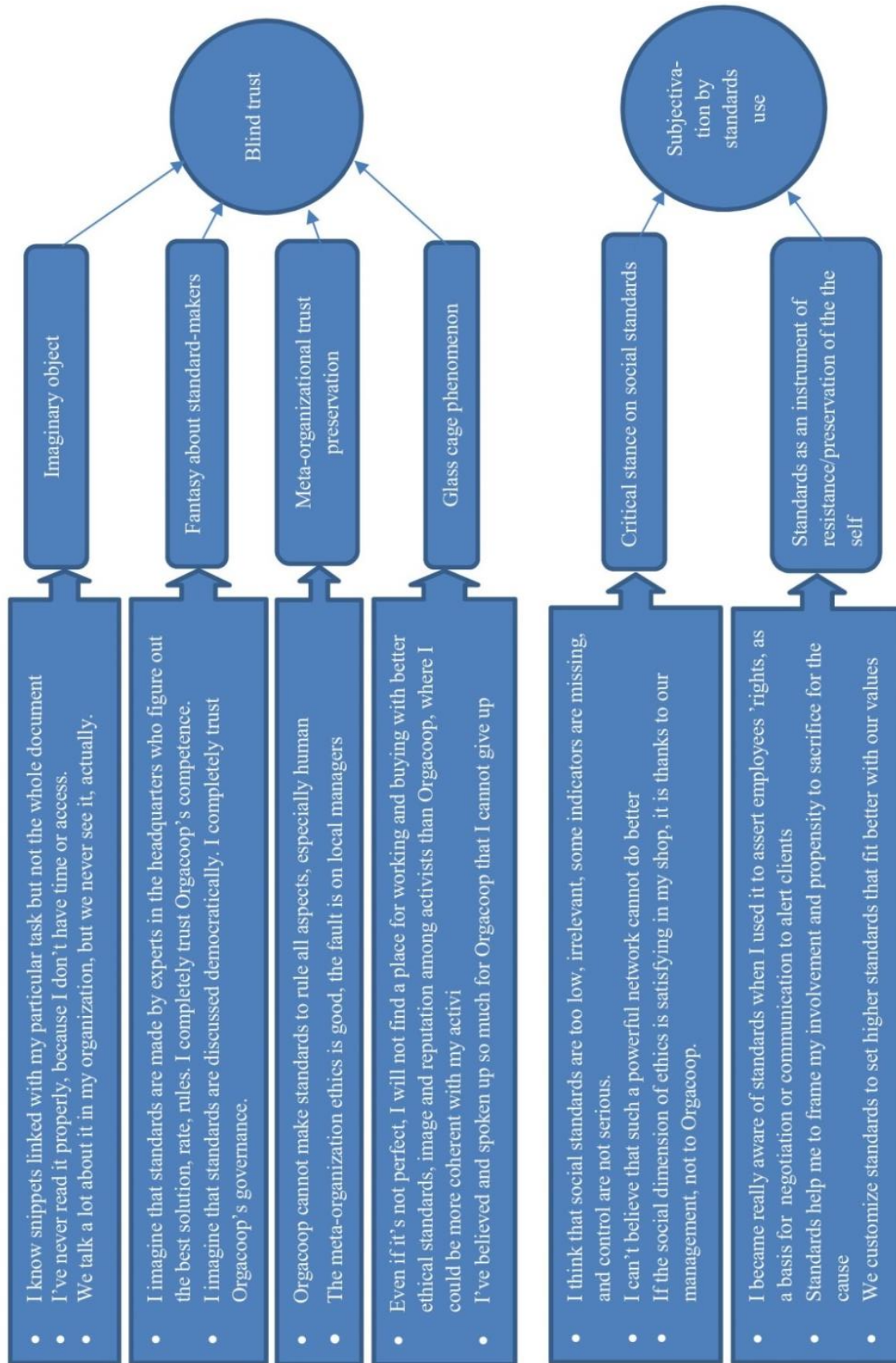
	AOLR4	Distribute information representing a particular social or environmental group's cause	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOLR5	Attend an informational meeting of a militant group?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOLR6	Attend an activist organization's regular planning meeting?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOLR7	Sign a petition for an activist cause?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOLR8	Encourager un ami à rejoindre une organisation militante	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOLR9	Try to change a friend's or acquaintance's mind about a social or environmental issue?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOLR10	Donate money to an activist NGO?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOLR11	Wear a T-shirt or button with an activist message?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
	AOLR12	Attend a talk on a particular group's social or political concerns?	0- Extremely unlikely 3- Extremely likely
Satisfaction regarding CSR	SATICSR1	When you think about your network, you feel :	1  2  3-  4  5- 
	SATICSR2	In comparison with what you expected from this network, its ethical practices are	1- Much worse 5- Much better
	SATICSR4	How do you feel about this network thinking about its responsible approach?	1- Furious 5- Delighted
	SATICSR5	Would you recommend your network to clients for its social and environmental actions?	1- Certainly not 5- Certainly
	SATICSR6	Would you advise someone close to you to work in your network because of their activist approach?	1- Certainly not 5- Certainly
	SATICSR7	Regarding the general ethics of your network, you are:	1- Very dissatisfied 5- Very satisfied
	Job satisfaction	JOB1	My work gives me a sense of accomplishment
JOB2		My work is satisfying	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
JOB3		I am really doing something worthwhile in my job	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
PROMO1		My opportunities for advancement are limited (reverse)	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
PROMO2		There are plenty of good jobs for those who and to get ahead	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
PAY1		My pay is low in comparison with what others get for similar work in other companies (reverse)	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree

	PAY2	In my opinion, the pay here is lower than in other companies (reverse)	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	SUPERVISOR1	My employer/manager really tries to get our ideas about things	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	SUPERVISOR2	My employer/manager has always been fair in dealing with me	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	SUPERVISOR3	My employer/manager gives us credit and praise for work well done	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	FELLOW1	My fellow workers are pleasant	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	FELLOW2	The people I work with are very friendly	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
Organizational commitment	OC1	I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this network to be successful	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	OC2	I talk up this network to my friends as a great network to work for	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	OC5	I am proud to tell others that I am a part of this network	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	OC6	This network really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
Whistleblowing intentions	If you witnessed practices that you feel are inconsistent with the ethics you expect from your network, what would you do?		
	Scenario 1: You have to list products that you find outrageous to sell and inconsistent with the product ethics of the network.		
	S1EXTWB1	I would let customers know by word of mouth	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	S1EXTWB2	I would let people know by word of mouth outside of work, around me	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	S1EXTWB3	I would reveal it to the general public, through social networks or the media	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	S1INTWB1	I would call the network headquarters / platform	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	S1INTWB3	I would invest myself as a representative to make a difference "	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	S1INTWB5	I would call the network members' commissions	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	Second scenario: you witness practices and treatments towards your colleagues that you consider unfair and inconsistent with the displayed ethics of the network.		
	S2INTWB1	I would call the siege	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree

	S2INTWB2	I would call on the network members' commissions	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	S2INTWB3	I would invest myself as a representative to make a difference "	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	S2EXTWB1	I would let customers know by word of mouth	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	S2EXTWB2	I would let people know by word of mouth outside of work, around me	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	S2EXTWB4	I would reveal it to the general public, through social networks or the media	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
Control variables	JOB TENURE	Your job tenure	1- < 1 year - 1 to 3 years = 2, 3 to 5 years = 3, 5 to 10 years = 4, > 10 years =5
	AGE	You age	1-18 to 25, 2- 25 to 35 3- 35 to 45=3, 4- 45 to 55=4, 5- 55 and more
	GENDER	You gender	1-Male 0- Female
	EDUCATION	You highest diploma	1- No diploma, 2-Bac, CAP/BEP, 3- Bachelor, 4-Master, 5-Phd
	DELEGATE	Have you ever been staff or union representative?	1-Yes 0- No
	MANAGER	Have you ever been manager in that network?	1-Yes 0- No
	COOPMEMBER	Are you a member of the cooperative as an employee?	1-Yes 0- No
	CHILDREN	Do you have family responsibilities?	1-Yes 0- No
	COUPLE	Do you live as a couple?	1-Yes 0- No
	COOP	What is the legal form of your shop?	1- SCOP, SCIC, SA coopérative de consommateurs 0- SARL, SAS, SCEA an other
	SATIENV	In particular, how do you find the actions undertaken by this network: - regarding environmental preservation	1- Very unsatisfactory 5- Very satisfactory
	SATISOLI	In particular, how do you find the actions undertaken by this network: - regarding solidarity with producers	1- Very unsatisfactory 5- Very satisfactory
	SATISOC	In particular, how do you find the actions undertaken by this network: - regarding workers' conditions in the network	1- Very unsatisfactory 5- Very satisfactory
Perceived External prestige	PEP1	Our network has a good reputation	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	PEP2	My network is considered one of the best organic network	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree
	PEP4	People of my community think highly of my Network	1- Strongly disagree 5 -Strongly agree

# Appendix 14 : Findings (Chapter II)









Marie LEMAIRE

Activist worker's responses to tensions in hybrid organizations:

The case of Solidarity Economy

## Résumé

La période actuelle voit grandir la part de travailleurs « militants » ayant expressément choisi leur occupation en réponse au besoin de défendre des intérêts collectifs et d'apporter des solutions aux problèmes sociaux et environnementaux. Ils espèrent trouver dans les organisations dites « hybrides » combinant activité marchande et mission sociale un cadre de travail permettant d'aligner leurs valeurs et leur profession. Or, les logiques divergentes à l'œuvre dans ces organisations tendent à les soumettre à d'importantes tensions, amplifiées ou atténuées par le contexte organisationnel. Sur le terrain de l'économie solidaire, nous explorons les réponses à ces tensions et les pratiques organisationnelles pouvant apporter un soutien à ces travailleurs. Nous identifions la façon dont l'individu donne du sens aux contradictions persistantes par le récit. Nous démontrons le support organisationnel rendu possible par la mise en œuvre de standards de responsabilité sociale de l'organisation (RSO). Nous vérifions l'impact de l'engagement social personnel sur la satisfaction concernant la RSO et l'intention de « lancer l'alerte » en cas de dérive éthique perçue, comparé à d'autres antécédents.

Mots clefs : Militantisme, standards RSE/RSO, tensions, paradoxe, organisation hybride, récit de vie, analyse structurale, analyse sociologique

## Résumé en anglais

The current period is seeing a growing proportion of "activist" workers who have expressly chosen their occupation in response to the need to defend collective interests and provide solutions to social and environmental problems. They hope to find in the so-called "hybrid organizations" combining market activity and social mission a framework for aligning their values and their profession. However, the divergent logics at work in these organizations tend to subject them to significant tensions, amplified or attenuated by the organizational context. We explore the responses to these tensions and the organizational practices that can support these workers. We identify how the individual gives meaning to persistent contradictions through storytelling. We demonstrate the organizational support made possible by the provision of CSR standards. We test the impact of personal social engagement on satisfaction with CSR and the intention to "blow the whistle" in case of perceived ethical drift, compared to other antecedents.

Key words: Activism, CSR standards, tensions, paradox, hybrid organization, life-story telling, structural analysis, sociological approach, whistle-blowing

Résumé en français de la thèse

**Le travailleur militant à l'épreuve des tensions dans les organisations hybrides, réponses individuelles et pratiques organisationnelles.**

**Le cas de l'économie solidaire**

**Présentation de la problématique de recherche**

**Le travailleur militant**

*« Faut faire ce qui est dans notre mesure de faire. Je fais ce que je peux, le colibri, dédicace à Pierre Rabhi, faites ce que vous pouvez quoi. Faites même de votre mieux, comme ça on est irréprochable. On ne peut pas avoir de culpabilité, on a fait de notre mieux. Même si c'est pas assez...on a fait de notre mieux. » (Ben, 2017, Entretien pour le Chapitre I)*

L'extrait de l'entretien accordé dans le cadre de ce travail de recherche par ce jeune agriculteur bio illustre avec force la quête exigeante d'un nombre croissant de travailleurs. La multiplication exponentielle ces dernières décennies des "bullshit jobs", ces emplois qui ne contribuent en rien à la société, interroge parfois violemment nos contemporains (Graeber, 2019). Le manque de sens, ainsi que les conflits de valeurs figureraient en bonne place parmi les facteurs favorisant le burnout, ce nouveau « mal du siècle » ravageant durablement les vies de certains individus (Zawiedja, 2017).

En réaction, et au prix parfois de sacrifices économiques et sociaux, un nombre croissant d'individus chercheraient à ce que leur travail soit une source de sens, de définition de soi, et leur donne l'opportunité de « faire la différence ». L'idée de se découvrir « une vocation » et de répondre à une mission particulière, souvent liée à la poursuite d'un idéal esthétique, artistique ou scientifique est aujourd'hui valorisée et relayée par les médias populaires (Cardador et Caza, 2012 ; Dik and Duffy, 2012). Mais à mesure que grandissent la conscience et la connaissance des problèmes environnementaux et sociaux, ce qu'on qualifie "d'idéalisme social" influence de plus en plus les choix de carrière de nombreux individus. Une part des travailleurs, en réponse à l'ampleur des défis sociétaux actuels, oriente son choix professionnel vers un emploi au pire neutre mais au mieux ayant un impact positif sur la société et constituant un vecteur de changement ou de plus-value sociale.

Cette recherche d'alignement avec des valeurs personnelles serait particulièrement présente au sein de la « Génération Y », ou des « Millenials », c'est-à-dire des individus nés entre 1981 et 2000 (Ozcelik, 2015), qui constituent aujourd'hui la moitié de la population active des pays occidentaux. Parmi les différences générationnelles (Eisner, 2005), ces individus accordent beaucoup d'importance au sens trouvé dans le travail (Gong *et al.*, 2018) et au fait d'appartenir à des organisations ayant un impact positif sur la société (Weber, 2019). Au travail comme dans sa consommation, cette génération est davantage en quête de responsabilité sociale. De ce fait, les entreprises socialement responsables apparaissent très attractives aux yeux de cette population (Alonso-Almeida & Llach, 2019; Klimkiewicz & Oltra, 2017).

Un cas extrême de ce type d'attitude par rapport au travail est celui des individus qui choisissent un travail pour pouvoir vivre leur orientation

militante. Dans cette thèse, nous appelons "**travailleurs militants**" les individus impliqués dans cette démarche. En référence à Corning and Meyers (2002), nous les définissons comme des individus ayant expressément choisi un travail répondant au besoin de défendre des intérêts collectifs, d'apporter des solutions aux problèmes sociaux et environnementaux.

Les mêmes auteurs définissent l'orientation militante comme « *la propension individuelle affirmée et relativement stable, mais tout de même changeante, à s'engager dans divers comportements collectifs, sociopolitiques, de résolution de problèmes allant d'actes à faible risque, passifs et institutionnalisés à des comportements à haut risque, actifs et non conventionnels.* » Du fait de la stabilité de cette orientation, les auteurs soulignent que celle-ci aurait tendance à persister sur de longues durées pouvant atteindre des décennies, bien que certaines influences externes augmentent la propension à agir (ex : effets intergénérationnels, premières expériences militantes, nouvel environnement social), quand certaines la réduisent (en particulier le fait d'avoir des enfants). L'orientation militante étant *stable* et *affirmée*, il semble évident que ces travailleurs militants adoptent des comportements particuliers dans leur cadre de travail, ouvrant un champ d'études en théorie des organisations. Le militantisme au travail a ainsi souvent été abordé sous l'angle de l'idéalisme par les chercheurs de ce domaine, chercheurs qui se sont notamment intéressés jusqu'alors aux dynamiques créées par la cohabitation de ce type de travailleurs au profil particulier avec d'autres travailleurs. L'idéaliste, par opposition au « pragmatique » (Ashforth and Reingen, 2014) ou au « capitaliste », « pluraliste » ou à « l'indifférent » (Besharov, 2014) se caractérise par le fait qu'il place les valeurs sociales au-dessus de la rentabilité financière et privilégie avant tout la mission sociale de l'organisation.

## **Tensions induites par le militantisme au travail et conséquences organisationnelles**

Une partie des dynamiques créées par le militantisme au travail reste pourtant mal comprise. La littérature montre que la poursuite d'un but supérieur et le sens trouvé au travail ont des conséquences positives sur le bien-être perçu et la satisfaction dans la vie, la satisfaction au travail, l'implication dans la carrière et dans l'organisation, ainsi que, l'identification organisationnelle, c'est-à-dire "une unité perçue avec une organisation et l'expérience des succès et des échecs de l'organisation comme étant la sienne" (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Les bénéfices organisationnels sont multiples (Wzesniewski *et al.*, 1997 ; Cardador et Caza, 2012 ; Elangovan *et al.*, 2010 ; Duffy *et al.*, 2011 ; Duffy and Dik, 2013 ; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). Cependant, le militantisme au travail porte en germe un certain nombre de difficultés. Les travailleurs militants réagissent de façon singulière, leur catégorie faisant exception aux retombées positives de certaines pratiques organisationnelles. Parmi les quatre catégories de membres étudiées, Besharov (2014) observe que les "idéalistes" sont les seuls à ne pas pouvoir être convertis à une autre identité, même pluraliste. Du fait de cette inflexibilité, certains doivent renoncer à des responsabilités de manager, ou quitter l'organisation. Ils sont aussi les seuls susceptibles d'expérimenter la "violation de leur identité", c'est-à-dire d'interpréter les comportements des autres membres comme une violation morale, une transgression de leurs valeurs. La brèche idéologique agit également comme une violation du "contrat psychologique" conclu avec l'organisation (Rousseau, 1989), contrat tacite basé sur des attentes fondées sur ce que sont l'individu et l'organisation mais définissant néanmoins des obligations réciproques (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). Chez ces travailleurs, on observe un risque accru de dés-identification, de désillusion et des conséquences organisationnelles (intention de quitter l'entreprise, réduction des efforts) (Besharov, 2014).

La poursuite d'un but supérieur et d'une mission pro-sociale confère à la population militante une grande partie des caractéristiques de la « vocation », dont on reconnaît qu'elle peut fragiliser l'individu. Selon Schabram et Maitlis (2016) ayant étudié l'évolution de travailleurs animés par une mission pro-sociale dans des refuges pour animaux, répondre à une vocation impliquerait de devoir mettre en place un processus pour surmonter les difficultés qui s'avèrent intenses et substantielles car « *une vocation implique un travail enraciné dans les valeurs qui importent énormément à l'individu* ». Dans le temps, ces individus adoptent des parcours divergents aux conséquences plus ou moins délétères. Ces travailleurs sont plus touchés par le surmenage, le burnout, l'addiction au travail, et éprouvent plus de difficulté à maintenir un équilibre entre vie privée et vie professionnelle (Cardador et Caza, 2012 ; Duffy and Dik, 2012, 2013). L'étude de Bunderson et Thompson (2009) auprès des soigneurs de zoo montre aussi que les travailleurs répondant à une vocation sont davantage sujets à l'exploitation par l'organisation, qui ne juge pas utile de leur donner les mêmes compensations financières qu'aux autres travailleurs.

Ces auteurs pointent en outre le risque majeur de « sur-identification » au travail, décrivant un individu dont la personnalité est réduite, devenue aveugle aux autres enjeux, s'engageant sur une trajectoire ayant finalement des conséquences à long terme néfastes pour l'organisation qui l'emploie (Galvin, Lange and Ashforth, 2015). Ainsi, la quête d'un travail qui ait un sens profond pour le travailleur peut évidemment rejaillir négativement sur l'organisation : ces travailleurs seraient sujets à la myopie dans le processus de décision, au manque de flexibilité, et à une poursuite incessante de standards toujours plus exigeants (Cardador et Caza, 2012 ; Duffy and Dik, 2012, 2013). En conséquence, certaines organisations préfèrent des profils moins tranchés, et recrutent par exemple des travailleurs n'ayant pas encore développé cette orientation pro-sociale, plus faciles à modeler selon les logiques de l'organisation (Battilana et Dorado, 2010).

## **Les organisations hybrides, refuge du travailleur militant ?**

Les travailleurs militants ont naturellement tendance à se tourner vers des organisations partageant leur mission sociale personnelle au sein desquelles ils espèrent trouver un écho à leurs valeurs. Ainsi, les recherches dont ces travailleurs "idéalistes" ont fait l'objet sont souvent menées dans le contexte d'organisations qui défendent une mission sociale ou environnementale, tout en s'engageant dans des activités marchandes pour soutenir leurs opérations. Apparues au cours des dernières décennies dans le secteur marchand dans le but d'apporter une réponse à des problématiques sociales et environnementales, ces « organisations hybrides » sont nommées ainsi du fait de la dualité de leurs identités, de leurs logiques, de leurs ressources ou encore de leurs modes de gouvernance.

Dans leur définition étendue, les organisations hybrides intègrent des logiques institutionnelles distinctes (Sirris, 2019; Battilana *et al.*, 2015 ; Battilana 2018), des objectifs divergents (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Smith & Besharov, 2019), des formes organisationnelles (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Padgett & Powell, 2012), des ressources et des identités organisationnelles multiples (Besharov, 2014). Ainsi, un hôpital ou un orchestre dans lesquels deux logiques majeures coexistent peuvent être considérés comme des organisations hybrides. Dans cette thèse, nous focalisons la recherche sur les organisations s'engageant à créer un impact environnemental ou social positif au travers d'activités commerciales, (ex.: Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Battilana *et al.*, 2015; Hoffman, Gullo, & Haigh, 2012; Pache & Santos, 2013). Les individus aux orientations pro-sociales travaillant au sein de ces organisations ont fait l'objet de nombreux travaux. Le terme d'« entreprise sociale » est apparu dans les années 1980-1990 pour désigner des organisations opérant dans des secteurs très variés (réinsertion, microfinance, secteur alimentaire, développement de logiciels) (Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey, 2011 ; Battilana, 2018). Ces organisations sont parfois qualifiées d'« alternatives » (Parker *et al.* 2014) puisqu'elles combinent la défense de

valeurs écologiques et sociales et la dénonciation des logiques de domination capitaliste, tout en poursuivant des activités commerciales.

En l'absence d'organisations économiquement viables et répondant en tout point à leur vocation, les organisations hybrides doivent *a priori* fournir aux travailleurs militants un cadre permettant un alignement satisfaisant du travail et des valeurs personnelles. Or les logiques contradictoires à l'œuvre dans ces organisations hybrides peuvent créer un sentiment de paradoxe chez l'individu, l'obligeant à gérer des contradictions persistantes entre éléments interdépendants. Ce niveau individuel de gestion des tensions est jusqu'à présent négligé par la littérature sur les organisations hybrides, plutôt focalisée sur le niveau organisationnel et les réponses aux questions émanant de la dualité des missions (Ashforth and Reingen, 2014 ; Battilana, 2018). Les auteurs en « Paradox studies » ayant davantage initié l'exploration de ce champ au niveau individuel dans d'autres contextes de recherche confirment que les contradictions créent d'importantes tensions au niveau individuel chez les membres d'une organisation (Miron-Spektor, 2018 ; Zheng et al., 2018) : « *stress, anxiété, inconfort, rigidité dans la prise de décision, les réponses et la progression dans les situations organisationnelles* » (Putnam et al., 2016, p. 68).

Miron-Spektor (2018) démontre cependant que la capacité de l'individu à gérer les tensions liées aux contradictions dépend de sa structuration mentale : être doté d'un « état d'esprit paradoxe » (vs dilemme), c'est-à-dire pouvoir accepter et être stimulé par les tensions, permet à certains individus d'être plus performants et innovants. Zheng *et al.* (2018) utilisent ce même cadre théorique du paradoxe pour étudier les femmes managers qui expérimentent les tensions entre l'agence, considérée comme un trait masculin, et la communion, perçue comme une injonction féminine. Ces auteurs suggèrent que l'intensité avec laquelle les femmes expérimentent ces tensions et la résilience psychologique dont elles font preuve dépend en



partie du niveau de congruence nécessaire à l'individu, rendant ces femmes plus ou moins aptes à supporter les contradictions. Or on peut présumer que le travailleur choisissant délibérément un emploi dans l'espoir de trouver un alignement avec ses valeurs est enclin à expérimenter les contradictions avec une certaine intensité, et rétif à accepter cet état d'esprit « paradoxe ». Nous pouvons donc nous demander comment ces individus, démontrant par leurs choix de carrière une certaine aversion au paradoxe, répondent individuellement aux logiques divergentes à l'œuvre dans les organisations hybrides, organisations qui représentent pourtant potentiellement le meilleur compromis au regard de leur orientation militante.

La littérature suggère que la capacité de l'individu à traiter au niveau individuel les logiques contradictoires dépendrait également du contexte organisationnel. Miron-Spektor (2018) met en lumière la rareté des ressources comme facteur d'accentuation des tensions, alors que Zheng *et al.* (2018) pointent l'importance de l'orientation vers l'apprentissage organisationnel dans l'adoption d'un état d'esprit permettant d'accepter les contradictions. Ainsi, en plus de caractéristiques propres à l'individu semblant déterminer son niveau de résilience psychologique face aux logiques divergentes, certains facteurs organisationnels pourraient amplifier ou au contraire réduire l'expérience des tensions et les réponses adoptées. L'intégration de cette catégorie particulière de travailleurs constitue un sujet d'étude pour la théorie des organisations, puisque le contexte organisationnel pourrait avoir un impact notable sur les tensions expérimentées et sur l'appariement *in fine* de l'organisation et de ses membres.

Certains travaux semblent conduire au constat que les tensions expérimentées par les travailleurs militants d'une part et les organisations hybrides d'autre part ne conduisent pas forcément au pire. Des travailleurs

à l'orientation militante authentique, stable et confirmée parviennent à s'épanouir dans des organisations assurant la dualité de leur mission (Besharov, 2014), et à surmonter le défi de répondre à une vocation (Schabram et Maitlis, 2016). Mieux encore, la présence de ces individus "idéalistes" peut être un atout pour les organisations hybrides, légitimant le panachage de profils des recrutés (Besharov, 2014 ; Battilana et Dorado, 2010). Ashforth et Reingen (2014) mettent plus particulièrement en lumière certaines dynamiques bénéfiques liées à la présence de militants : les conflits intergroupes entre « idéalistes » et « pragmatiques » et les rituels de réparation et de maintenance de la relation favorisant in fine le bon fonctionnement de l'organisation, un groupe projetant sur l'autre ce qu'il ne veut pas être, tout en ayant besoin que l'autre joue ce rôle pour la viabilité de l'organisation.

Cependant, la littérature confirme la particularité des réponses de ces travailleurs aux tensions, plus enclins à réagir négativement en cas de perception de violation morale, en faisant une population "sensible" (Besharov, 2014). Elle n'a cependant jusqu'alors qu'effleuré les facteurs pouvant favoriser des réponses émotionnelles et comportementales au niveau individuel, se bornant à identifier l'utilité des pratiques de management dans la reconnaissance de l'identité des « idéalistes », et leur bonne cohabitation avec les autres membres (Besharov, 2014), sans explorer davantage les dynamiques induites par ces pratiques. Les réactions de ces travailleurs en réponse aux tensions demeurent ainsi une sorte de « boîte noire » pour la théorie des organisations, où l'on devine que des prédispositions individuelles concurrencent ou amplifient des données contextuelles. A quoi tient cette délicate alchimie entre l'individu militant et l'organisation hybride ? Quelles prédispositions individuelles affectent les réponses de l'individu militant aux tensions liées à la confrontation de son idéalisme à la réalité organisationnelle ? Quelles sont les dynamiques sous-jacentes à l'œuvre créées par les pratiques de management ? Comment un support organisationnel peut-il être apporté dans la gestion des tensions ?

Dans quelles mesures d'autres variables organisationnelles peuvent-elles contribuer à attiser, ou au contraire à apaiser ces tensions ?

L'importance des enjeux présents et futurs et le rôle potentiel que peuvent jouer les organisations à travers la mise en œuvre de pratiques adaptées justifient à notre sens ce travail doctoral en théorie des organisations. Dans cette thèse, nous nous attacherons donc à répondre à la question de recherche générale suivante :

**Comment les travailleurs militants répondent-ils au niveau individuel aux tensions créées par leur quête d'idéal et la nature complexe des organisations hybrides qui les emploient?**

### **Contexte de recherche : le cas de l'économie solidaire**

Dans cette étude, nous lions le concept d'organisations hybrides avec celui d'"économie solidaire" (Laville, 2014; Laville, Hillenkamp, Eynaud, Coraggio, Ferrarini, Gaiger, Wanderley, 2016). L'économie solidaire est un sous-ensemble de l'économie sociale et solidaire (ESS) qui regroupe les organisations privées ou publiques (entreprises, coopératives, associations, mutuelles ou fondations), cherchant à concilier activité économique et utilité sociale. Cette économie solidaire se veut utile, tant du point de vue économique, social, écologique et politique. Elle est beaucoup plus qu'une économie de réparation, à laquelle elle a souvent été limitée mais a, au contraire, un rôle proactif : résister à la marchandisation de la vie et faire émerger des activités économiques à finalité humaine, favorisant l'avènement d'un autre monde, de nouveaux modes de vivre, de travailler et de produire de la richesse sans exploiter ni exclure, et sans détruire la planète.

Nous disposons d'une littérature satisfaisante sur ce secteur en France, permettant d'identifier les tensions potentielles à l'œuvre. L'économie solidaire présente en effet du fait de son hybridité un grand nombre de caractéristiques en faisant un terrain à la fois favorables aux tensions, tout en générant de grandes attentes chez ceux qui la rejoignent en espérant mettre en accord valeurs et travail. L'importance des attentes conjuguées avec les tensions inhérentes au terrain font du travailleur militant de l'économie solidaire un « cas extrême » de gestion du paradoxe : le travailleur a une hypersensibilité aux contradictions, et va être plongé dans un univers les favorisant. Les cas extrêmes sont souhaitables pour construire une théorie car les dynamiques sont davantage visibles (Eisenhardt, 1989)

Cette population de travailleurs militants présente par ailleurs des caractéristiques répandues: charge de famille, socialisation dans un environnement commun, expériences professionnelles dans des organisations classiques. Ces traits communs donnent à nos résultats un caractère plus généralisable que ne le seraient ceux concernant des profils plus atypiques (dans l'humanitaire, les congrégations religieuses ou encore les communautés alternatives vivant en autarcie).

## **Chapitre I : « *Parfois j'aimerais m'en foutre...* » - La construction des paradoxes et dilemmes en réponse aux tensions professionnelles chez les travailleurs des organisations hybrides.**

Dans cet essai, nous nous intéressons aux réponses que l'individu apporte au niveau individuel aux tensions identitaires en créant du sens par le récit. Alors que les défis que présentent les organisations hybrides ont été étudiés au niveau organisationnel, nous proposons un aperçu de la façon dont les individus membres de ces organisations interprètent les tensions auxquelles ils sont confrontés dans le cadre de leur travail.

Nous répondons dans ce chapitre aux deux questions de recherche suivantes:

**À quelles interprétations les travailleurs ont-ils recours lorsqu'ils font face aux tensions créées par la nature complexe des organisations hybrides?**

**Dans quelles mesures ces interprétations reflètent-elles un état d'esprit « paradoxe » versus « dilemme » de leurs auteurs?**

Pour cela, nous proposons une analyse structurale du récit de vie (Demazière et Dubar, 1997) de douze travailleurs de l'économie solidaire marchande. Nous réalisons douze entretiens approfondis auprès de membres d'organisations françaises hybrides afin de documenter la façon dont ils justifient les tensions qu'ils expérimentent dans leur vie professionnelle.

En nous référant à la littérature sur le paradoxe (Miron-Spektor *et al.*, 2018), nous montrons que les membres de ces organisations présentent une forte sensibilité à ce qu'ils perçoivent comme un dilemme entre leurs valeurs personnelles pro-sociales et les valeurs portées par les organisations de type capitaliste. Nous documentons les tensions professionnelles personnelles qu'ils vivent en plus de celles générées par le caractère hybride de l'organisation pour laquelle ils travaillent.

Nous mettons en évidence de nombreuses tensions intenses persistant au niveau individuel chez les travailleurs militants des organisations hybrides, malgré le fait qu'ils aient choisi leur profession afin de mettre en accord leurs valeurs pro-sociales personnelles et celles de leur organisation. Conformément à la littérature précédente sur les organisations hybrides, nous trouvons les tensions émanant de la double nature de ces organisations et leur poursuite conjointe d'objectifs financiers et sociaux (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Besharov, 2014; Battilana, 2018). L'approche individuelle que nous utilisons ici nous permet de plus d'identifier d'autres sources de tensions, liées notamment aux attentes élevées vis à vis du caractère solidaire des relations sociales prédominant sur l'intérêt et le profit individuel, aux exigences parfois aliénantes d'exemplarité dans la sphère professionnelle et privée de la part des clients, et enfin à des loyautés familiales complexes tiraillant l'individu dans diverses directions.

Tous les individus que nous avons étudiés sont animés par la recherche de congruence avec leurs valeurs personnelles. Ils manifestent une hypersensibilité aux contradictions, qui a induit des choix professionnels souvent au prix de sacrifices sociaux et économiques.

Nous observons cependant des variations dans la façon dont ces travailleurs traitent les incohérences qui persistent. Les individus confrontés à des

tensions similaires recourent soit à un état d'esprit dans lequel ils acceptent ces tensions inhérentes à leur profession (état d'esprit du paradoxe), soit à un état d'esprit dans lequel ils perçoivent les tensions comme devant être éliminées (état d'esprit du dilemme). Trois schémas narratifs se distinguent au sein de cet état d'esprit du dilemme, correspondant à des risques personnels et organisationnels particuliers. Au sein même de cette dernière catégorie, nous identifions trois façons de penser le dilemme.

Nous montrons donc qu'il n'y a pas un type de militant, mais différents types au sein de cette population dans la façon de penser les contradictions. L'adoption d'un schéma interprétatif particulier dépendrait de caractéristiques semblant individuelles, mais aussi du contexte organisationnel.

Nous contribuons à la littérature sur l'organisation hybride en observant les variations interprétatives considérables dans la façon dont les défis sont vécus au niveau individuel.

Nous contribuons à la littérature sur le paradoxe en offrant des descriptions précises des façons de penser le paradoxe et le dilemme que les travailleurs des organisations hybrides peuvent exploiter pour faire face aux tensions professionnelles omniprésentes et en soulignant les dimensions dynamiques de ces façons de penser.

Cette observation ouvre des perspectives concernant la création de pratiques organisationnelles pouvant aider à soulager les tensions individuelles des travailleurs militants, notamment grâce à certains outils de gestion.

	Profil du narrateur	Disjonction principale	Verbatim
État d'esprit « Paradoxe »	<b>The bridger</b>	Ce qu'on peut faire dans l'idéal/ ce que je choisis de faire	<i>“Si les gens te croient parfaits, ça les inhibe” (Paul)</i>
État d'esprit “Dilemme”	<b>The sinner</b>	Ce que je devrais faire / ce que j'essaie de faire	<i>“D'une façon sarcastique, je dis que je suis devenu cupide” (Victor)</i>
	<b>The quitter</b>	Ce que je voulais faire / ce que j'ai été contraint(e) de faire	<i>“A chaque fois qu'on doit arrondir un angle on s'éloigne du projet de base et au bout d'un moment c'est plus très intéressant » (Nathan)</i>
	<b>The believer</b>	Ce qu'on fait dans mon organisation/ ce qui est fait ailleurs	<i>“On a un comité d'éthique qui veille aux grains” (Oscar)</i>

*Résumé des quatre schémas narratifs*



## **Chapitre II : « C'est une Bible ! » - L'apport des standards organisationnels de Responsabilité Sociale et Environnementale dans l'encadrement des tensions chez les travailleurs militants dans les organisations hybrides.**

Dans cette étude des réponses du travailleur militant aux tensions identitaires, nous explorons cette fois l'interaction du travailleur avec les pratiques organisationnelles dans ce processus. Le précédent chapitre suggérait la possibilité pour les organisations hybrides de soulager le travailleur militant dans la gestion des tensions. Nous proposons d'explorer dans ce second chapitre cette piste de recherche par une approche sociologique des outils de gestion (Chiapello et Gilbert, 2013). Les Critical Management Studies (CMS) ont surtout démontré la potentielle exploitation de l'individu par les pratiques RSO et son côté instrumental (Costas and Kärreman, 2013 ; Banerjee, 2008). Nous nous intéressons ici à une population que nous pouvons supposer plus critique envers ces outils: l'objectif de cette étude empirique est ainsi de comprendre le processus d'adaptation des travailleurs militants aux standards de responsabilité sociale des entreprises (RSE) susceptibles de générer des tensions individuelles du fait de leur insuffisance ou des contradictions avec les attentes du travailleur militant concernant l'éthique de son organisation. Les CSM ayant également mis en lumière la potentielle aliénation de l'identité individuelle de ces travailleurs en quête d'idéal (Bunderson and Thompson, 2009 ; Schabram & Mailtli, 2017), en particulier dans les organisations hybrides (Kenny, 2010 ; Endrissat, 2015), nous nous interrogeons sur l'impact de ces outils concernant cette question.

Nous tentons donc de répondre à la question de recherche suivante:

**Pour la catégorie particulière des travailleurs militants, quel rôle les standards de RSO jouent-ils dans la gestion des tensions créées par la nature des organisations hybrides?**

A cette fin, nous analysons le récit d'individus combinant militantisme et travail au sein d'un réseau coopératif de magasins bio, Orgacoop (un pseudonyme), organisation présentant une identité hybride militante historique et commerciale. Cette méta-organisation encadre l'activité d'enseignes indépendantes à travers un cahier des charges (un ensemble de standards) détaillant les impératifs de RSE.

Nous avons exploré le support potentiel offert par certains outils de gestion dans la gestion des tensions personnelles chez les travailleurs militants, dont l'existence était suggérée par les résultats du Chapitre I. Nous avons exploré la façon dont cette population particulière perçoit et utilise les standards RSO au sein des organisations hybrides. Nous découvrons que face à l'importance de tensions similaires à celles dépeintes dans le Chapitre I, les travailleurs de première ligne manifestent un grand besoin de support organisationnel. Le cahier des charges apparaît alors comme un outil de gestion omniprésent et central, mais que presque personne ne connaît réellement. Ce document semble important par sa simple existence plutôt que par son contenu. Les travailleurs utilisent ces standards RSE comme une ressource pour sous-traiter la gestion des tensions identitaires à l'organisation. Ces standards confirment l'identité militante et permet au travailleur d'échapper aux anti-identités (qu'il refuse d'endosser, comme celle de vendeur ou de dirigeant par exemple) Ces standards protègent les travailleurs de l'excès de questionnement et de la sur-implication, et les aident à gérer ambiguïté et paradoxes, dans un contexte de rareté d'alternatives.

En écho à une approche foucauldienne (Foucault, 1984), nous opposons deux dynamiques. En tant que sujets des standards (agissant en utilisant les standards), les travailleurs témoignent une profonde confiance envers les normalisateurs, issue d'un imaginaire sur l'expertise et l'éthique de l'organisation. En se basant sur ce qui apparaît comme un mythe organisationnel, ils utilisent aveuglément cet outil de gestion comme une ressource pour encadrer l'hyper-conscience et l'hyper-connaissance créant de sempiternels conflits internes. En tant qu'objets de ces standards (c'est-à-dire concernant les standards sociaux internes régissant la façon dont le travailleur est utilisé comme ressource par l'organisation), les travailleurs ont tendance à adopter une position plus critique ou cynique. Par conséquent, les travailleurs insatisfaits utilisent ces standards comme une ressource dans une lutte salutaire, pour limiter leur propension à se sacrifier pour un but supérieur. Ces résultats invitent les organisations hybrides à un travail participatif de création et adaptation de ces standards, et à une attention particulière portée aux conditions de travail.

De ce fait, contrairement à ce que l'on pouvait présumer de la part de cette catégorie d'individus, ils s'appuient sur l'existence de standards RSO sans spécialement chercher à les connaître et faire preuve de l'esprit critique qui caractérise leur engagement par ailleurs. Ils s'en remettent à l'organisation qui semble partager leurs valeurs, à laquelle ils sous-treatent l'arbitrage entre objectifs social et financier. Nous mettons en lumière l'importance de ce besoin de support organisationnel, pouvant parfois s'apparenter à une foi aveugle. Cette confiance trouve toutefois ses limites : en cas d'insatisfaction des travailleurs concernant leurs propres conditions de travail, les travailleurs deviennent bien plus critiques concernant les standards RSO, notamment les standards sociaux internes

### **Chapitre III : « Hey, vous vous attendiez à quoi ? » - L'impact de la satisfaction au travail et de l'engagement militant sur la satisfaction concernant la RSE et les intentions de « lancer l'alerte »**

Dans ce dernier essai, nous poursuivons notre exploration des réponses du travailleur militant aux tensions liées à la nature hybride des organisations en identifiant au moyen d'une approche quantitative les différentes variables individuelles et organisationnelles impactant ses réponses cognitives, émotionnelles et conatives.

Intriguées par le discours récurrent entendu lors du précédent projet (Chapitre II) selon lequel certains magasins préféreraient ne pas recruter de candidats présentant un profil militant (Corning et Myers, 2002) car ils seraient plus enclins à être insatisfaits par la RSE et prompts à réagir le cas échéant, nous avons souhaité vérifier scientifiquement si cette stratégie se justifiait: l'engagement militant dans la vie privée rend-il les gens plus critiques vis-à-vis des pratiques de l'organisation, moins satisfaits et susceptibles de créer des conflits dans ce cas? Plus largement, l'identité idéaliste est-elle plus problématique ou précieuse (Ashforth et Reingen, 2014) pour une organisation? Comment cela affecte-t-il les luttes et les conflits?

Cette étude vise ainsi à répondre à la question de recherche suivante :

**Quel est l'impact réel de l'engagement social personnel sur la satisfaction à l'égard de la RSO et des intentions d'alerte par rapport à d'autres antécédents?**

En nous appuyant principalement sur la Théorie de l'Identité Sociale (Tajfel, 1974), nous proposons de tester empiriquement l'impact de l'engagement militant sur la satisfaction vis-à-vis de la RSE et les intentions d'agir en cas d'insatisfaction face aux pratiques RSE. Les 155 réponses à une enquête réalisée auprès des salariés du réseau d'Orgacoop ont permis de mesurer l'engagement social personnel (à travers la consommation responsable et l'orientation militante), la satisfaction concernant les pratiques RSE d'Orgacoop, la satisfaction au travail, l'implication organisationnelle et les intentions de « lancer l'alerte » par voie interne (représentant du personnel, siège social...) ou externe (bouche-à-oreille, dénonciation dans les médias ou réseaux sociaux) en cas de conflit éthique. Nous utilisons une approche P.L.S. pour traiter les données, parvenant ainsi à 5 modèles structurels.

Dans cette étude, nous démontrons que, contrairement à l'hypothèse de départ, l'engagement militant personnel est partiellement lié à une plus grande satisfaction vis-à-vis des pratiques RSE. En revanche, il favorise bien les intentions d'alerte en cas de conflit éthique. Cependant, l'impact de cette variable est négligeable par rapport à la satisfaction au travail. La perception de bonnes conditions de travail et le sens trouvé au travail favorisent les voies de recours internes pour donner l'alerte, et réduisent le recours à des moyens de résistance plus néfastes pour l'organisation, tels que le bouche-à-oreille ou la dénonciation publique. L'implication organisationnelle peut également contrebalancer l'impact de l'orientation militante sur les intentions de dénonciation externe.

Cette étude confirme l'importance des conditions de travail comme principal déterminant de la satisfaction des travailleurs à l'égard de la RSE dans les organisations hybrides. Le niveau d'activisme de l'individu ne le rend pas moins satisfait, mais le rend plus prompt à réagir en cas de perception d'une contradiction avec la ligne éthique de l'organisation. La satisfaction au travail (et surtout l'attitude du manager) permet de réagir de manière plus

constructive et moins dangereuse pour l'organisation en favorisant le recours interne à la "dénonciation".

Ces résultats permettent de repenser la priorité des programmes de RSE, en montrant la plus grande importance de la satisfaction au travail, et en relativisant le danger que l'engagement militant des employés peut représenter pour l'organisation, en particulier considérant les autres bénéfices qu'apportent ce type d'employés aux organisations hybrides en terme de légitimité et de réputation auprès des autres parties prenantes. Nous invitons à considérer les travailleurs militants comme des détecteurs de dérives éthiques, garants de l'intégrité de l'organisation. Nous identifions plusieurs facteurs susceptibles de favoriser les intentions d'alerte interne et de réduire les intentions d'alerte externe: satisfaction au travail, engagement organisationnel mais aussi fonctions de représentation ou gouvernance participative. Bien que nous puissions douter que l'orientation militante puisse être gérée au travail, ces facteurs peuvent facilement être soumis à des pratiques de gestion.

## **Contributions générales de la thèse**

### **Les travailleurs militants : une population spécifique à intégrer au sein des organisations hybrides**

La littérature nous suggérerait que les individus au sein des organisations hybrides étaient menacés par les tensions générées par la dualité d'objectifs (Ashforth & Reingen, 2014; Besharov, 2014; Battilana, 2018). Nos résultats du Chapitre I confirment les risques individuels et organisationnels liés à ces tensions. Ils montrent par ailleurs la multiplicité de tensions individuelles chez le travailleur militant, dépassant celles liées à l'hybridité de

l'organisation. Les militants forment de ce fait ainsi une population spécifique au sein des organisations hybrides. Notre travail démontre qu'indubitablement, les travailleurs militants entendent utiliser leur force de travail pour défendre leurs valeurs idéologiques (Chapitre I). Ils éprouvent des tensions importantes face aux contradictions (Chapitre I et II), et réagissent davantage en cas d'incohérence entre les pratiques organisationnelles et la mission sociale (Chapitre III).

La particularité de cette population tient également aux réponses adoptées face aux tensions et aux pratiques mises en place par les organisations pour assurer la dualité de leur mission. Pour Besharov (2014), qui s'intéressait surtout à la cohabitation de profils aux valeurs divergentes, les réponses de ces travailleurs aux pratiques organisationnelles forment une sorte de « boîte noire ».

La solution de facilité serait d'éviter de recruter des travailleurs militants, en se limitant à la rigueur à ceux dotés d'un état d'esprit « paradoxal » (Chapitre I), qui sont plus à même de trouver un sens aux contradictions qu'ils rencontrent. Cependant, l'insertion des travailleurs militants risque de constituer un enjeu majeur dans les prochaines décennies. La prise de conscience générale concernant les problèmes sociaux et environnementaux amène une part croissante de la population à chercher à aligner leur travail avec leurs préoccupations, en particulier dans la génération Y pour laquelle le sens du travail serait primordial (Eisner, 2005) et très sensible à la RSO (Klimkiewicz & Oltra, 2017). La génération suivante, dite génération Z qui commence à investir le marché du travail semble présenter par sa consommation une sensibilité encore plus importante à la RSO (Dabija, Bejan & Dinu, 2019). Selon Frimousse et Perretti (2019), « *les revendications de bien-être au travail, de justice sociale, environnementales ou encore d'équité, fera à coup sûr de la dimension éthique une part importante dans leurs choix professionnels.* » La question de l'intégration de travailleurs au profit « idéaliste » dans le monde du travail est donc une question majeure qui se posera durablement du fait de la prédominance future de ces générations dans entreprise.

De plus, comme le souligne Besharov (2014), les catégories de travailleurs ne sont pas statiques : au contact d'autres membres, des individus "indifférents" peuvent devenir "pluralistes", et les "pluralistes" "idéalistes". Des individus déjà membres de l'organisation peuvent ainsi développer un certain militantisme a posteriori et remettre en question les pratiques organisationnelles.

Par ailleurs, depuis les années 90, l'apparition des entreprises sociales s'était posée comme une réponse aux préoccupations sociales et environnementales (Hoffman, Badiane & Haigh, 2012; Smith, Gonin and Besharov, 2013). On observe actuellement une prolifération d'entreprises qui veulent apporter une plus-value sociale, y compris dans des entreprises traditionnelles. Ce tournant éthique génère une promesse, des attentes et des changements de perspectives chez des travailleurs qui n'étaient pas spécialement sensibilisés. On peut donc prévoir une hausse générale de la sensibilité à la question de la responsabilité sociale des organisations.

La solution d'éviter de recruter les travailleurs au profil militant apparaît dans ce contexte une réponse au mieux partielle, y compris en misant sur l'emploi de jeunes travailleurs sans expérience professionnelle préalable. La question de l'intégration des travailleurs au profil militant est une donnée avec laquelle toute les organisations, et celles hybrides plus encore, doivent composer.

Les organisations hybrides doivent donc intégrer la multiplicité des tensions vécues par les travailleurs militants, et intégrer cette caractéristique comme une particularité de cette population. Car si les tensions peuvent être exacerbées par certaines prédispositions individuelles, elles dépendent également du contexte (Zheng *et al.*, 2014). L'état d'esprit adopté par le travailleur pourrait dépendre de pratiques organisationnelles et des outils mis à sa disposition, (Chapitre I), ce que confirme notre seconde étude (Chapitre II) démontrant la capacité des organisations à soulager le travailleur dans la gestion de ces tensions, par exemple par les standards RSO. On peut donc considérer comme allant de la responsabilité de



l'organisation d'intégrer la fragilité de ces travailleurs militants, mais aussi d'introduire dans son programme CSR des pratiques permettant de leur apporter un support organisationnel dans la gestion des tensions.

Nos résultats du Chapitre II permettent en effet de conclure indubitablement à l'utilité pour la catégorie les travailleurs militants des pratiques de routinisation de l'idéologie qui permettent la reconnaissance des valeurs qu'ils chérissent. L'implantation de standards RSO sur des sujets très « terre-à-terre », dont l'impact positif sur les travailleurs militants est démontré par notre Chapitre II est en effet un exemple de ces pratiques. Loin d'être des outils de domination, ils peuvent constituer une ressource pour l'individu militant. Ils lui permettent d'évaluer objectivement s'il met sa force de travail au service du bon projet. Ils permettent surtout d'apaiser les tensions et de sous-traiter une partie de la gestion de ces tensions à l'organisation et de fournir au travailleur des limites à son investissement personnel (Chapitre II). Nous montrons donc qu'au-delà de l'aspect fonctionnel pour l'organisation, l'intérêt de ces outils est aussi d'améliorer le bien-être des travailleurs, pour leur capacité « à tenir » compte tenu de cette quête d'idéal qui peut être lourde, et de remplir à long terme leur différents rôles dans l'organisation.

Le risque réside cependant dans le fait que les travailleurs ne parviennent qu'à une pseudo-connaissance des standards RSO, nourrissant une foi aveugle et précaire dans l'outil et l'organisation créatrice, pouvant tourner à la désillusion et au cynisme, comme observé dans le Chapitre II. Nous soulignons de ce fait la nécessité d'une réelle connaissance et appropriation des standards RSO pour obtenir des effets positifs durables sur les travailleurs en termes d'implication organisationnelle et de compréhension des enjeux en concurrence.

Les travailleurs de cette étude suggéraient des exemples de pratiques autour de la création et l'évolution de ces standards: "customisation", adaptation au contexte local, aux contraintes économiques, au mode de gouvernance, à l'activité, aux spécificités des membres de l'organisation... Contribuer à la

création ou l'évolution des standards permet de vivre authentiquement le militantisme au travail, en donnant à chacun cette possibilité d'acte politique dans le cadre professionnel. D'après les managers, ce travail, notamment lorsqu'il est collaboratif, permettrait de faire prendre conscience aux employés des contraintes, notamment économiques, auxquelles doit faire face l'organisation.

### **Le travailleur militant, agent structurant de l'organisation hybride**

Besharov (2014) suggère par ailleurs que ces organisations hybrides *“pourraient perdre en chemin du fait de l'absence de représentation distincte des valeurs qu'elles incarnent.”* (« *Something may be lost when organizations lack distinct representation of the values they embody* » (Besharov, 2014)).

La littérature démontre en effet l'intérêt de la cohabitation de différents groupes au sein des organisations hybrides, du fait des dynamiques intra et intergroupes créées par les conflits, négociations et rituels de réparation (Ashforth et Reingen, 2014), améliorant au final le fonctionnement de l'organisation. Le choix d'intégrer des profils avec différents niveaux d'orientation sociale est de ce fait la stratégie adoptée par de nombreuses organisations hybrides (Battilana et Dorado, 2010, Besharov, 2014).

Notre travail permet d'étayer ce propos, démontrant l'intérêt du travailleur militant en termes de calcul risque/bénéfices. D'après les analyses statistiques de notre troisième étude, les freins à l'emploi de militants dans une organisation hybride ne seraient pas justifiés. Embaucher des travailleurs militants ne laisserait en rien présager de davantage de conflits, à condition que l'entreprise mette ses pratiques en accord avec son discours: ces travailleurs sont même potentiellement plus satisfaits des pratiques RSO, ce qui nourrit leur implication organisationnelle (Chapitre III). Les travailleurs ont naturellement une tendance à faire confiance à l'entreprise qu'ils perçoivent comme partageant leurs valeurs, et choisissent de rejoindre

parfois au prix de sacrifices. La foi dans le projet politique de l'organisation leur donnerait aussi une certaine résilience face aux contradictions liées à la dualité des objectifs. (Chapitre II)

De ce fait, et au vu des résultats de ces trois projets de recherche, Nous pourrions suggérer aux entreprises hybrides à concevoir le travailleur militant non pas comme une source potentielle de trouble, mais plutôt comme un agent structurant de l'organisation, et à adopter des pratiques lui permettant de remplir ce rôle. Les travailleurs militants peuvent être perçus comme des détecteurs d'incohérence. Ils peuvent être des garde-fous préservant l'entreprise d'une véritable dérive dans la mission. Ces travailleurs sont une ressource précieuse, tant pour la réputation et la légitimité de l'organisation que pour la préservation des lignes directrices de l'organisation et de son climat éthique.

Ne serait-ce que par pragmatisme, à la relecture de nos données, nous soulignons en particulier le rôle du travailleur « de première ligne » sur lequel nous nous sommes focalisés dans ce travail doctoral. Garder une cohérence avec l'ambition éthique de l'entreprise requiert un apprentissage permanent, et une veille constante des pratiques internes et de celles des parties prenantes. L'intégrité de la mission sociale tient à la somme des détails terre-à-terre de la vie organisationnelle quotidienne, que seuls l'ensemble des "shop-floor workers" (en vente, en production...) est en capacité d'appréhender. On ne peut systématiquement incriminer la direction de l'organisation ou ses managers pour leur négligence, mais celle-ci doit admettre ses limites et reconnaître aux travailleurs, et en particuliers militants, la capacité de détecter les contradictions perçues. Les travailleurs peuvent à leur niveau, grâce à leurs connaissances personnelles, leurs interactions avec les parties prenantes, et leur connaissance du terrain informer l'entreprise des contradictions dont l'entreprise n'a pas forcément connaissance, plutôt que d'imaginer des « standards-makers » experts omniscients qui veilleront à la préservation de la mission, comme décrit dans

le Chapitre II. Une véritable valorisation du rôle du travailleur, a fortiori militant, dans cette mission sociale, est à penser.

En conséquence, on mesure l'importance de la multiplication et la fiabilité des canaux proposés pour lancer l'alerte en interne dans la préservation de la mission de l'organisation hybride. Le "whistleblowing" peut être présenté dans une organisation hybride comme une des missions de tout travailleur, au lieu de le concevoir comme un risque lié à l'emploi de militants. Il convient de l'assurer de la considération qui sera portée à sa contribution à la préservation de la ligne éthique de l'organisation. Cela nécessite de repenser les pratiques, par exemple au niveau du recrutement, de la description du poste, du management au quotidien, du design des canaux de communication.

Ainsi, le travailleur militant peut se révéler un agent moteur et structurant de l'organisation hybride, obligeant à une amélioration continue et une mise en pratique de la dualité de mission.

### **L'importance primordiale des conditions de travail dans les organisations hybrides**

Notre travail démontre l'importance de conditions de travail satisfaisantes dans les organisations hybrides. Le Chapitre II suggère que les travailleurs ont tendance à accorder une confiance quasi-aveugle à l'organisation et à ses pratiques RSO lorsqu'ils sont satisfaits de leurs propres conditions de travail. S'ils peuvent être préoccupés par les injustices subies par leurs pairs, les travailleurs ont cependant tendance à préserver la confiance en l'organisation et à attribuer les brèches éthiques à des éléments extérieurs (un porteur de projet arriviste, les clients...). En revanche, en cas de conflit social le concernant, le sentiment de trahison envers l'organisation se

prétendant éthique est d'autant plus important que le travailleur avait accordé sa confiance à l'organisation. Le Chapitre III confirme la prédominance de la satisfaction au travail (mesurée en grande partie avec la satisfaction liée aux conditions de travail) comme variable explicative de la satisfaction vis-à-vis de la RSO. Cette même variable favorise le recours à des canaux d'alerte internes constructifs (représentant du personnel, contact du siège...) et réduit l'intention de courir à ceux aux effets potentiellement délétères (bouche-à-oreille négatif, dénonciation dans les médias et réseaux sociaux...).

Si la qualité des conditions de travail apparaît comme une évidence dans le contexte des organisations hybrides, notre travail laisse apparaître qu'il n'en est rien. L'idée de lutter pour un but plus grand donne une certaine résilience aux travailleurs acceptant de ce fait certains sacrifices. Ce phénomène, et les possibles abus en découlant avaient été identifiés par la littérature précédente sur la quête de sens dans le travail, à la fois aliénant et ennoblissant (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). Nous voyons que les particularités de ces organisations hybrides génèrent de plus parfois d'autres déviances (loi de la jungle dû à l'absence de hiérarchie claire par exemple). De ce fait, les travailleurs militants constituent une population de travailleurs particulièrement sujette à certains risques psycho-sociaux. L'Agence Nationale pour l'amélioration des conditions de travail y voit d'ailleurs un des enjeux de l'Economie Sociale et Solidaire.

La question des pratiques sociales internes est souvent absente ou minorée dans les projets de RSO dans les contextes traditionnels (Allouche, Huault & Schmidt, 2004). Nos études démontrent que la dimension sociale interne n'est pas toujours mieux traitée dans les organisations hybrides. Elles ont donc à prendre conscience de leur défaillance concernant cette question, et repenser la priorité donnée au niveau social, dans l'arbitrage entre producteurs, fournisseurs, clients, et salariés, pour éviter cette perception rapportée par certains répondants d'être « *les vrais payeurs de l'éthique* » qui questionne la légitimité de ces organisations.

Cette priorité donnée à dimension sociale interne est nécessaire du point de vue de la raison d'être même de ces organisations hybrides à mission sociale, mais également, de façon plus pragmatique, d'un point de vue stratégique. Les travailleurs de première ligne en particulier véhiculent l'image de l'organisation et sa réputation (Edinger-Schons *et al.*, 2019).

Il convient cependant de s'interroger sur ce que sont de bonnes conditions de travail pour cette catégorie de travailleurs, et qui peuvent varier même au sein de ce terrain de recherche. Notre second chapitre pointait l'importance du sens trouvé au travail, de l'attitude du dirigeant et des contacts humains, ce que confirme en partie l'analyse statistique dans notre Chapitre III montrant la contribution des différents éléments à la satisfaction au travail générale.

Le manager (bienveillant, reconnaissant, juste) apparaît ainsi statistiquement comme un élément crucial. Les interviewés des Chapitre I et II insistaient pour leur part sur l'importance d'un manager partageant les conditions de travail difficiles de ses salariés, authentiquement militant tout en étant pragmatique, et donc capable d'assurer la viabilité de l'entreprise, ce qui correspond au profil "pluraliste" recommandé par Besharov (2014) pour les positions de manager des travailleurs de première ligne. Or, nos entretiens montrent la difficulté de penser le rôle de dirigeant pour certains travailleurs militants dotés d'un état d'esprit "dilemme", souhaitant éviter la reproduction des schémas de domination. Les managers à profil « idéaliste » ont d'ailleurs été identifiés par Besharov (2014) comme susceptibles de renoncer ou d'être déçus de cette responsabilité. Ces difficultés à remplir le rôle de dirigeant pourraient par ailleurs mener à des situations encore plus nocives pour les travailleurs. On en veut pour preuve le récit de cette participante à propos de l'autogestion devenant anarchie, puis loi de la jungle régie par un dictateur informel (Chapitre I). Il est donc nécessaire aussi de reconnaître les tensions vécues par cette catégorie de travailleurs dirigeants dans les organisations hybrides et leurs conséquences. Pour ces individus, le recours à la construction collaborative

d'outils de gestion comme les statuts ou les standards s'avéraient également bénéfiques.

### **Limites et pistes de recherche**

Bien que notre thèse offre des contributions sur les plans théoriques et managériaux, elle présente aussi des limites pouvant inspirer des travaux de recherche futurs.

### **Glissements entre profils**

Si nous n'avons pas considéré dans cette thèse qu'un même individu puisse adopter un état d'esprit différent selon l'organisation et les pratiques, nous pensons cependant que cela puisse être le cas. Nous suggérons notamment l'impact de dynamiques de groupe. Besharov (2014) suggère que les travailleurs ne sont pas figés dans une catégorie, mais pourraient évoluer, se laissant gagner par les valeurs sociétales défendues par l'organisation hybride. Les membres "indifférents" ou les "capitalistes" notamment, pourraient devenir "pluralistes". Nos données du Chapitre I et II suggèrent que les positions pourraient également être affectées par la composition du groupe. Nous faisons l'hypothèse que ces changements permettraient de créer ou maintenir certaines dynamiques fonctionnelles similaires à celles identifiées par Ashforth et Reingen (2014). Ce phénomène de glissement d'une catégorie à l'autre en réponse au contexte organisationnel mérite davantage d'explorations.

### **Accès au terrain**

L'une des difficultés de tout projet de recherche indépendant, a fortiori doctoral, est de collecter les données en un temps restreint, avec des ressources réduites et un pouvoir de persuasion très limité auprès des

organisations. Si les contacts préexistants et une certaine ténacité ont permis une collecte de données satisfaisante, nul doute que le nombre restreint d'entretiens (12 pour le chapitre 1 et 27 pour le 2) et de réponses complètes au questionnaire (155) limite le caractère généralisable des résultats.

Dans le Chapitre I, bien que l'abondance de données de qualité et l'analyse structurale aient permis de réelles contributions théoriques, nous concédons que davantage d'entretiens aurait peut-être pu faire émerger d'autres schèmes narratifs. Nous considérons avoir élargi le champ de connaissance de la gestion du paradoxe, mais non d'être parvenue à une typologie exhaustive.

Dans le Chapitre III, l'accès limité au terrain crée certains biais, développés en partie 5.3. Cette étude, dont la problématique reste selon nous très intéressante, mériterait d'être répliquée dans de meilleures conditions, en collaboration avec une organisation assurant une meilleure représentativité de la population de travailleurs.

### **Approche d'analyse quantitative**

Nous avons fait le choix dans le Chapitre III d'une approche PLS du fait des caractéristiques des données, des échelles de mesure et du caractère exploratoire de l'étude. En revanche, l'un des inconvénients de cette approche est qu'elle ne mesure pas les effets inversés ou circulaires. De ce fait, elle ne nous permet pas de saisir les dynamiques subtiles à l'œuvre, notamment d'observer l'impact de variables telles que l'identification organisationnelle, l'implication organisationnelle ou le prestige externe perçu. Répliquer cette étude avec un échantillon plus représentatif, davantage de réponses, d'autres variables et en s'appropriant une autre approche d'analyse statistique pourrait compléter plus justement la connaissance sur l'impact du militantisme au travail.