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Vincent Salaun

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From transition to logistical transition: a new perspective on temporary logistics and organizations*

Full Papers

Vincent SALAUN

Nantes Université, Laboratoire d'Économie et de Management
Nantes-Atlantique

vincent.salaun@univ-nantes.fr

Abstract : Temporary organizations have been known and studied for many years, but there are still many unknowns. Since the founding writings on the subject in the 1970s, the scientific community has continued to develop knowledge and to highlight the specific characteristics of this type of structure. However, as has recently been highlighted, the transition from the state of a potential project to that of a project in progress remains particularly poorly understood. Often referred to as transitional phases, these periods of change are still poorly defined. After presenting the literature on transitional phases, the paper aims to highlight that these phases are primarily dedicated to the transfer of coordination from the strategic top to the logistic functions. The main academic contribution of the paper lies in the proposal of a conceptualization of transitional phases around three main dimensions: the construction and mobilization of an organizational memory, the introduction and stabilization of managerial innovations, and the evolution of the mode of coordination of actions. From an empirical point of view, the paper is based on multiple case studies from the field of event management in the broadest sense, including sports and musical events, as well as popular festivals.

Keywords : Temporary Logistics, Transition, Coordination, Mutual Adjustment, Case Study

INTRODUCTION

For many years now, the scientific community has been interested in time-bound organizations. Sometimes referred to as temporary, ephemeral or discontinuous, these organizations have the particularity of knowing their end dates or conditions, whereas a traditional organization is intended to last, theoretically, indefinitely. Since the 1970s and the first works of Goodman and Goodman (1976), temporary organizations have been associated with project management and are often perceived as either tools for a given ambition, such as constructing a building, or as means of improving existing processes, such as changing an information system. This somewhat narrow view has been extended in more recent literature by considering the temporary organization as a full-fledged organization representing a mixed form between stable and purely ephemeral organizations (Modig, 2007).

In publications that are now accepted as key references in the field, Lundin and Söderholm (1995; 2013) highlight the importance of the notion of transition in temporary organizations. While in the 1990s transition was a notion associated with a change of state following the completion of a project (the project is the means for an organization to move from state A to state B), the viewpoint evolved in the 2010s by considering transition as an integral part of the life cycle of a temporary organization. Although research on the notion of transition is increasingly present in the literature, there is still a significant lack of knowledge about these particular moments in temporary organizations, and in particular temporary organizations that are recurrent.

Recently, Sydow and Braun (2018) have highlighted the lack of theorizing on the functioning of temporary organizations. In a landmark editorial, these authors called for more academically dense studies that develop an ambition to conceptualize the functioning of temporary organizations. It is in line with this call that the present paper aims to explore the nature of transitions in recurrent temporary organizations. The research question is: how can we characterize the transitional phases in the life cycle of temporary organizations?

In order to try to provide some answers to this question, the paper adopts a traditional approach based on a review of the literature to highlight the main dimensions of transitions and emphasizes the evolution of the coordination modes used. The second part focuses on the methodology of an empirical survey carried out on 9 cases of organizations from the event sector (sports, music, popular events, etc.). Finally, the third part is devoted to discussing the results and developing an analysis grid for transitional phases.

1. A TRANSITION WITH MULTIPLE AND STILL POORLY UNDERSTOOD FORMS

The notion of transition remains particularly vague in the literature on temporary organizations. This first point aims to provide the reader with a global overview of current knowledge on the subject and brings out a new hypothesis which considers the transition phase as a time of evolution of the organization's coordination modes which aims to switch from direct supervision to adhocratic coordination based on logistical principles.

1.1. Permanent transitions are both necessary and dangerous

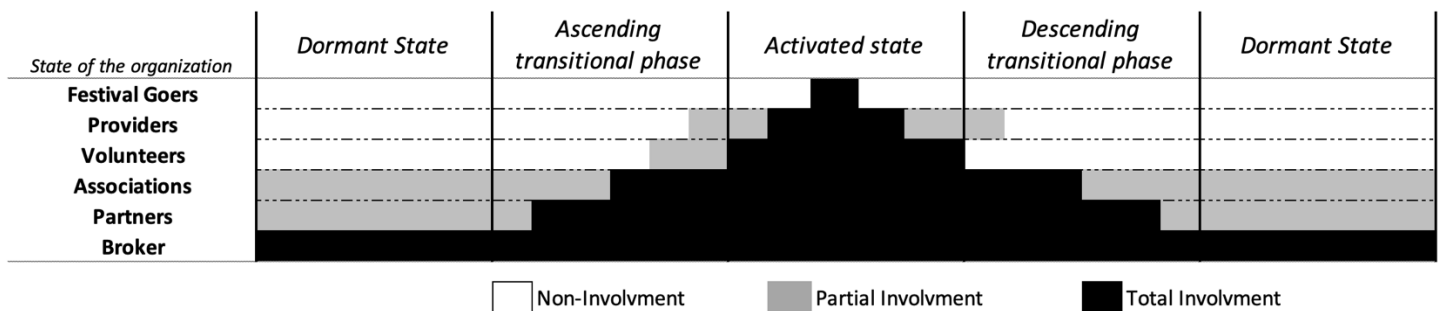
Recurrent temporary organizations are one of the objects of study of temporary organizing, a stream of research that focuses on the various forms of temporary organizations. Without seeking to produce an exhaustive review of the work on recurrent temporary organizations, it seems essential to give the reader an overview of the multiplicity of terms used, each of which represents a different approach to these research objects. It is noteworthy that, although the scientific communities have each developed their own notions or concepts, the notion of transition appears to be the only real link in the whole corpus.

Although work on temporary organizations has been flourishing in recent years, it is important to remember that the foundations of current knowledge date back more than 30 years, notably with Goodman and Goodman (1976) who, in a seminal article, were the first to examine these organizations "*which make actors with different skills work together for a limited period*". Research on temporary organizations made a real leap forward in 1995 with the publication of a special issue of the Scandinavian Journal of Management which published several works that are now considered fundamental (Lundin and Soderholm, 1995; Midler, 1995; Packendorff, 1995). At that time, Lundin and Söderholm (1995) defined an analysis grid for temporary organizations with four dimensions: the team, temporality, objective and transition. This fourth and last dimension takes on a particular meaning when studying recurrent or discontinuous temporary organizations whose activity consists of regularly reproducing identical or different projects. Indeed, in its original sense, Lundin and Söderholm's (1995) transition dimension refers to the fact that an organization carries out a project to ensure the passage from an initial state A to a final state B, without a desired return to state A. This absence of a 'no return' transition has long challenged researchers to characterize, or not, projects as recurring events of temporary organizations. Birnholtz et al (2007) provide an answer by developing the

terminology of iterative organizations, which is able to describe the behavior, cognitive in the case of this work, of organizations that pilot recurrent projects.

More recently, the issue of transition in temporary organizations has been addressed by Salaun et al (2015) by breaking down the pulsating cycle of an event-driven organization into four stages: dormant state, ascending transitional phase, activated state, descending transitional phase (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Breakdown of the pulsatory cycle of a temporary recurrent organization



Source: translation from Salaun et al. (2015)

These works are among the few, with for example those of Tatham and Kovács (2010), to directly mention the existence of organizational phases dedicated to the transition from one state to another. These transitional phases are described by Salaun (2016) as times dedicated to the aggregation/disaggregation and coordination of actors in order to complete or close a project; they mark the passage from dormant to activated state, or vice versa. Thus, temporary organizations appear as potentially recurrent and are then described as iterative (Birnholtz et al., 2007), pulsating (Salaun, et al., 2015) or discontinuous (Kreutzer and Rueede, 2019), and are marked by the regular presence of transitory phases that ensure the profound reorganization of their functioning to achieve a project. An attempt to synthesize the field of temporary organizations has been proposed by Bakker et al. (2016) around two variables: the presence of a permanent or non-permanent organization, and the presence of permanent or non-permanent employees. Using the grid formulated by these authors, we are particularly interested in what they describe as a semi-permanent organization, i.e. one characterized by the presence of a core group of employees (or at least those working on a permanent basis under whatever status) and a stable 'parent' organization (association or company). For the sake of clarity, we will use the term 'discontinuous organization' to describe a temporary organization with a recurring activity. The recurrent presence of radical restructuring phases in an organization necessarily leads to questions about the impact that this may have. Indeed, an organization such as the one

mobilized by a major music event involves switching, for a few weeks, from an organization with a dozen or so permanent staff to a mega-structure with more than 7,000 members (volunteers, professionals, permanent staff, etc.) to which must be added thousands of participants who are all co-producers.

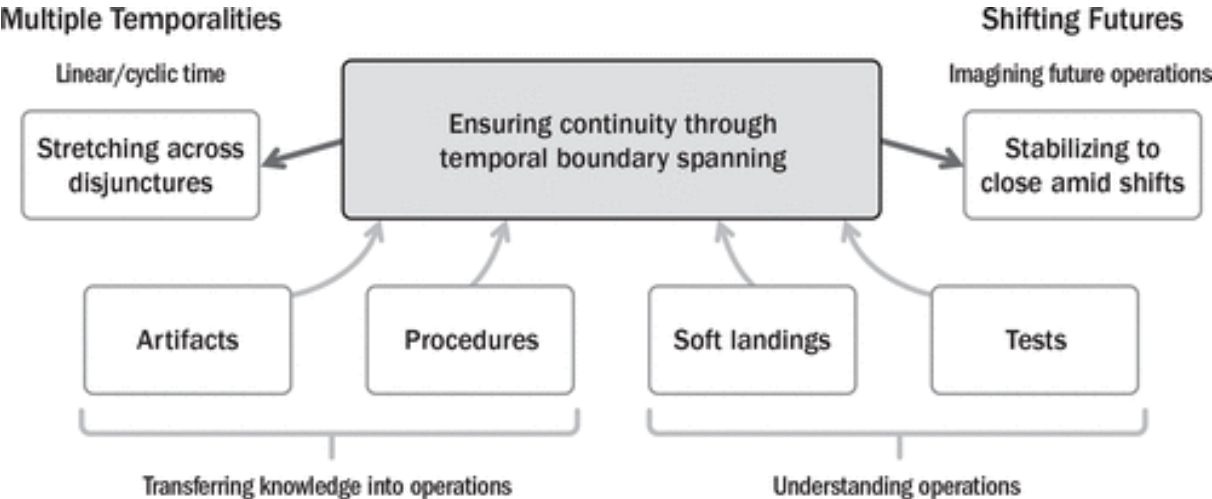
The recurrent presence of transitional phases in temporary organizations seems to present a notable danger. The fact that these phases are dedicated to a profound change of structure seems to significantly increase the risk of the whole organization falling apart. This point of view is reinforced by the recent work of Whyte and Nussbaum (2020), which demonstrates the complexity and the challenges of managing transition phases in temporary organizations.

1.2 A memorable transition

Whyte and Nussbaum (2020) highlight the importance of transitional phases in the life cycle of temporary organizations. In a generic way, the role played by these phases is to allow a rapid assembly of the resources and skills mobilized to carry out a project and can be part of a recurrent cycle (as for a sports competition which returns every year or two) or a single cycle (as for a given construction site) (Salaun, 2016). If until now the functioning and place of transitional phases in temporary organization have remained relatively unclear, the work of Whyte and Nussbaum (2020) sheds new light by formulating an analysis grid that focuses on organization in the broad sense of the term, considered as a network of actors. For these authors, the purpose of transitional phases is to recall elements of past projects (for the ascending transitional phase enabling the transition from the latent state to the activated state), or to accumulate knowledge with a view to future projects (for the descending transitional phase enabling the transition from the activated state to the latent state). According to these authors, the transitional phases are above all a time for aligning time horizons and managing change among all the actors involved in the project, whether they come from a single organization or several. The challenge is then to propose a single time horizon where at the beginning of the project the horizons can be very diverse: a stakeholder who intervenes only once at the beginning of the project will not have the same vision as another who intervenes throughout the project, who will also have a different vision and expectations from those of the project leader. The transitional phases are therefore present to give everyone the opportunity to align themselves with the project's time horizon and to create a single, perfectly integrated entity. Furthermore, this integration will require the implementation of methods and tools to facilitate joint work in order to overcome the gaps (Colin and Farah, 2000) that naturally exist in any organization. The ambition of the transitional phases is therefore to guarantee a form of

continuity beyond the natural limits of the project in order to create a semblance of stability conducive to working together. According to Whyte and Nussbaum (2020), four tools will be used to achieve this: physical artefacts enabling past resources to be remobilized, procedures from previous experiences, the implementation of 'soft landings' and finally the carrying out of tests. The first two of these tools are intended to ensure the transfer of knowledge and tools developed in response to concrete problems identified in the field during previous projects. The other two tools take into consideration the importance of understanding operations and a gradual move away from project mode. Figure 2 provides a schematic representation of the authors' conclusions.

Figure 2 - Organizational transition supports



Source: Whyte and Nussbaum (2020)

The artefacts referred to in Whyte and Nussbaum's (2020) model represent concrete traces left by previous projects; for example, a concrete slab built by the organizer of a music festival in order to facilitate the setting up of a stage in the same place every year. The purpose of these artefacts is to make it easier to memories the methods and tools for managing operations, but also to guarantee speed of action linked to constrained automatisms (if the slab is in this place, then it is not possible to move it to set up the stage elsewhere). The procedures are the counterpart of the artefacts, but for the knowledge and skills acquired during the previous projects. The idea of these procedures is not necessarily to detail all the operating methods deployed during a project, but to keep traces of the tools and the main lines of the project in order to facilitate the interfacing of the actors and guarantee almost immediate performance.

This subject also refers to the work of Fernandes et al (2018) on the concept of venueization, which implies a principle of memorization based on the fact of decontextualizing the knowledge and skills acquired in order to be able to transfer them to subsequent projects with different contexts.

The notions of soft landing and testing are vaguer but can be combined to describe the fact that an organization does not break links abruptly after a project but seeks to exit the project gradually by involving the actors in the final tests, even if this means generating tests whose usefulness may be questioned but which make it possible to maintain links beyond the purely operational part of the project.

In the same perspective, it seems relevant to consider the contribution of the work of Kreutzer and Rueede (2019) who, while not directly interested in the organizational aspect but rather in organizational identity, highlight the role of what they describe as inter-organizational episodes in the smooth functioning of temporary organizations. By observing the practices, particularly informal ones, implemented by the actors between two activated phases, the authors show that periods of 'latency' play an important role in maintaining organizational identity and organizational memory, which appear as 'facilitators of organizational continuity'. These transitional phases can be classified according to their function: the connection between organizational episodes (e.g. through feedback), the preparation of future episodes (e.g. preparation of materials, training), the expansion of organizational interactions (e.g. by generating micro-episodes that maintain contact between members) or the organization of alternative interactions (e.g. a volunteer lunch).

In the light of the various studies carried out so far, it appears that the transitional phases of temporary organizations serve as a basis for the construction and mobilization of an organization's own memory. A summary of the contributions of the two transitional phases can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1 - Summary of the functions of the transitional phases from an organizational and memory perspective

Ascending transitional phase Dormant -> Activated	Descending transitional phase Activated -> Dormant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobilization of artefacts from previous projects - Implementing previously established procedures - Conducting tests and experiments to create a common experience - Anticipating future events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Memorizing the procedures implemented and the adaptations made along the way - Production of artefacts for future projects - Anticipation of future micro-events and alternative relationships in order to maintain the link

1.3. A logistical transition

While the work just mentioned provides a new perspective on these transitional phases, it also reveals that these times of transition are above all times of implementation of complex logistics chains. Indeed, as the work of Modig (2004) and Salaun et al. (2016) has shown, the deployment of temporary organizations lies above all in the deployment of complex logistics chains or networks of embedded chains. Explicitly, the literature makes little mention of logistics 'facts' when studying transitional phases. However, a quick exploration of the literature on the subject shows that all the examples reported by the authors refer to logistical issues: the artefacts, procedures, tools for "soft landing" and tests are above all based on approaches in terms of flows. Two illustrative cases can be presented here to reinforce this view.

The first case concerns the organization of a music festival that takes place every year and brings together several tens of thousands of people over three days. It is clear that all of the recurring physical elements (the artefacts) are directly linked to logistics: a stabilized area (packed sand surface present all year round) for storage during the event, the restoration of a disused fort to make it a control center for all the flows of the event, the digging of a footpath for the movement of food and volunteers during the event, etc. An analysis of the procedures drawn up by the festival also reveals that more than three quarters of them concern the management of flows (food, energy, waste, participants, etc.). Finally, a "soft landing" phase could be identified in the downward transitional phase with several actions (notably cleaning) that will take place at increasingly frequent intervals for several weeks after the event. In this case of a temporary logistics chain, the transitional phases seem to be places of transition, above all logistical and not just organizational. The increasing proximity of the main event flow, i.e.

the flow of festival-goers, seems to lead the entire organization to switch from a virtual mode of operation to the deployment of a global system of specific logistics chains (one for food, another for energy, another for waste, etc.) which function thanks to the use of past artefacts and procedures, and which then gradually disintegrate through a 'soft landing'.

The second case concerns an ephemeral logistics chain studied in 2020 and concerns the implementation of a pop-up store for a clothing brand on the French west coast. Here the artefacts identified are not stable elements 'anchored' in the ground as in the first case but are represented by elements of decoration and handling tools that are moved from one ephemeral shop to another. Indeed, the strategy of this brand is to open pop-up stores on a recurring basis in order to publicize the new products in its range. Strict procedures are also at work but they almost exclusively concern communication strategies and the management of stocks and shop supplies. Here again, the dominant logistical aspect is evident in the transitional phases, including the gradual closure of the shops, which do not disappear overnight but are closed in several stages: firstly, for the general public, then for partners or VIPs, and finally for those involved in the management of the shop.

Although the transitional phases appear to be key times in the organizational aspect of temporary organizations, they seem to be above all 'logistical moments'. The temporal alignment evoked by Whyte and Nussbaum (2020) can then be assimilated to a logistical alignment that is indispensable to the realization of the project, whether recurrent or not. Although this observation may seem anecdotal, it is in fact of crucial importance. If the transitional phases are above all times of logistical alignment, then it seems legitimate to think that the control of the entire organization would at this point fall under the responsibility of the flow pilots and logistics managers. In this perspective, it would be possible to think that the 'dormant' or 'latent' phases would be devoted to the establishment of a general strategy for the organization and that the activated phase would be the place where power would be expressed in the hands of logistics; the transitional phases being here the place where the handover from strategic control to logistical control takes place.

In order to explore this hypothesis, the analysis grid provided by Mintzberg (1982) with his famous configurations. According to the author, the organization will take a distinct form according to the module which ensures the coordination of the activity. In relation to the subject at hand, it seems possible to imagine that the "dormant" phase is similar to a simple structure under the control of the strategic summit with coordination by direct supervision, whereas the "activated" phase corresponds to management by logistical support with adhocratic coordination. Here, the transitional phases represent moments of evolution from direct

supervisory coordination to adhocratic coordination aimed at giving maximum freedom to logistics to organize the project.

2. METHODOLOGY

In order to explore the hypothesis of a change in the mode of coordination during the transitional phases, this second part of the study outlines an empirical study carried out between 2016 and 2021. In line with the recommendations of O'Toole (2005), the choice was made to adopt a qualitative approach using comparative case studies to explore the functioning of the event industry. According to O'Toole, event projects are strong examples of project-based operations, and therefore of recurrent temporary organizations. More specifically, a case study approach was chosen and was based on the mobilization of multiple data from the author's participant and non-participant observations (Journé, 2012), as well as interviews with event managers and logistics managers or people in charge of managing flows.

The cases were selected in order to be representative of the event industry sector in France. Thus, the cases come from the fields of sports events (4 and 5), music (1, 2, 9), cinema (2), popular festivals (6) and shows (7 and 8). The size of the cases also varies, ranging from a network of nearly 100 players running an event with 300,000 participants to small networks of two or three players running events with fewer than 1,000 participants. Finally, the influence of the events also varies, with cases having an international, national or local dimension. Table 2 below provides a summary of the different case studies and their characteristics.

Table 2 - list and characteristics of cases

N°	Theme of the event	Size	Number of actors in the network	Number of participants	Influence
1	Music festival	Large	80	60 000	National
2	Film festival	Medium	11	6 200	National
3	Music festival	Large	96	300 000	International
4	International sports competition	Medium	24	8 500	International
5	National sports competition	Small	3	1 200	National
6	Popular celebration	Small	3	7 500	Local
7	Entertainment	Small	2	700	Local
8	Entertainment	Medium	10	1 000	Local
9	Music festival	Large	69	28 000	National

Data collection was carried out in two phases: the first phase took place before the event, depending on the case, from 1 to 5 months before the event, and the second phase during the entire event. During all the observation periods, the situations observed were recorded in study books which were then coded by theme. The interviews were conducted after the two phases were completed in order to get the respondents to react to the initial conclusions. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed and coded using thematic coding on five main themes: modes of coordination, the role of logistics, the role of management, decision-making methods and the effective hierarchical structure. A summary of the data collected is provided in table 3 below.

Table 3 – Data collection

N°	Types de données	Volume des données	Répondants aux entretiens
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating observations - Non-participant observations - Semi-structured interviews - Internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8h45mn interview - 16 hours of participant observation - 5h45 of non-participant observations - 96 pages of internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisation Manager - Logistics Manager - Volunteer manager - Volunteer team leaders - Volunteer association representatives - Volunteers
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Semi-structured interviews - Internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3h50 interviews - 42 pages of internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Director of the association - Operations Manager - Deputy Logistics Manager
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating observations - Non-participant observations - Semi-structured interviews - Internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7.5 hours of interviews - 8 hours of participant observation - 27 hours of non-participant observation - 132 pages of internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food logistics manager - Deputy Logistics Manager - Volunteer team leaders - Volunteer association representatives - Volunteers
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating observations - Semi-structured interviews - Internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5h45mn interview - 70h of participant observations - 76 pages of internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President of international federation - Head of Operations - Partnership Officer - Volunteers and volunteer team leaders
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating observations - Internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 180 hours of participant observation - 250 pages of internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operations Manager - Delegation Manager

6	- Participatory observations - Semi-structured interviews - Internal documents	- 2h10mn interview - 10 hours of participant observation - 15 pages of internal documents	- Head of department - External service provider
7	- Participatory observations - Internal documents	- 40 hours of participant observation - 85 pages of internal documents	/
8	- Participatory observations - Internal documents	- 20 hours of participant observation - 30 pages of internal documents	/
9	- Non-participant observations - Semi-structured interviews - Internal documents	- 4h45mn interview - 60h of non-participatory observations - 59 pages of internal documents	- Volunteer Team Leaders - Representation of voluntary associations - Volunteers

Once the data had been collected and reprocessed, a three-stage analysis was carried out in order to carry out intra- and inter-case analyses as listed below:

- Analysis 1: pooling of all data from the 9 cases and then analysis of the data according to the life cycle of the organization (all data concerning dormant phases are analyzed together, etc.)
- Analysis 2: intra-case analysis with a specific approach to each of the case studies independently of the others
- Analysis 3: inter-case analysis with segmentation according to the theme of the event, its size or its influence

At the end of the analysis process, summary tables and figures were produced as shown in Figure 3 below. In this document, the function of the person in charge of facilitating the working meetings in case 4 is indicated. This type of representation highlights the increasing importance given to the logistics manager as the event approaches, until he or she is entrusted with almost exclusive responsibility for facilitation in the final weeks of preparation.

Figure 3 - Meeting moderator chart, case 4

N° meeting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Time to event*	167	161	142	133	104	98	75	52	49
Moderator of the meeting	director of the association	Project Manager	director of the association	director of the association	Logistics manager	Project Manager	Project Manager	Project Manager	Project Manager
N° meeting	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Time to event*	32	25	19	12	8	8	5	3	0
Moderator of the meeting	director of the association	Logistics manager	Logistics manager	Logistics manager	Logistics manager	Project Manager	Logistics manager	Logistics manager	Project Manager

* *in days*

It should be recognized from the outset that the use of these nine cases is exploratory in nature and cannot provide definitive conclusions. However, this multi-case and multi-sector approach is a novelty in the literature and will certainly provide insights for further study.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS: TOWARDS A CONCEPTUALISATION OF TRANSITIONAL PHASES

In order to make use of the data collected, this third and final part sets out to formulate a two-stage analysis aimed in turn at exploring the traces of transitional phases in the light of the work previously presented, and then to formulate a proposal for the characterization of transitional phases as a time of mobilization of past knowledge in order to bring about a change in coordination mode.

3.1. The organizational memory puzzle for a change in coordination

In their work, Whyte and Nussbaum (2020) highlight the importance of mobilizing past artefacts and procedures in order to ensure the temporal alignment of the different actors involved in a temporary organization. The exploration of the data from the nine case studies seems to confirm this view. Indeed, in all nine cases it was possible to identify procedures from previous events, but also the re-use of physical artefacts in seven cases out of nine. Table 4 below shows examples of the artefacts and procedures identified in a case-by-case analysis.

Table 4 - Artefact and procedures from the nine cases

Case number	Artefacts	Procedure
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reuse of a historic building to house the event control center - Reuse of energy access points that have been permanently installed for the event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of habits developed over the years in the operation of some volunteer groups - Unified application procedure for volunteering - Mobilization of stabilized procedures for access controls
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Installation of the event in permanent and always identical structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reuse of a permanent framework for the communication strategy - Mobilization of tools to coordinate guest flows
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of permanent installations dedicated to the event - Use of a stabilized green space by the organizing association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of a stock management file named "stock2015" for the 2018 edition - Use of the same color scheme on the organizers' badges for quick identification
4	<i>No concrete artefacts observed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of a standardized procedure for award ceremonies - Standardized organizational guidelines to ensure consistency between events
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reuse of a layout from a previous edition - Reuse of signage used in a previous edition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-use of the list of partners from a previous event to organize the new event - Mobilization of precise specifications for the organization of the event
6	<i>No concrete artefacts observed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of the results of previous feedback meetings when designing the event - Application of standardized procedures for the safety aspect
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reutilization of event-specific anchors present in the auditorium all year round 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reuse of previous year's implementation plans
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use of permanent structures to set up the event - reuse of equipment purchased throughout the year to be used only during the event which takes place once a year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobilization throughout the organization phase of the previous two years' organization file
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of infrastructure purchased by the association for other events within the framework of the implementation of the case study - Use of a space dedicated to the piloting of the event which is present all year round 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Systematic reminder of all the volunteers from the previous edition in order to mobilize them for the next edition - Mobilization of standardized procedures for the choice of catering providers

While the first part of the model proposed by Whyte and Nussbaum (2020) could be confirmed, in its entirety in seven cases and partially in two cases, the second part of the model involving the organization of tests and "soft landings" was more complex to identify. Only three cases out of nine allowed the identification of testing or simulation in the transitional phases. This was the case in particular for event number 3, where a small-scale simulation of the safety procedures was carried out, or in case number 7, where a dress rehearsal was organized in order to test the show's main theme and to ensure the coordination of all the actors involved. In the light of these first elements, it appears that the transitional phases, both ascending and descending, seem to be places of construction and solicitation of a collective memory based on the mobilization of physical artefacts or procedures standardized in the past. This point can then be considered as the first dimension of transitional phases.

However, the observation of transitional phases has not only led to the observation of a mobilization of past experience and memory, but has also allowed us to understand that these particular phases are often the place where new ideas emerge and new procedures are developed. Indeed, the transitional phases correspond to a time dedicated to the aggregation of actors in a network dedicated to the project. The gradual arrival of new companies or new members leads to the arrival of new ideas and suggestions in the functioning of the whole organization.

On this point, the transcript of a meeting organized in the framework of case 4 is particularly telling. For the first time, the organizing association included a new local player in the steering committee for this sports competition, whose initial role was to provide volunteers to ensure the smooth running of the sports competition. From the very first meeting, it became clear that one of the representatives of the new player had significant experience in event management and made proposals for radical changes, particularly in the management of waste flows and vehicle flows. After lengthy discussions, all the proposals suggested by the new player were validated and then tested during the event. Since this edition of the event, these new management rules have been ratified in the event's general specifications. This observation can therefore be considered as the second dimension of the transitional phases, which appear to be places of innovation.

At this stage, an important observation should be made. In almost all the cases studied (6 out of 9) a form of tension could be identified between the two components just identified: the mobilization of past experience to structure the event, and the introduction of new practices generally resulting from the arrival of new actors. The transitional phases, and particularly the upward transitional phase from dormant to activated, appear to be a place where two

antagonistic forces will oppose each other between a desire to repeat the same event in order to ensure a form of stability and a desire to renew the management methods. This point has often given rise to very lively discussions between the supporters of both sides: those who want to do "as usual" and those who want to "change things". This type of debate, which may seem innocuous at first glance, was in fact particularly revealing when we look at the way the conflict was resolved and the person in charge of deciding in favor of one or the other position. Among the nine cases, thirteen situations of tension could be identified, some examples are summarized in Table 5 below, which shows the case number, a brief summary of the conflict, the function of the person who made the final decision, and the period in which the conflict took place (before or after the physical installation of the event).

Table 5 - Analysis of tensions in ascending transitional phases

Case number	Summary	Moderator	Periodicity
1	When selecting the criteria for choosing a provider, two heads of department were opposed, one preferring criterion that favored the usual provider, the other wishing to open up the selection process further	Project manager or director of the organization	before the event installation
1	When defining the food stalls, a new provider proposed to integrate a new approach of food for the participants but this view is contested by the former providers present who wish to keep the type of service already offered in the previous years	Logistics manager	before the event installation
4	At a meeting on vehicle flow management strategy, a group of volunteers suggested a new approach to signage, but some of those present objected because they felt it would be disruptive to participants	Project manager or director of the organization	before the event installation
5	During the preparation of the event a new pipeline is detected which was not anticipated, part of the management committee wishes to ignore the parameter but another part wishes to divert part of the participant flow to avoid taking risks	Logistics manager	after the event installation

6	Following a stock shortage of food products, a crisis meeting is organized where two approaches are opposed, one wishing to mobilize the help of a usual actor, the other proposing to adopt an original point of view by soliciting a large number of potential actors to meet the food needs	Logistics manager	after the event installation
8	Following an unanticipated crowd movement, a meeting was organized during the night in order to take a decision on the actions to be taken. Tension quickly arose between one part of the organizers, who considered that it usually worked well and that it was simply bad luck, and another part, who wanted to adopt a radical break with the event and change the site during the night.	Logistics manager	after the event installation

Table 4 shows that there was a regularity in the resolution of tensions between those who wanted the event to be reproduced identically and those who wanted to change certain procedures. Indeed, before the start of the event, it appears that the resolution of the conflict is the responsibility of the director of the association or the project manager, whereas once the event has started, the resolution is the responsibility of the various logistics managers or flow managers. This appears to be an initial trend that seems to confirm a shift in the mode of coordination from the strategic top to the logistics support functions. This point of view seems to be confirmed by a more in-depth study of an observation from case 1.

During the implementation of event number 1, it was observed that the actors had a great deal of independence in carrying out their tasks. An extract from the observation logbook highlights the autonomy granted to the volunteers and the environmental service managers.

Extract from the logbook of observations of case 1

The organization of all the shifts follows the same pattern. Between 8.15 and 8.30 a.m., all the volunteers who had been called in for the morning shift gathered at the environmental control center, which was located a little way from the rest of the organization. On site, the four managers waited for the volunteers and then checked in on a list to ensure that each volunteer was present for the different time slots. Once the check-in has been completed, the volunteers

are divided by the managers into sub-teams assigned to a specific task: collecting glass, cleaning the stage area, installing rubbish bags, cleaning the toilets, distributing wood shavings for the dry toilets, etc. Each group is made up of several volunteers, each of whom is responsible for a specific task. Each group consists of several volunteers, the number of which varies according to the size of the task, and a leader, who is usually older, more experienced, and/or has special skills (such as driving a tractor-trailer). The team leaders are given instructions and objectives for the shift informally. Thereafter, the teams disperse to their workplaces and carry out their tasks freely. No methods or organization are imposed, although advice may be given. Generally, in the middle of the shift, the team leader gives the volunteers a break, either by returning to the environment PC or, for teams that are far away, by offering a snack in a quiet area. Once the four hours are up, the teams return to the HQ to return the tools, and to take another attendance count and distribute meal tickets. Each shift corresponds to the distribution of a coupon entitling the volunteer to a meal in a dedicated restaurant.

What is apparent from this extract is the freedom the actors have to carry out their tasks. However, the absence of an element in this text, written "on the spot" during the event, is indicative of another observation: the inability, during the event, to distinguish the professional origin of the actors. Indeed, after the event, an interview with the event director revealed that the environmental service was made up of several professional companies, volunteers directly from the organizing company and "traditional" volunteers from local associations. This plurality of actors was not noted in the extract from the logbook, which suggests that the participants were strongly integrated into a single autonomous entity in charge of waste management and the cleanliness of the event. In the light of these elements, it seems possible to compare the mode of coordination during the festival with what Mintzberg (1990) calls mutual adjustment, which is mainly characterized by a large autonomy of the actors who decide together, notably through informal discussions, on the procedures or methods to be used to achieve an objective.

At the same time, the fact that the pivot of the network, which is the organizing company, on the basis of the range of services it wishes to offer its users, carries out a 'recruitment' of specialized partners is reminiscent of another mode of coordination: direct supervision. For Mintzberg (1990) this mode of coordination is based on a strong hierarchical line which sets objectives, dictates methods and controls the results. If in this case the hub does not impose itself as a hierarchical superior to the partners, the fact that it is part of a coordinating hub posture as described by Snow, et al. (1992), i.e. the central actor who selects the members of the network structure, leads to the perception of the hub of the organization as a direct supervisor of the dormant network.

Thus, two distinct modes of coordination seem to coexist in the life of this case: mutual adjustment and direct supervision. This point then refers to the form that the organization takes according to the prioritized mode. Toffler (1970) was the first to refer to adhoc organizations, a term later taken up and developed by Mintzberg (1982). These organizations are characterized by a functioning based primarily on mutual adjustment mechanisms in order to achieve a given objective. Toffler (1970) notes that adhocratic organizations are organizations with a necessarily limited lifespan. In parallel, coordination by direct supervision within the dormant network can be compared to the network structures centered on a decision-maker pivot as discussed by Snow et al. Thus, in case 1, but the same observation is made for the nine cases, there seems to be an oscillating movement between a network structure centered on a pivot in direct supervision, and an adhocratic structure based on a game of mutual adjustments. By putting these conclusions into perspective and the breakdown of the life cycle of temporary organizations proposed by Salaun et al. (2016), it seems possible to propose a description of the evolution of the organization of coordination modes as explained in Table 6 below.

Table 6 - Correspondence between the states of the organization, the organizational forms and the coordination modes

State of the organization	dormant state	ascending transitional phase	activated state	descending transitional phase	dormant state
Organizational form	Centred network	Mixed	<i>Adhocracy</i>	Mixed	Centered network
Coordination mode	Direct supervision	Mixed	Mutual adjustment	Mixed	Direct supervision

3.2. Proposed characterization of transitional phases

Following Quivy and Van Campendhoudt (2011), the conceptualization approach can be seen as 'more than a simple definition or terminological convention. It constitutes an abstract construction that aims to account for reality' (Quivy and Van Campendhoudt, 2011, p. 122).

For these authors, two types of conceptualization approaches can be identified. The first of these aims at the emergence of an 'Isolated Operating Concept' (IOC) which is defined as 'a concept

constructed empirically from direct observations or information gathered by others' (Quivy and Van Campendhoudt, 2011, p. 124). What emerges here is an approach rooted in a form of inductive reasoning in which the observation of facts, by the researcher or by previous work, leads to the identification of invariants of a phenomenon. The second approach aims to formalize "systemic concepts" which are not the result of the transcription of one or more experiments, but "of abstract reasoning: deduction, analogy, opposition, implication, etc., even if they are necessarily inspired by the behavior of real objects and knowledge previously acquired about these objects". Also, with a view to stabilizing the notion of transitional phase, a "systemic" conceptualization approach is used here.

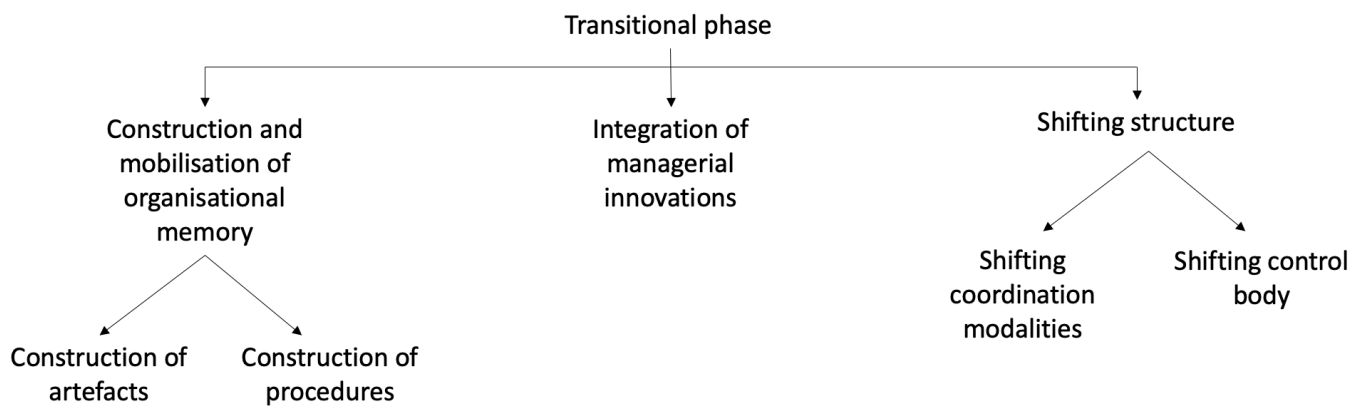
For Quivy and Van Campendhoudt (2011), any concept can be split into different dimensions that represent the different facets of a phenomenon, which can themselves be divided into different components. This step of splitting the dimensions into components is considered optional by the authors, who consider it useful when one or more dimensions present a high degree of complexity. Finally, with a view to operationalizing the concepts, a last level of analysis is inserted in the form of indicators which are seen as "objectively identifiable and measurable manifestations of the dimensions of the concept" (Quivy and Van Campendhoudt, 2011, p. 122).

Based on the findings so far, three main dimensions seem to be identifiable for describing the transitional phases of temporary organizations:

1. A time of construction or mobilization of the collective memory
2. A time of innovation and integration of new practices
3. A time of modification of the organizational configuration

More precisely, it is possible to consider that the first dimension of memorization can be divided into two major components: the mobilization or construction of physical artefacts on the one hand, and the mobilization or construction of procedures and methods on the other. The third dimension, which concerns the change of coordination mode, can also be divided into two components: the change of control body (logistic support or strategic top) and the change of coordination mode. All these dimensions and components can then be described in concrete terms through observable items. Figure 4 below provides a summary of the conceptualization of the transitional phases.

Figure 4 - Conceptualization of transitional phases in temporary organizations



CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to explore the notion of transitional phases in temporary organizations and to try to highlight the takeover of the organization by the logistics function during these transitional phases. Although the literature on the subject remains relatively underdeveloped, recent works such as those of Whyte and Nussbaum (2020) shed new light on the subject. Based on this innovative work, but also by going back to the origins of the literature on temporary organizations, it has been possible to put forward a general hypothesis positioning the logistics function as the pivotal function of the transition between the dormant and activated phases of temporary organizations.

Based on multiple case studies, the paper concludes by proposing a conceptualization approach to transitional phases and insists on the central place of flow management in transitional phases. If this conceptualization approach can be considered as one of the major contributions of the paper, the logistical approach and the focus on the role of the support functions also appear as a novelty in the literature on temporary organizations. While the scientific community will find in this paper new grids of analysis, practitioners will also be able to mobilize this new knowledge in order to improve the management of transitional phases which appear to be particularly sensitive. Indeed, as it has been highlighted, transitional phases are places of tension between a desire to continue a project in the same way and a desire for novelty in managerial practices. Insisting on the importance of control by the support functions therefore invites

practitioners to reflect on the role given to the various flow drivers in the design and implementation of events, or temporary organizations in the broad sense.

Although the conclusions of the paper open up new perspectives, it should be noted that the study carried out only concerns a specific industry, i.e. the event industry. Comparative studies with other project-based sectors, such as humanitarian aid, military intervention or construction, would seem to be necessary to strengthen the external validity of our findings.

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