I love my work but how do I make sense of it? The role of emotions in hybrid organizations

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Abstract

Despite the growing literature on hybrid organizations, little attention has been paid to the micro-processes that sustain their functionality, especially the role of emotions in individuals' efforts to cope with hybrid complexity. We empirically examine, through a case study in the renewable energy sector, how individuals relate emotionally to potentially divergent components of hybrid organizations. Drawing on the literature on psychological bonds and the findings from our case study, we develop a framework that specifies how individuals engage emotionally with the challenges of working in a hybrid organization. Based on this study, we argue that individuals are more likely to succeed in combining or integrating multiple demands when they establish psychological bonds of a medium level intensity to multiple components of a hybrid organization. In contrast, psychological bonds of low or high level intensity tend to undermine their capacity and/or motivation to cope emotionally with hybrid organizations. This framework sheds light on the affective engagement that, in combination with cognitive sensemaking, enables individuals to cope with, and navigate, the inherent paradoxes of working in a hybrid organization.

Key words

Hybrid organizations, emotions, institutions

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Introduction

The institutional literature on hybrid organizations focuses on how hybrid organizations respond to the challenges of balancing multiple institutional pressures that are not always compatible with one another. By combining different aspects of multiple organizational forms, hybrid organizations are by nature arenas of contradiction (Pache & Santos 2013). Scholars of hybrid organizations emphasize either the strategic or the managerial implications of such challenges and contradictions while largely ignoring the emotional underpinnings of working in such an environment. In fact, it is implicitly presumed that individuals experience and cope with the challenges of working in a hybrid organizations in more or less the same way. Yet, it is evident that the tensions that characterize hybrid organizations can provoke strong emotions, prompting organizational members to reflect on their own identity and role within the organization. Depending on how they cope emotionally with these challenges, individuals may jeopardize the hybrid nature of the organization and potentially undermine its intended benefits. In this respect, affective engagement can have far-reaching implications for the sustainability, and ultimately for the success, of hybrid organizations.

This study analyzes how individuals subjectively engage with a hybrid organizational environment, notably how they construct their own roles and emotional attachments within this environment. From a conceptual point of view, this study focuses on the emotional bonds that individuals create towards objects rather than on the notion of moods, i.e., the more or less enduring emotional state of an individual. As such, we are emphasizing the emotional engagement that individuals establish to selected features of a hybrid organization. Individuals may simultaneously invest with various emotional degrees to the multiple workplace objects. Klein, Molloy and Brinsfield (2012) use the degree of psychological involvement to summarize the sets of cognitions and emotions towards each object. They

propose for psychological bond levels: acquiescence, instrumental, commitment and identification. More specifically, this paper investigates the type of elements in hybrid organizations that individuals consider to be salient organizational objects for their emotional engagement. It also examines the types of emotional bonds that individuals create to selected objects in order to cope with the paradoxical demands of hybrid organizations. These components can, in combination with one another, shed light on how individuals emotionally navigate the challenges of multiple institutional pressures that present themselves in hybrid organizations.

The paper relies on an empirical case study of a hybrid organization in the renewable energy sector. This study is the result of four months ethnographic work, conducted within a hybrid organizational unit of a large French multinational corporation, operating in the energy sector. The hybrid organizational unit is a fairly recent R&D division specialized on photovoltaic (PV) energy, which has both academic and industrial partners from the public and private sector alike. Participants in this hybrid organization are thus affiliated formally with different organizations, all of which participate actively in the hybrid organizational unit that we studied.

Findings suggest that individuals engage differently with the same organizational objects, some individuals creating emotional bonds of greater intensity than others. Part of the explanation for this difference may relate to the institutional context, such as the organizational affiliation of an individual, while another part probably pertains to individual characteristics, such as personality. Our object of inquiry is not the theoretical sources of emotional bonds per se, but rather the intensity of these bonds. Notably, we study the organizational factors that mediate the intensity of emotional bonds and the implications of emotional bond intensity for an individual's ability to cope productively with working in a hybrid organization.

Findings also suggest that individuals create emotional bonds to organizational objects by comparing different objects to one another. In order to compare, individuals need exposure to different objects. The intensity of the bond that an individual creates to a specific object is mediated by his or her exposure to this object. Individuals with limited access to an organizational object, and to information and social interaction related to this object, lack the

ability and motivation to establish an emotional bond to this object. This barrier truncates their capacity to connect various organizational objects to one another, which in turn predisposes them to cope poorly with organizational hybridity. Individuals with poor exposure to the inherent paradox of a hybrid organization are more likely to cognitively oppose different components of the hybrid organization and to engage exclusively with one side of the paradox. Likewise, individuals with greater exposure to multiple components of hybrid organizations are better positioned to combine, integrate and navigate the paradoxical aspects of a hybrid organization. In this light, it seems important to expose all organizational members to objects that can enable them to engage emotionally with the paradoxical nature of hybrid organization.

Findings further suggest that individuals proceed progressively to integrate emotional bonds to various objects in a hybrid organization. An individual tends to create intense emotional bonds to only one or two organizational objects at the outset. These objects seem to be the ones that offer the best prospects for an individual to create a positive identity and organizational role. Based on the selected objects, individuals then connect to other objects by adapting their perception, looking for complementarities, and attempting to manipulate, combine, integrate or compartmentalize objects that appear to fit poorly with the initially selected objects. Key motivational factors for this adaptation include strong emotional bonds to an organizational mission, to technical superiority and/or to teamwork. These factors can enable individuals to overcome barriers to emotional engagement, which may result from poor exposure to the hybrid features of the organization or from a variety of other sources. These motivational elements prompt individuals to search for connections between organizational objects that otherwise appear fundamentally incompatible with one another. In their presence, individuals can progressively construct emotional bonds to various objects within hybrid organizations. By searching for elements that provide positive emotions, individuals can find the motivation for connecting various organizational objects. As a result of this process, individuals can re-interpret their own identity and organizational role and hence engage productively with hybridity.

These dynamics can affect not only individuals' work engagement but also potentially impact on the institutional environment. In this perspective, this analysis contributes to the

role of emotions in both hybrid organizations and institutional work. Institutional work is defined as the "purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions" and their role in creating new institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby 2006). This stream of research refers to the micro-processes of actors' intentional actions and their institutional effect, whether or not this affect is anticipated and desired (Boxenbaum & Pedersen, 2009). Growing attention is paid to how individuals experience and resolve (or not) contradictions within and between institutional fields (Creed, Dejordy & Lok, 2010). However, the role of emotions in institutional work has not received so far, significant research attention (Voronov & Vince, 2012). Our findings can potentially shed new light on the role of emotions in institutional work.

After defining the key theoretical concepts underpinning the research questions and explaining the methodology adopted, the current paper will present the key results and a discussion of the main implications and limits of this study. We conclude with key contributions and future research opportunities.

Theoretical Concepts Underpinning the Research Question

Institutional theory and institutional work

According to institutional theory, actors' behaviors are influenced by their need to be regarded as legitimate in their institutional environment (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum, 2009). In this context, culture, institutions and social relations influence actors' cognition and actions in important and often unconscious ways. If institutional theory has historically focused on the macro-dynamics of fields, recent researches have called for focus on a more micro perspective, such as the lived experience of organizational individuals. "Institutional work" describes the practices of individuals and collective actors aimed at creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions" (Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca, 2011, p.52).

Hybrid organization and paradox

Hybrids are defined as organizations that incorporate elements from different templates, hence "locus of disorder" (Battilana & Lee, 2014, p.398). One of the strength of hybrids is to facilitate rapid access to sources of know-how located outside the organization, without risking that the know-how will disappear. However, hybrid arrangements can also

create a host of difficulties. Because hybrid organizations combine aspects of multiple organizational forms, they are by nature, arenas of contradiction (Pache & Santos, 2013). In attempting to combine multiple logics, hybrids may face unintended consequences such as conflicting external demands, competing internal claims, and ambiguity (Jay, 2013).

Actors exposed to contradictory institutional arrangements are less likely to take existing arrangements as granted and more likely to question them (Battilana et al., 2009). Experiencing contradictory arrangements is likely to trigger actors' reflective capacity. These efforts can themselves provide hybrid organizations with opportunities for creativity and flexibility in adapting to a changing environment (Battilana & Lee 2014). The "efforts of members to make sense of organizational strategy and identity, result in their transforming their organization from a business logic to a non-profit business and finally a synthesis of the two" (Jay, 2013, p.138). During this process, individuals may however be pressured to take position for or against a target, thus "provoking feelings of inclusion and exclusion simultaneously" (Lewis, 2000, p.769). The capacity and ability of individuals to cope with ambiguity and to make sense of the conflicting demands is important to secure the hybrid's stability.

Researchers use paradox to describe conflicting demands, opposing perspectives, or seemingly illogical findings. This term is well suited to illustrate some of the challenges that hybrid organizations often face. "Paradox denotes elements that seem logical in isolation but absurd and irrational when appearing simultaneously" (Lewis, 2000, p.760). While it is relatively easy to understand and endorse the different parts of a hybrid organization, a consideration of all parts simultaneously may reveal oppositions and paradox situations. "Paradox is the simultaneous existence of two inconsistent states, such as between innovation and efficiency, collaboration and competition, or new and old" (Eisenhardt, 2000, p.703). An example of paradox can be the coexistence of industrial missions and applied research with academic missions, fundamental research.

Individual psychological bonds and emotions

The sheer complexity of how individuals make sense of the complexities and ambiguities associated with a hybrid organization calls for multi-dimensional concepts and processes. "Because different bond types reflect distinct psychological phenomena that arise

from different circumstances and have different psychological, they should not all be termed commitment – the differences are in how individuals make sense of, experience, and react to the bond" (Klein et al., 2012, p.133).

Those bonds result in certain workplace related bonds to various "targets", which may be, for example, employing organization, professional associations, supervisors, work teams, projects, goals, values, career (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Klein et al. (2012) use the degree of psychological involvement to summarize sets of cognitions and emotions that individuals have toward an object, such as the level of internalization or intrapersonal significance or indifference. Their model introduces four particular – and increasingly intense – types of bonds: acquiescence, instrumental, commitment and identification. Acquiescence bonds are defined by the perceived absence of alternatives. Instrumental attachment is defined by the employee's focus on the cost or losses. Commitment is defined as "a volition psychological bond, reflecting dedication and responsibility for a particular target" Klein et al. (2012, p.137). Identification reflects the sense of oneness with a group and requires the self to merge with the target (Klein et al., 2012).

In these models, the contractual ("economic exchange") perspective tends to give way to more diffuse and affective ("social exchange") perspectives. However, these developments are rather recent. According to Max Weber (1968) and his "rational-legal bureaucracy" principles, "the more it is "dehumanized", the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation" (p. 975). If negative perceptions are traditionally associated with emotions in the workplace, emotional connections to the content and context of the work can also serve individuals ends. A common theme underlying these perspectives is that strong motivational and psychological involvements are not possible without an emotional connection to the work or its context.

There is a central distinction between moods and emotion. Emotions have an object of interest, something or someone, while moods are affective experiences disconnected from their proximate cause (Cropanzano, 2003). Because emotions have objects, they depend at least partly on cognitive understandings and appraisal of those objects. While the traditional standpoint considers emotions as antithesis of rationality, rationality and emotionality can

also be viewed as interpenetrated instead of mutually exclusive (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995).

Methodology

The data collection was conducted in a hybrid organizational unit of a French multinational corporation that we call Earth; this unit is devoted to R&D in the area of PV energy and includes partners from both the public and the private sector. Data was collected in 2014 and consisted in onsite interviews at Earth headquarter and in two R&D labs, lab B (Belgium) and lab F (France). Individuals interviewed are all employees of Earth and most of them work with teams based at a leading PV industrial company located in the US, which we call Mars, and which is also part of the hybrid organization.

Individuals interviewed are all Earth employees, but they are either located in Earth headquarter (HQ) or in one of its two R&D partner labs (Lab B, lab F). Additionally, most of them interact daily with Mars. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on site, recorded and coded. A total of 31 persons work in this R&D department. The split between the three locations is almost equal. Employers located in Mars were not interviewed due to study time restrictions. Interviews with eighteen employees were retained for analysis. The choice of semi-structured interviews facilitated discussions with employees.

After transcription of interviews, we proceeded to open coding. As our analysis progressed, we began engaging with the literature on emotions. We retained for in-depth data analysis an analytical framework on the intensity of psychological bonds, which seemed to fit particularly well with our emergent findings. This framework specifies four (growing) intensity levels of the emotional bond that individuals generate towards various organizational objects: acquiescence, instrumental, commitment and identification (Klein et al., 2012). Using this theoretical framework, we engaged in focused coding with a triple objective. The first objective was to identify which organizational objects mattered emotionally for each individual. The second objective pertained to the intensity of psychological bond that each individual established to each object, notably each organization. The third and last objective was to identify how each individual connected salient organizational objects to one other. The outcome of the coding resulted in some key themes that are presented in the result section.

Results

Results are presented in four sections:

- Elements influencing subjective importance of organizational objects

- Individual factors influencing perception of objects

- Multiple psychological bond levels experienced by individuals

- Mechanisms used by individuals to connect multiple objects.

Elements influencing subjective importance of organizational objects

      Verbatim reveal a number of factors considered as important for individuals. They all relate to their work content and context and have either or both affective and cognitive components. They can be grouped in three sub-themes: characteristics representing commonalities and unity, objects capacity to provide something to be proud of and to offer a sufficient access to resources. Details of the verbatim can be found in Appendix 1.

      The first sub-theme relates to objects characteristics representing commonalities and unity. Objects characteristics providing shared goals and shared methods are important for individuals as they offer unique purpose and language. In the context of a hybrid organization, these elements decrease individuals' perception of complexity and ease their cognitive efforts.

- "Knowing who is setting the objectives is not so important. We all have the same goals and this agreement between all of us is what matters" (Lab B – Z).

- "The shared projects are what link us the most, as they allow common language, methods" (Lab B – T).

      The second sub-theme relates to objects capacity to create emotions related to individuals' work content or context. Various sources of emotions have been identified as a result of the coding: emotions due to the industrial application perspective of the research performed, emotions deriving of working on new leading technology and on new "green" energies, emotions linked to the excitement of developing a new activity. They are important for individuals as they represent very strong motivation factors. On the one hand, they provide common denominators among the various actors and on the other hand, they also give

people the feeling that they are working on something unique in the world and something to be proud of. By focusing on these emotions, individuals accept also more easily engaging in cognitive efforts required in order to cope with the hybrid complexity.

- "One of key motivation for me is to be able now with Mars to do research which is going to be used!" (Lab B – Y).

- "If I think about who "we" are, I think about Mars and Earth. I am part of a team working on the best technology in the world" (Lab B – Z).

- "Whether people are located here or there, we all have in common of working for the future of new energies: we all share this mission!" (Lab F – M).

- "Our branch has nothing to do with the rest of Earth group. Starting a new activity can be tiring sometimes, but also very exciting!" (Lab F – O).

A third sub-theme relates to individuals' perceived access level to resources, such as work information exchange and social interactions. In the context of a hybrid organization, individuals are dependent on formal and informal information in order to cope with complexity and in order to deal ambiguities. Limited access to work and/or social related resources will increase actors' cognitive efforts in their attempt to perform their work but also to make sense of their work context. Limited access can also affect individuals' affect, in case they feel excluded from another group with a perceived higher access.

- "The management structure and the ways the various teams work together is so complicate that you cannot enforce formal rules: you are condemned to get along well with your counterparts. It is all about lobbying and influence, but not in the bad sense. It forces us to talk often and agree of shared goals" (Earth HQ E).

Individual factors influencing perception of objects

Verbatim suggest that few individual characteristics and their levels influence how they perceive the relative importance of each object. These dimensions are more likely to influence directly their affective process and indirectly their cognitive process. Five sub-themes emerged from the coding: individual's capacity to manage negative moods and affects, individual's need for legitimacy, need for team-belonging and trust and individual's

past experience (see Appendix 2). These elements will also influence mechanisms used by individuals in connecting to the various objects (see following two sections).

- "Despite the organizational complexity, I do not get frustration as I am a curious person and dare asking others if something is unclear. Network, communication skills and teamwork capacities are important in this environment!" (Lab F – K).

- "Because of the lack of trust from Mars, you give a lot of info but you do not get much back in return. One consequence is that it is hard to feel that you do not mean much in the decisions and I do not feel that I am the only one feeling this way. I need to talk a lot with others, but exchanges in general are too limited; I feel a lack of trust. As if I was being trapped in a forced marriage, where the other side would see me as an enemy. Trust is very hard to gain from them" (Lab B – F).

- "You need prior similar experiences to start working here, for having the capacity to adapt to multiple actors, projects, approaches and to be able to communicate accordingly" (Lab F – L).

Multiple psychological bond levels experienced by individuals

Individuals (coded in letters in the table below) from the three locations (Earth HQ, lab F, lab B) all develop psychological bonds of various intensities, towards multiple organizational parts of the hybrid organizational. All individuals interviewed are Earth employees, but Earth is not necessary the object which is the most important and not the only one that matters. Individuals perceive simultaneously psychological bonds to at least two organizational objects and up to five organizational objects: Mars, Earth, lab F, lab B and lab FF. Employees located in Earth HQ tend to attach more importance to Earth, then employees located in the two labs.

Earth HQ, lab B, lab F

	Acquiescence	Instrumental	Commitment	Identification
Earth	S,E	T, Y, L, J, M, N, B	X, Z, K, O, I, A, B, C, D	G
Mars	S,G	Z, J, O, I, A, C	T, X, Y, M, N, E	L, K
Lab F	X	T, L, K, J, M, O, N, I, A, B, C, D	G	
Lab B	T, L, K	X, Y, S, A, B, C, D	Z, G	
Lab FF	J,O,N, C	O, I, B		

The majority of the bonds experienced by actors correspond to medium high psychological intensity (instrumental and commitment). Only 3 individuals (G, L, K) perceive high psychological intensity (identification) associated with one single organization (Earth or Mars). Two individuals (S and J) who are respectively located in lab B and lab F, only experience bonds with low or very low psychological involvement (acquiescence and instrumental). It can be noted that they both have a three-year contract, which differs from the majority of individuals interviewed.

Employees located in the two labs do not feel strong psychological attachment to their own lab. Out of twelve individuals located in the labs, only one (Z) experiences a medium strong psychological bond (commitment) towards his lab. The majority experiences low/medium psychological involvement to their own lab (instrumental). Surprisingly, individuals based at Earth HQ perceive higher psychological involvement towards the two labs. Location or physical proximity is not critical explaining indivdiuals psychological involvement towards an organizational object.

Three charts (see Appendix 3) illustrate in each of the three locations, the various psychological bonds perceived by each individual (in letters) towards the organizational objects they perceive. The heterogeneity of the results highlights that each individual has a unique perception of the various organizational objects. This is applies particularly in lab F and Earth HQ where actors' perceptions differ from each other. While we previously identified which antecedents are important in influencing individuals' perceptions, we now need to explore the nature of mechanisms used by individuals when interpreting the objects and their role towards them.

Mechanisms used by individuals to connect multiple objects.

Organizational objects likely to fulfill individuals' "important" factors are associated with a high psychological involvement (commitment or identification). Then, once these bonds are consciously or unconsciously assigned to a few selected organizational objects, actors cognitively search for connecting strategies to the other objects. They try to avoid perceived source of conflicts and develop strategies aimed at defining how various objects can or cannot fit with each other.

Coding suggests that individuals develop their own strategies. Four main strategies emerge from the verbatim: complementing, compartmenting, integrating, manipulating (see Appendix 4). Few individuals refer to more then one strategy to connect different objects to another. For example, individual I, X and T use both complementing and integrating mental strategies. Individual E refers to both manipulating and integrating strategy. The result of the coding also reveals that the most frequent strategies are complementing and integrating, while the least frequent are compartmenting and manipulating.

- Example of complementing strategy: "Working with Mars is great but tough, including with their American performance methods. Thank god, Earth is protecting us from that; we do need space to think more longer term R&D, out of the shared projects" (Lab B – X).
- Example of compartmenting strategy: "I prefer not to work directly with Mars and academics at lab F, else it becomes very difficult. If needed then, I manage the relationship to Lab F as hosting lab via PhD students. At the same time PhD students do not work directly with Mars" (Lab F L).
- Example of integrating strategy: "Working with Mars has since given us a stronger identity, because it gave a sense of our R&D efforts" (Lab F – I).

It is interesting to observe that the three individuals choosing a compartmenting approach also show different psychological patterns. On the one hand, one (J) expressed relative low psychological levels overall. This actor is a PhD student and has relative low access to work and social resources, as he is not allowed to work on shared projects nor directly with Mars, due to confidentially requirements. This can limit his capacity to

affectively focus on important objects characteristics and reduce his motivation to cognitively elaborate combining or integrating strategy solutions. On the other hand, the two other employees selecting a more compartmenting approach also reported very high psychological involvement levels (identification to Mars). Strong emotions towards one specific object may prevent actors combining and integrating it to other objects, because they may represent threats toward the central element. In this case the affective process may take priority over the cognitive one or the cognitive efforts may be too high. These three examples indicate that an actor experiencing either very low or very strong emotions to object(s) can experience challenges in finding synergies or complementarities with others. In both case, individuals may find difficulties in making sense of the overall hybrid dimensions. Risks may either be a growing lack of motivation or the choice of one aspect of the hybrid to the detriment of the others.

Some individuals experience how their actions influence their environments over time (see Appendix 5). The result of the coding highlights how some actors not only adapt consciously or unconsciously to their environment but also manipulate their work content and context to their best interests. This process also appears to be an ongoing one. One of the individuals had reported difficulties dealing with the challenges inherent to this hybrid environment and finding motivations out of it. That person gave up investing emotional and cognitive efforts by leaving the company shortly after the interview. Others still working for Earth needed to develop extraordinary capacities to reflect, adapt, accept but also to influence complex situation. Becoming actors might help individuals navigating the hybrid paradoxes.

Adapting, manipulating:
- "Step after step, we manage to give them (Mars) results and to convince them that we can bring them something they cannot do". (Lab B – T).
- "Positioning ourselves on the long-term research, is also a better strategic approach. We are the creative brain of the group! This is how we try to get accepted by Mars" (Lab F – M).

Navigating paradoxes:

- "I work at Earth for Mars and Lab B is my physical work location. We are aware that we belong to Earth and not to Mars, which provides benefits with French contracts, but well we do work more for Mars then for Earth" (Lab B – T).

Discussion

To make sense of the various organizational objects of a hybrid organization, individuals assess the various organizational objects' characteristics. From this process, each person is influenced by several factors for deriving what he/she perceives as most important. These factors have in common to offer strong emotions to the individual. Their main characteristics are to offer commonality, such as shared norms, values and goals through the organization and among employees. Through them, employees perceive that they all serve the same objectives and share common languages, which increases their capacity to communicate and a sense of shared identity. "One of the key elements in the evolution of a group from anonymity and confusion to cohesiveness and common purpose, is that along the way the members share intense emotional experiences" (Zurcher, 1982 in Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995, p. 114).

Other factors reflect the "embedded agents", influenced by their institutional environment. Emotions are derived from individuals' perception of dedicating their work to an environmental mission in "green" energy and from their proudness of working on a leading technology with the best worldwide expert in this field. Other individual factors also influence what is assessed as "important" object. Individuals' specificities include past experience, the relative need for technical and social legitimacy and the subjective access to resource (social capital and work information). This last element is very important for individuals to have the sufficient information for understanding their environment and manage their emotions. Affects that cannot be understood or controlled may prevent individuals from learning or adapting to new circumstances (Jasper, 1998). In that respect, social position and contractual situation might directly affect actors' access to resources (work and social capital) and indirectly their motivation to engage or not in various forms of institutional work (Voronov & Vince, 2012). In an environment characterized with conflicting

demands and ambiguity, the exchange of information between actors can become essential. Trust can foster great cooperation and richer information exchange then would occur otherwise.

Organizational objects perceived as most "important" are not necessary those offering physical proximity or employers' contractual terms. Organizational objects supporting the best such relative shared norms and values or noble goals (leading scientific R&D research; renewable energy sector) are more likely to boost employees' affective involvements, trust and motivations and to be associated with higher psychological level (commitment or identification). Organizational objects not fulfilling these characteristics will be associated with weaker psychological levels (instrumental, acquiescence). Actors may not always be conscious of these affective and cognitive efforts. If the concept of institutional "work" implies some kind of intentionality (Lawrence et al., 2011), it is important to avoid confusion *intentionality* and *rationality*. Feelings and action might be oriented at achieving some personally desirable objectives, without individuals' conscious reflection (Voronov & Vince, 2012).

Factors offering shared norms, values and noble goals are also important in the context of a hybrid organization, as they represent "anchors", which justify and potentially increase the amount of cognitive effort performed in attempting to cope with competing demands. Based on these core motivations and through information exchanges, individuals then cognitively attempt to link the various organizational objects in order to find connections scenarios that can best serve their interests. Emotions help individuals motivation to invest in cognitive efforts but these can also mitigate potential negative emotions, in case those are not too strong. Rationalizing is a recognized way of defense against the perceived dysfunctions of emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995) and in that sense, the cognitive efforts limit the negative emotions deriving from objects competitions or conflicts. In this sense, affective and cognitive efforts are intertwined.

Each individual associates different levels of psychological involvement towards each part of the hybrid organization. The majority of the bonds are of medium psychological investments, with only one or none very high (identification) or very low (acquiescence) bonds by individual. Individuals do not all perceive each organizational object with the same

intensity, but the majority of individuals adopt similar mechanisms. An individual identifies himself to one or commit himself to one or two organizational objects, because they provide factors perceived previously as important affectively and cognitively. Then, through social interaction and information exchange, an individual will link the other objects in a more calculated way, by answering, "how can this object complement and serve what I consider as important"? "People base judgments of the similarity of two entities on the attributes and relations they share, whereas judgments of the difference between two entities are based on the distinctions between them" (Ashforth & Kreiner, 2002, p.221).

While the literature on hybrids focus on the challenges associated with the complexity individuals need to deal with, the study reveals that individuals less exposed to all hybrid dimensions have more difficulties in perceiving strong psychological bond and in combining the various organizational targets. From an emotional perspective, some of them experience low legitimacy, which can impact their trust and motivation. From a cognitive perspective, they can experience more difficulties because of a relative deficit of information. At the same time, individuals experiencing very strong psychological involvement towards an object may experience difficulties combining or integrating it to others, either because they are not worth the cognitive efforts or because they may represents threats in case of conflicts. This analysis also highlights the role of individuals' emotions in institution work and contributes to understanding better actors' micro-processes in experiencing and resolving (or not) contradictions within and between institutional logics (Creed, Dejordy & Lok, 2010).

While emotionality has often implicitly been viewed as the antithesis of rationality, this study illustrates how rationality and emotionality are interpenetrated (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). Research indicates how organization utilizes emotions by regulating it through neutralizing, buffering, prescribing, normalizing it (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Ashforth & Kreiner, 2002). The present paper illustrates how emotions influence individuals' trust and motivation, which then affect their cognitive efforts in attempting to make sense.

This research focuses on the micro or mesa level of how individuals resolve (or not), contradictions either within or between contradictory institutional logics. Institutional research historically focused on the field or organizational levels rather then on individual levels. This study focuses instead on how individuals resolve (or not), contradictions either

within or between contradictory institutional logics. This research contributes to the institutional work, conceived of individual agents as constrained by institutions, yet attempting to navigate and to shape them (Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca, 2009). By studying how embedded agents interpret individually their environment, change its perception but also influence it, this study contributes to the institutional work research. It contributes to understanding better actors' micro-processes in experiencing and resolving (or not) contradictions within and between institutional logics (Creed, Dejordy & Lok, 2010). It also contributes to the work on hybrid organization, by providing some insight in how individuals within the hybrid make sense of the multiple templates and cope (or not) with conflicting demands.

However, one limit of this case refers to the nature of the population interviewed. Its high percentage of PhD individuals may include a bias. Studying the cognitive mechanisms in a different population may results in different conclusions. Another limit of the paper refers to the relatively small number of interviews, which does not allow the generalization of the present findings. Lastly, the present paper focused on the individual and interpersonal levels within a hybrid organization. Analyzing the role of emotions at an organizational level of analysis could also be very relevant since group level phenomenon, such as shared emotional experiences, are likely to influence group "cohesiveness", team spirit, and social identity within the hybrid organization (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995).

Conclusion

The present paper was based on an empirical case of individuals working with R&D in a hybrid organizational unit of a multinational energy company. The analytical objectives consisted in determining individuals' affective and cognitive assessment of organizational objects and, notably, the intensity of the emotional bonds they form to various objects of the hybrid organization. Results revealed that different individuals experience divergent perceptions of the same objects in the hybrid organization. Individual perception is influenced by the institutional context but also by their personal characteristics, including their creation of emotional bonds to different objects. Actors are searching for commonalities across the various objects they encounter, such as shared goals, values, and teams. They are also looking

for characteristics of objects that are likely to provide them with strong emotions, such as environmental mission, proudness of working on leading technologies, motivation of performing research with an industrial application, and a sense of team belonging. Individuals who developed intense emotional bonds to shared elements were more motivated to engage in the cognitive search for connections that could help relate various organizational objects to each other.

As for the process of engagement, actors developed strong psychological bonds (e.g., identification or commitment) towards one or two organizational objects. They avoided (consciously or unconsciously) creating strong bonds to more objects in order to avoid cognitive and affective conflicts. Instead, they invested less emotion in other objects and searched for how they could best fit with their initial selection of objects. Individuals may generate a medium-high intensity psychological bond (i.e., commitment) if they perceive that an object can successfully complement, integrate or/and be combined with the most important objects. In contrast, they may generate a less intensive psychological bond (i.e., instrumental) if they perceive that an object is fitting poorly with the important objects and/or their interest. Individuals tend to invest in lower intensity psychological bonds (i.e., acquiescence) in case an object is perceived as being opposed to, or threatening of, an important object, or if it does not serve their interests. Objects not provoking any emotion or cognitive reaction will not be mentioned (0 psychological level).

Actors' capacity to perceive "important" shared elements and to connect objects was not only influenced by individuals' personal characteristics (past experience, affective state, need to influence objects, need for trust) but also by their capacity to access resources. Individuals who felt that they had limited access to the various organizational objects, work information and social interaction lacked the capacity and the motivation to invest in extended cognitive efforts. As they experienced less emotion, they were more likely to establish a lower intensity psychological bond and to oppose, compartment and buffer the various organizational objects. Individuals experiencing better access to a broad range of objects in the hybrid organization may experience higher emotions and capacity to invest in cognitive efforts. They are most likely to select one or two objects for a bond of high psychological intensity and to construct strategies such as complementing, integrating, combining, or

manipulating other less important objects in connection to the key one(s). These actors will be likely to perform "hybrid work" through ongoing reflective efforts, adapting to opportunities that serve their own interests and enable them to navigate paradoxes.

As actors construct an interpretation of their hybrid organization, the outcome of this process may, advertently or not, influence their work content and institutional context. Actors can be said to engage in institutional work to the extent that they are aware of such effects and seek to use emotions for the purpose of creating, maintaining, or disrupting institutions. Our analysis of how individuals navigate their emotional engagement with hybrid organizations enhances our understanding of the role of emotions not only in hybrid organizations but also more broadly in institutional work.

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