Organizational Legitimation on the Floor:
A Phenomenological Approach to Tours of Collaborative Spaces

Abstract: The majority of neo-institutional studies frame legitimation as a "judgment." In this paper, we offer a more embodied and material perspective on legitimation by means of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty, 1945, 1964). Through an ethnography focusing on guided tours of collaborative spaces, we accordingly explore how tour guides draw on participants' emotions (their own as well as those of others) in order to make visible the otherwise invisible dimensions of everyday activities. By systematically coding 110 tours of collaborative spaces, we identify four emotional registers – "initiation," "commodification," "selection," and "gamification" – which together constitute a first step towards a better understanding of these taken-for-granted environments. We then go on to detail how these registers are related to particular spatial features and embodiments of such spaces. Together, we see these modalities as being relatively typical of the world of new work practices, which are themselves grounded in communities and in the co-creation of the legitimation process. We conclude by discussing how managers can conceive of and improvise emotional experiences that are deemed "acceptable" for contemporary innovators and entrepreneurs.

Introduction

Experiencing a place, legitimating services and values

Since the 1990s, an increasing number of studies in the field of Management and Organization Studies (MOS) have dealt with the issue of spatiality and materiality in organizations and organizing (Dale, 2005; Dale & Burrell, 2007; Orlikowski, 2007; Leonardi, Nardi, & Kallinikos, 2012; Mitev & De Vaujany, 2013; Carlile, Nicolini, Langley, & Tsoukas, 2013).

Beyond these studies being a reaction to a theoretical gap in the literature, the recent spatial and material turns in MOS can also be understood as an attempt to adapt to the ontological evolution of societies, organizations and organizing, which have increasingly become more fluid in nature (Perret, 2010), de-institutionalized (Bauman, 2000), virtual, digital, distributed (Fulk & DeSanctis, 1995), and service-oriented through their spatial design (Van Marrewijk & Broos, 2012). As such, MOS research requires innovative perspectives that will allow for a renewed understanding of how space and time are produced and reproduced through everyday activities in ways that are increasingly dis-embedded from social and institutional structures. As such, MOS research today faces the key challenge not only of understanding materiality as an "encounter" or "practice," but also that of engaging with the embodied and material dimensions of our world that lie outside of discourse (Cooren et al, 2011) and discursive materials (Malafouris, 2004; Ashkanasy, Ayoko & Jehn, 2014; Malafouris, 2013; Knappett & Malafouris, 2008; de Vaujany and Mitev, 2013).[1] Otherwise said, given that our economies are becoming more and more service-oriented, digital, immaterial, and affective, as well as increasingly rooted in remote (or distributed) working and co-creation, some scholars have pointed out how this can result in a "disembodiment" of and in our daily lives (Hayles, 1999; De Vaujany & Mitev, 2017). Such disembodiment has the potential to impact the materialization of intermediary *experiences* that could eventually be purchased by customers (de Vaujany & Vaast, 2016). As such, our argument here is both historical and ontological.

Through this research, we wish to explore the materiality and corporeality of organizational legitimation processes, as well as how such processes possess material and embodied

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[1] By discursive, we mean the use of "discourse" as a primary research category as well as the use of content analysis as a means of extrapolating facts, interpretations and practices. In contrast, ethnographical research is more likely to stress the material, corporeal, and emotional dimensions of our world. We agree that some philosophical perspectives on discourse and language (e.g. Peirce, Merleau-Ponty, or Foucault) deal with non-verbal communication and very open views of sense-making processes.

dimensions that lie outside of discursive forms of judgment. In a recent review of the research dealing with legitimacy, Suddaby, Bitektine and Haack (2017) identify three lenses for legitimacy: property, socio-cognitive legitimacy and process-oriented legitimacy. In the present paper, we are particularly interested in the latter. In a world in which the relationship between practices and materiality is being questioned more than ever (Lyotard, 1979; Baschet, 2008), legitimacy must in turn be seen as a process, rather than as a mechanism that people can "activate" (de Vaujany & Vaast, 2016). Nonetheless, the bulk of contemporary research on the process of legitimation remains largely centered on perspectives that could be described as judgment-based and/or discursive; this is the case both inside (Bitektine, 2011; Suddaby et al., 2017) and outside (Merleau-Ponty, 2003; de Vaujany and Vaast, 2016) of the neo-institutional literature. The consequences of such a focus are twofold. Firstly, in a world in which materialization and performativity are more and more embodied (see the rising importance of mobile work, the visual dimensions of social media, iPad use, 3D and augmented-reality technologies, DIY, coworking, etc.), such a focus neglects certain key dimensions legitimation. Conversely, a post-discursive stance can instead pave the way for novel research methods that have a limited presence in current work on legitimation processes, including organizational ethnography (Ybema et al., 2009), visual ethnography (Pink, Kürti & Afonso, 2004), and auto-ethnography (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2012). As we will demonstrate, the use of such multi-modal approaches (Zilber, 2017) and ethnographical accounts of legitimation enables one to more easily capture gestures, movements, visuality, and embodiment.

In order to better describe and understand legitimation as a process, we will also draw on the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty (1945, 1964), more specifically on his vision of "embodiment." Furthermore, we will focus on an interesting organizational and managerial context: the tours organized by "collaborative spaces" (in particular coworking spaces, makerspaces, hackerspaces, and fab labs). For the present research, we define "collaborative spaces" as places *whose facilities, aesthetics codes, temporalities, enacted values and spatial settings aim at fostering horizontal collaboration*. Such a context is inherently linked to broader notions of collaborative, cooperative and communal utopias.[2] Ultimately, this description is

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[2] We have purposefully not included "workplace" in this definition (i.e. collaborative *workplace*) because our visits all emphasized the increasing integration of both work/home practices and work/home emotions (Bauman, 2013; Bohas et al, 2018). Collaborative spaces stress joint gamification, address issues of well-being (through yoga, sophrology and tai-chi courses, etc.), and emphasize the tight interpersonal relationships typically associated with working remote, mobile, or at home. Such practices all contribute to the increasingly porous nature of traditional spatial-temporal work/home boundaries.

more akin to a "practice" or a "logic of practice" (Sandberg & Tsoukas, 2011) in the sense that it suggests a pattern of meaningful behaviors and movements that individuals and artefacts can draw upon in order to produce meaning for other members of the space. Coworking spaces, makerspaces, hackerspaces, and fab labs all rely more or less on such practices day-in and day-out.

Collaborative spaces communicate volumes about the communities they host (Spinuzzi, 2012; Merkel, 2015). We consider a community to be defined by its members' specific sense of belonging (which Garrett, Spreitzer and Bacevice (2017) have conceptualized as a "Sense Of Community" (SOC)) and by its ability to foster the construction of collective knowledge. According to Garrett, Spreitzer and Bacevice (2017), prospective customers learn about community norms and practices by taking guided tours with insiders: "We observed that these tours were some of the liveliest and interactive times in the space, as members used these opportunities to make visible the full strength of the 'community' on full strength to make it plainly evident" (Ibid, p.10). Such tours seem to be organized with the aim of embodying this particular sense of community. **This progressive, unstable, fragile understanding and acceptability, which we see as a process of legitimation,** is at the heart of the research presented here. More specifically, through our reliance on certain among Merleau-Ponty's (1945, 1962, 1964) insights, we will attempt to detail exactly how this process occurs.

In the first part of this paper, we thus define both the practice and process of legitimation, as well as the key debates surrounding the concept in the neo-institutional literature. We observe that the bulk of the literature that describes legitimation as a process largely positions it as being judgment-based, ideational and rhetorical. This is partly due to the research methods implemented in such studies (surveys, case-studies, interviews), in particular with regards to their data analysis (i.e. content analysis). Conversely, organizational ethnography, visual ethnography, auto-ethnography and researcher-reflexivity about emotions are relatively rare in such analyses, but nevertheless present themselves as an interesting means for exploring legitimation processes on the floor, as well as institutional processes at large (McPherson & Sauder, 2013; De Vaujany & Vaast, 2016). Accordingly, here we offer a different theory and description of legitimation that is based on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological ontology, which stresses the mediation between "body" and "embodiment" and conceptualizes practices as being always *embodied*. What is also interesting for our purposes is that Merleau-Ponty

positions emotions and emotional flows as being at the heart of the constitution of space, place, time, and everyday activities.

In a second part of the article, we detail our research method, which is based on tours of 110 collaborative spaces throughout the world. We describe these tours at length, and given that they have been coded both as processes and experiences, we explain the coding scheme and cross-fertilizations between co-authors, as well as the authors' sharing of emotions. In conclusion, we detail our results regarding the processes and experiences of the tours, and in doing so, explicate the implications for the four emotional registers identified for communication and socialization. We in turn explain how such a view does not supplant but instead supplements the traditional vision of legitimacy based on judgment and discursive materials.

I. Theoretical perspectives on legitimacy: from legitimation as rhetorical structure(s) to legitimation as grounded in spaces and bodies

1. Key debates surrounding legitimacy in the institutional literature

Legitimacy has long been a core philosophical and sociological concept. It is grounded in Max Weber's (Weber, 1978) work on the legitimation of authority, which itself poses the following questions: What will make people obey other people? What are the underpinnings of authority? To answer these questions, Weber distinguishes between three forms of legitimacy (also known as forms of domination): traditional legitimacy, charismatic legitimacy, and rational-legal legitimacy. Moreover, Weber makes a clear distinction between legitimate order and legitimate authority, and points out that it is difficult for empirical studies to detect whether or not people truly believe the legitimacy, or if they are simply acting "hypocritically […] because there is no acceptable alternative" (Weber, 1978, p.214; see also Pakulski, 1986)).

From a Weberian perspective, legitimacy is essentially described as a judgement sustained by the three aforementioned underlying logics. Other relevant takes on legitimacy come from Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), who have stressed the importance of justificatory logics, plus an additional one identified later in Boltanski and Chiapello (1999), Friedland and Alford

(1992), who have pointed out particular institutional logics, and Arendt (2007), who views judgement and pre-judgement as being part of political processes.

Management and organization studies, on the other hand, have taken a different approach to the study of legitimacy. Indeed, organizations, as well as the products and services that they provide, are now part of the scope of legitimacy. Collective activity can be more or less legitimate, in particular vis-à-vis its organization, the resources that it gathers, or the mode(s) of organizing that it involves. How organizations acquire and maintain their legitimacy in complex and changing institutional contexts has been a significant research topic in institutional theory (e.g. Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Elsbach, 1994; Scott 1995; Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). This being said, judgement-based views remain central. Organizational legitimacy thus corresponds to "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions" (Suchman, 1995, p.574). Suchman (1995) has provided a major summary of perspectives on organizational legitimacy, and in doing so has posited a distinction between normative/social, pragmatic, and cognitive legitimacy. In this conceptualization, legitimacy can include 1) the taken-for-granted nature of a given situation (cognitive legitimacy), 2) its unquestionable, compelling power (normative legitimacy), or 3) its necessarily instrumental way of acting (pragmatic legitimacy).

Suchman calls this context (in which legitimacy is grounded) the "institutionalized organizational field," and highlights that it is socially and intentionally constructed by actors' collective activities (Suchman, 1995). The field itself exerts normative, mimetic and coercive pressures that favor isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) (especially given that the field is an evolving structure) through the evolution of interactions and inter-organizational patterns. In other words, in order to be considered as part of the field and to potentially be identified as "good," "dominant," "innovative," or "prestigious" within it, individuals and collective entities must be somewhat similar in appearance and, for instance, adopt quasi-identical structures and technologies.

In most neo-institutional studies, legitimacy is conceptualized as something that can be told, shared, computed and intellectualized; in this way, it remains quite symbolic, discursive and rhetorical (see the recent work of Harmon, Green, & Goodnight (2015), Hoefer & Green (2016), or Hossfeld (2018) for illustrations of this point). Spatiality and materiality are considered as

being either irrelevant or are considered alongside of the judgment processes associated with being a human being; in other words, he/she judges beyond his/her sensations and feelings.

In contrast, some scholars have recently emphasized the materiality (Jones, Boxenbaum, & Anthony, 2013; Monteiro & Nicolini, 2015), spatiality (Proffitt & Zahn, 2006) and historicity (de Vaujany, Varlander, & Vaast, 2014) of the process of legitimation, particularly in contexts in which organizational members draw on various institutional logics to legitimate their activities (de Vaujany Varlander, & Vaast, 2014). These scholars have suggested that *it* can judge as much as *he* or *she* judges, or that the judgment process involving a manager implies any number of material mediations. Some scholars have thus recently estimated that legitimacy can be implemented by an assemblage of material and human entities, thus making the logic meaningful for those involved in it (see Jones et al., 2013; de Vaujany Varlander, & Vaast, 2014). Logics are more than mere symbols, icons or symbolic artefacts – they constitute performative spaces, practices, embodied rules, postures, movements, places, and instruments.

2. A phenomenological view: towards an embodied perspective on legitimation processes

Phenomenology and phenomenological perspectives have been attracting a growing audience in MOS (Ciborra, 1999; Dale, 2005; Küpers, 2014; Introna, 2013; Gärtner, 2013; Bazin, 2013; Ziakas & Boukas, 2014; Dale & Latham, 2015). The notion of *embodiment*, itself derived from phenomenological literatures, focuses on the role of bodily experience. Moreover, *embodiment* considers the role of the body in organizing work: "embodiment is sensible and sentient" (Dale & Latham, 2015). In other words, according to these authors, embodiment is at the heart of our pre-reflexive exposure to the world. This phenomenological perspective suggests a more complex construction of the legitimation process that is based on sensations and reflection: "our phenomenologically experienced embodiment (the entanglement of body and mind, biology and culture) is much more multi-faceted than we often allow for in conventional discussions of organizational life" (Dale, 2013, p.165). Nevertheless, the body has seemingly been lost in the many organization studies on legitimacy, and in turn subordinated to (organizational) discourse, a naturalness that is "seen but unnoticed" (Garfinkel, 1967). It is our view that an embodied perspective on legitimacy presents several interesting avenues and possibilities for the cross fertilization of neo-institutional research and scholars interested in the issues of institutions and

institutionalization; however, somewhat surprisingly, such links are nearly non-existent in the current literature.

Many interdisciplinary studies have stressed the importance of understanding the extent to which physical dimensions are intertwined with intellectual ones (Malafouris, 2004; Ingold, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978; De Certeau, 1980). In an effort both to group several relevant concepts and to adopt a precise ontology for our research, we will rely here on one key author who will enable us to grasp the embodied connectivity at stake in the tours in question: Merleau-Ponty (1945, 1962, 1964, 2003).[3]

- *The embodied experience:*

Merleau-Ponty (1942, 1945) is above all the philosopher of bodies, corporeality and embodiment. His philosophy questions the perceived "obviousness" of perception and the "obviousness" of present time and instantaneity, mainly in an effort to demonstrate the essential role that living bodies play in this taken-for-grantedness. Bodies and embodiment are the conditions of our experience in the world and its continuity, as well as in the emotional flow in which we are individually and collectively involved. It is because we feel our own presence through our bodies that the body itself serves as the basis for a phenomenology of perception. According to Merleau-Ponty, "perception is an opening-out to and engagement with otherness, a dialectical relationship of the body and its environment, which simultaneously constitutes both subject and object" (Simonsen, 2007). In this view, there is a connection between embodied practice and language. The corporeality of practices concerns sensible (i.e. pre-reflexive) as well as reflexive activities (Ibid). In thinking through Husserl's example of two hands touching one another, Merleau-Ponty (1945) stresses that both are touched and touching, felt and feeling. This phenomenon is at the heart of the notion of reversibility that interests the philosopher. From this perspective, we can feel ourselves to be individuals only through the presence of a community, a set of individuals who we feel share "our" world. A community is one of the modes of expression of the reversible "I," "you," and "we," which are each imbricated in one another. My body defines itself through the perception of other people's bodies, in particular in the context of a collective movement that is likely to dichotomize them

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[3] In his lectures at the College de France (published in French and in English: *L'institution; la passivité*), Merleau-Ponty deals at length with the problem of institutions and institutionalization, yet his work is strangely absent from contemporary institutional debates.

(walking together in the city, participating in a meeting, sitting together on a train, chatting on social networks using avatars or profile pictures, etc.).

- *The criticism of intellectual judgement:*

It is important at this juncture to stress one specific dimension of Merleau-Ponty's *political* thought: his critique of judgement and of the general turn towards post-judgment views of everyday activities. We find this turn to be particularly interesting vis-à-vis neo-institutional analyses and their views on legitimacy and legitimation, mainly insofar as many of the latter strongly rely on the categories of "judgement" (cf. Bitektine, 2011) and "rhetoric" (cf. Hossfeld, 2018).

Merleau-Ponty (1945) provides a phenomenological critique of "judgement" at the level of being (which will be particularly crucial for our deconstruction of legitimacy). For him, judgment is not an intellectual move beyond sensation and feeling; rather, the philosopher remains sceptical about "intellectualist" theses that defend this view: "Judgment is often introduced by what is missing from sensations in order to make a perception possible. A sensation is not supposed to be a real element of consciousness [...]. Intellectualism lives from the refutation of empiricism and judgment has often had the function to cancel the possible dispersion of sensations. Reflexive analysis is established by pushing realist and empiricist theses to their end-point, and by showing through absurdity the anti-thesis" (Merleau-Ponty, 1945, p. 56). Whereas Merleau-Ponty defends a more experiential view of judgment – as an embodied, always interconnected (to things and other people's experience) set of experiences –, today's dominant theses in MOS continue to stress a sequential process moving from pragmatic legitimacy to cognitive legitimacy, even when discussing concrete practices: "a practice must first gain moral or pragmatic legitimacy before it can gain cognitive legitimacy" (Hossfeld, 2018, p. 11). On the contrary, Merleau-Ponty states: "Common experience makes a clear distinction between sensations and judgment. Judgment is for that a stance, it aims at knowing something valuable for my-self at all times of my life and for the other existing or possible spirits; sensation, conversely, is subject to appearance. It is beyond possession and any search for truth. This distinction vanishes in the context of intellectualism, as judgment is everywhere where pure feeling is not, which means everywhere" (Merleau-Ponty, 1945, p. 158).

The philosopher in turn invites us to reject an intellectualist view of judgement that runs from one person to another and that involves an "external" judgement and perception. In Merleau-Ponty's (1945, 1964) writings, judgement conversely becomes an embodied perception in

which people "feel each other out" and in which "institutionalization" remains a *shared* feeling. **There is no external third party that is mentally "judging" a situation** (as in the context of the process described by Bitektine, 2011) on the basis of legitimacy claims produced by the organization (intentionally or not). From this perspective, legitimation is a co-production, and a particular kind of more-or-less harmonious happening that is grounded in the concrete experience of our world and in its interrelated mediations.

- *An embodied view of legitimation:*

That being said, Merleau-Ponty's argument for an experiential view of judgement can lead us to a more embodied view of legitimation as a shared, joint emotion – in short, as a post-discursive process. "Emotional experience is something 'in-between'—situated in the perceptibility of its gestures" (Simonsen, 2007, p.176). We "live" in a body through a continuous chain of perceptions and sensations: "emotions are inseparable from other aspects of subjectivity, such as perception, speech/talk, gestures, practices and interpretations of the surrounding world, and they primordially function at the pre-reflexive level" (Simonsen, 2007). Bodies are created through the emotions of others in what Merleau-Ponty (1945) calls "intercorporeality" (a notion aimed at emphasizing the intertwined relation of our own being and that of others): "Familiar bodies can be incorporated through a sense of community, being with each other as like bodies, while strange bodies more likely are expelled from bodily space and moved apart as different bodies" (Simonsen, 2007, p. 177).

Merleau-Ponty often uses the concept of "flesh" to understand emotion. Flesh is "the element able to be affected, the visible part of the Being conserving a latency, a part of invisibility of sense (senses, directions and meanings)" (Bonan, 2010, p. 236), the "viewing-visible" of the constitution of the being (Dupond, 2007, p. 16). At its most visible, flesh acquires a kind of sensoriality, itself immanently and transcendently reflexive of "viewing flesh" and "visible flesh" (Dupond, 2007; Bonan, 2010). This permanent dialectic seems to relate to both the sensory aspect of emotions (such as fear, anger, or happiness, which often begin with external stimulation of the body) as well as to the sensitive aspect of the relived immanence of the experience (our body(ies) are central in the flow of life and pre-reflexivity).

Also central for Merleau-Ponty (1945, 1960) is what each individual is likely to "express." For the philosopher, expression and the expressivity of gestures and language are at the heart of "signs" and "gestures." These are an immediate manifestation of the collective that is involved in a perception (i.e. more than one person is involved). From this perspective, historical inquiry

might thus be otherwise considered as an archaeology of perception and expression, and thus concerned with how both pervade the bodies and embodied activities of today's world.

But what constitutes activity and its expression? For Merleau-Ponty (1964), the relationship between the visible and invisible is key. In order to live, to live together, and most of all, to *act* together in the middle of a society, an individual ignores numerous perceptions, and instead focuses their attention on a particular set of perceptions. It is necessary to create a proliferation of "visibilities" that will favour "invisibilities," and conversely "invisibilities" that will improve one's visibility. In this way, gestures, objects, and signs effectively point out, show, materialize, hide and link spaces and places. As this problem is also inextricably temporal, it is necessary to constitute a time, an instantaneity that will enable one to avoid becoming lost in endless anticipation or projection into the future, or becoming too conscious, and in turn intellectualizing memories. Accordingly, "there is an experience of the visible thing as pre-existing to my vision, but it is not a merger, a coincidence: because my eyes who see, my hands which touch can also be seen and touched, because, in that sense, they see and touch the visible, the tangible from the inside, that our flesh covers and even folds all visible and tangible things which it is surrounded by, the world and me are inside each other, and from the *perciperer* to the *percipi*, there is no anteriority, there is simultaneity and even delay" (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, p. 162). **From this perspective, we thus spend the bulk of our time in the past, re-cognizing and re-activating shapes and forms 'before' truly perceiving them.**

Vignette 1: the expressivity of work

The following two examples of the expressivity of work illustrate this idea.

> The first example comes from a visit to what 50 years ago was an industrial workshop. Each gesture perceived that visitors could perceive was expressive of everyday activities (what was produced and how): cutting, welding, printing, etc. Moreover, each gesture had a perceivable external significance (expressivity), visible even for a visitor far removed from the occupational community. Obviously, the gestures carried out by this worker were not things that we could do ourselves, but were still things that we saw; we *felt* what the person is doing. Think of Chaplin's "Modern Times" (1936): this silent black-and-white movie was similarly able to show what was being *worked on*.

In contrast, today's workplaces and the gestures that they host are much more enigmatic due to their making *invisible* what is being worked on (see the pictures below). The multiple artefacts here (mainly digital) are even less "expressive": the room could house any function or job from seemingly any organization. In this regard, from the outside, technology is flat, meaningless. From the inside, one does not simply "use" digital artefacts in today's world – s/he is "immersed" in them (Serres, 2015).

Figure 1: Two contemporary workspaces, with and without activities (source: all pictures are authors' own)

Merleau-Ponty's holistic approach, which incorporates the categories of temporality (immanence as a past-present-future whole), personality (as a mix of psychological characteristics, existential experiences and the construction of the Self) and embodiment (from the senses to neurobiological characteristics to interpretation and language), can thus be seen as a precious lens for jointly exploring tours and legitimation, in particular in contexts where co-presence and intercorporeality is key (e.g. collaborative spaces). Thanks to the fact that two of this article's authors served as tour guides (a particularity further described in the auto-ethnographic sections of our research design), we had access to emotional discussions between actors on both sides of the tour (i.e. both tour guides and visitors).

As such, by relying on the ethnography and auto-ethnography of tour guides' embodied experience, we were able to understand the the legitimation process in terms of the guides' practice, as well as in relation to customers' perception and reception of the guides' intentions.

II. Material and methods

1. Research object: collaborative spaces guided tours

We identified the following criteria for selecting a tour for our sample, as well as for distinguishing these tours from simple "visits" or "walks":

i) The tour needed to be guided. A visit alone was not eligible for our sample, except when this was the specific strategy chosen by the guide;

ii) The guide needed to be a member of the space, e.g. an intern, a person in charge of communications or PR, the manager or owner of the space, or a member of the security staff whose duty it was to welcome guests;

iii) The tour did not necessarily need to be scripted in order to be included in our sample. In fact, we noticed that most tours were poorly coordinated by guides (which was evident in their discourse, the key ideas that they chose to emphasize, etc.);

iv) Visits could be internal or external (i.e. related to corporate collaborative communities (or not));

v) The tour could require a registration process (online) or a procedure that could be activated *in situ* (visitors being invited in and offered a tour).

We ultimately distinguished between informal tours, formal tours, collective tours, individual tours, tours based (or not) on an interview, tours conducted by an insider or an outsider (see Figure 1 below), tours for special events (such as openings), recurring tours, and tours conducted collectively by at least two of the co-authors. In sum, 52 tours lasted less than 35 minutes (the median tour length), while 58 lasted more than 35 minutes (among which 15 tours lasted more than 60 minutes).

While the majority of these spaces were independently operated, we also visited corporate, internal, hybrid and shared (between several companies) collaborative spaces. During the elaboration of our classification scheme, the definition of corporate spaces was problematic. The most famous collaborative spaces are fab labs, hackerspaces, makerspaces and coworking spaces. Accordingly, we defined each of these places as one of the following: "collaborative spaces," "collaborative places," "innovation spaces," or sometimes simply as "labs," the latter being linked (more or less) closely to a company's more innovative projects. What we at times

observed were spaces for creativity, or *redeveloped* workplaces. We have ultimately chosen to use the terms employed by the guides themselves, rather than modelling the spaces that we visited according to definitions such as coworking spaces, fab labs, hackerspaces, etc.

2. **Collecting data: ethnographies and auto-ethnographies**

Our research relies mainly on ethnographic (Ybema, Yanow, Wels, & Kamsteeg, 2009) and auto-ethnographic (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2012; Boyle & Parry, 2007) accounts of tours of "collaborative spaces" (see in introduction for the definition). Ethnography can be defined as "the art and science of describing a group or culture" (Fetterman, 1989, p. 11), and organizational ethnography as "the ethnographic study, and its dissemination, of organizations and their organizing processes" (Ybema, Yanow, Wels, & Kamsteeg, 2009, p. 4). Ybema et al. (2009) stress on the importance of "everyday organizational life" (Ybema, Yanow, Wels, & Kamsteeg, 2009, p. 1), which "can be better grasped not through questionnaires […], but by going out into the organizational 'field'" (Ibid, p. 1) and highlighting otherwise hidden dimensions, "including emotional and political aspects" (Ibid, p. 7). An organizational ethnography of tours of collaborative spaces was thus particularly relevant for two reasons. Firstly, these tours are described in the literature as "the more lively and interactive times in the space" (Garett et al, 2017, p. 10). Accordingly, our ethnography of these tours consisted of broader, "long-term" ethnographies (of the spaces themselves) that we completed in several collaborative spaces (mainly in Paris). These "long-term residences" (Fetterman, 1989, p. 45) helped us to "internalize the basic beliefs, fears, hopes, and expectations of the people under study" (Ibid, p.45). This broader experience also led us to gain a better understanding of the tour as the materialized and condensed expression of the community, largely thanks to our "cyclical process" (Ibid, p. 47) view of ethnography: "it begins with a panoramic view of the community, closes into a microscopic focus on details, and then pans out to the larger picture again" (Ibid, p.47). Auto-ethnographic narratives are reflexive insofar as they enable researchers to not only reflect on the practice of guiding tours and on the experience of taking the tour (as a potential customer), but also to simultaneously reflect on being a researcher that is studying the practice of guiding and taking the tour(s). Such an approach thus allows for multiple levels of embodied understanding, which provided us with original inputs for our research and results.

All of this article's co-authors were involved in the physical, embodied experience of participating in a set of tours of collaborative spaces (mainly coworking spaces, makerspaces, hackerspaces and fab labs). For this ethnographic work, our team consisted of four researchers with varied profiles: three women and one man, two less than 35 years of age and two more than 35 years of age, one researcher external to the sites visited, and two researchers who at the time were serving as facilitators (holding research-action positions) for several collaborative spaces visited. And the last one of the four researchers was employed by a large company, and in turn was able to carry out several visits of the space. Collectively, our team represented a diversity of positions, ranging from researchers that were part of the object being studied to researchers *outside* of the space(s) visited. These differences in position greatly altered how we were welcomed (as researchers) in these spaces, and consequently affected the emotions provoked by the visits. Furthermore, it is of note that these corporate collaborative spaces were in our case mostly located within very large companies.

Moreover, two of the co-authors were active members of collaborative spaces at the time that the research was being conducted, and two others were or had been employees in collaborative spaces. This gave us the opportunity to complete our global research through the telling of two auto-ethnographic tales consisting of multiple levels of complexity (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2012). First, as guides themselves, two of the researchers had inside inputs related to visibilities and invisibilities and continuities and discontinuities, which enabled us to uncover the key emotional registers that we will discuss below. Second, these same researchers sometimes had a different point of view on the same tour than did the other co-authors, which allowed for discussions and debates about perception of tours. Third, the two auto-ethnographic researchers (Boyle and Parry, 2007) also observed tours in their own spaces with another guide, which allowed peer-to-peer discussions. With these complexities in mind, we thus carried out the two auto-ethnographies when two of our authors served as tour guides for a period of months. We documented these auto-ethnographies using the same coding elements for the processes, experiences, and emotions expected/provoked. Thus, thanks to their roles within these spaces, these two researchers were able to identify reasons and/or consequences of various invisibilities and discontinuities during the tours that they led.

We were also afforded the opportunity to engage in dialogue about the tours and tour process, and were in turn able to collectively reflect on the following questions:
- What is a tour? What is a simple "visit"?

- Which of these two should be included in our sample? How should we categorize them?
- How should a tour be described and coded?
- How can we make a distinction between legitimacy claims and legitimation?

110 tours of collaborative spaces were thus completed in 13 countries between October 2014 and October 2016.

Type of collaborative spaces: 9	Number of tours: 110	Countries: 13
Independent coworking spaces	67	France, Thailand, Singapore, Spain, Germany, Portugal, Israel, Taiwan, Australia, India, UK, Greece
Independent hybrid spaces	13	France, Singapore, Israel
Independent fab labs	10	France, Spain, Germany, Portugal, Taiwan, Singapore
Independent makerspaces	5	France, Spain, Taiwan, Germany, Portugal, Australia
Corporate coworking spaces	4	France
Corporate fab labs	4	France
Independent hacker spaces	3	France, USA, Taiwan,
Corporate hybrid spaces	2	France
Independent artistic makerspaces	2	Spain, Germany

Table 1: Types of collaborative spaces visited

On average, each tour lasted for 40.05 minutes. 63% of the tours were guided according to a ritual. We did our best to linger (often for a number of hours) in the space after the tours had ended. We did this as we wanted to get a better feel for each space's atmosphere, to use its facilities, and to have the opportunity for informal discussion with its members. We visited a number of the spaces several times; some were visited by several of the co-authors, at times even months after the initial visit. This made it possible for the co-authors to share emotions and/or to compare how their emotions had evolved over time.

Our tours were linked to the collection of numerous sets of data: screenshots of the spaces' websites and social networks, leaflets, posters and other communication/PR documents, pictures, short videos of the visits, and notes and memos.

Finally, we can break the profiles of the guides (Figure 2 below) into two categories: insiders and outsiders. The tours themselves were led by various institutional actors, and who gave each tour depended on a number of different factors, including the tour being seen as an impromptu opportunity (if the tour was not scheduled), part of a business model (interns were typically recruited for such tasks), or used as a means of managing a community (various members were asked to give tours when needed). Among the 110 tours, 107 can be seen as having had a defined strategy.
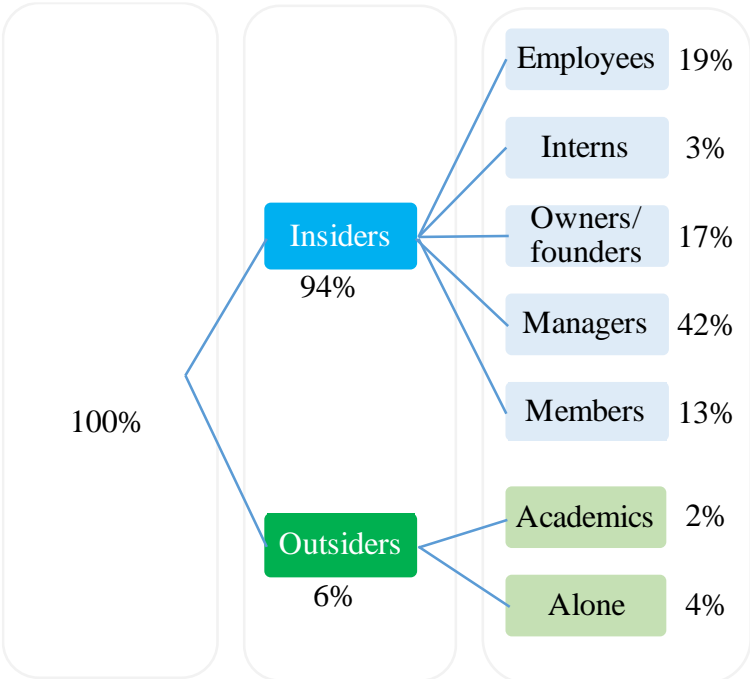

Figure 2: Profiles of tour guides

Thus, we defined insiders as employees, interns, managers of the space/place, co-owners/co-founders/founders, or community members, and outsiders as academics or the (outside) co-authors alone. Four of the tours were given to one co-author alone, sometimes after an interview, as this was how the managers in question chose to show the space's sense of community, i.e. without constructing a narrative. Moreover, six of the tours were led by more than just one person, and at times included both insiders and/or outsiders.

3. **Treatments of the tours: a two-level coding**

Above, we described tours first as a process (Langley, 1999) then as an "experience" or "happening" (Merleau-Ponty, 1945). By doing so, we were able to position each tour as both an objective and a subjective temporal experience. In line with a process view, we identified a three-step process for each tour: Step 1) Preparing for the tour; Step 2) Participating in and materializing the activities and places involved in the tour; Step 3) Re-enacting the tour (see Figure 3 below).
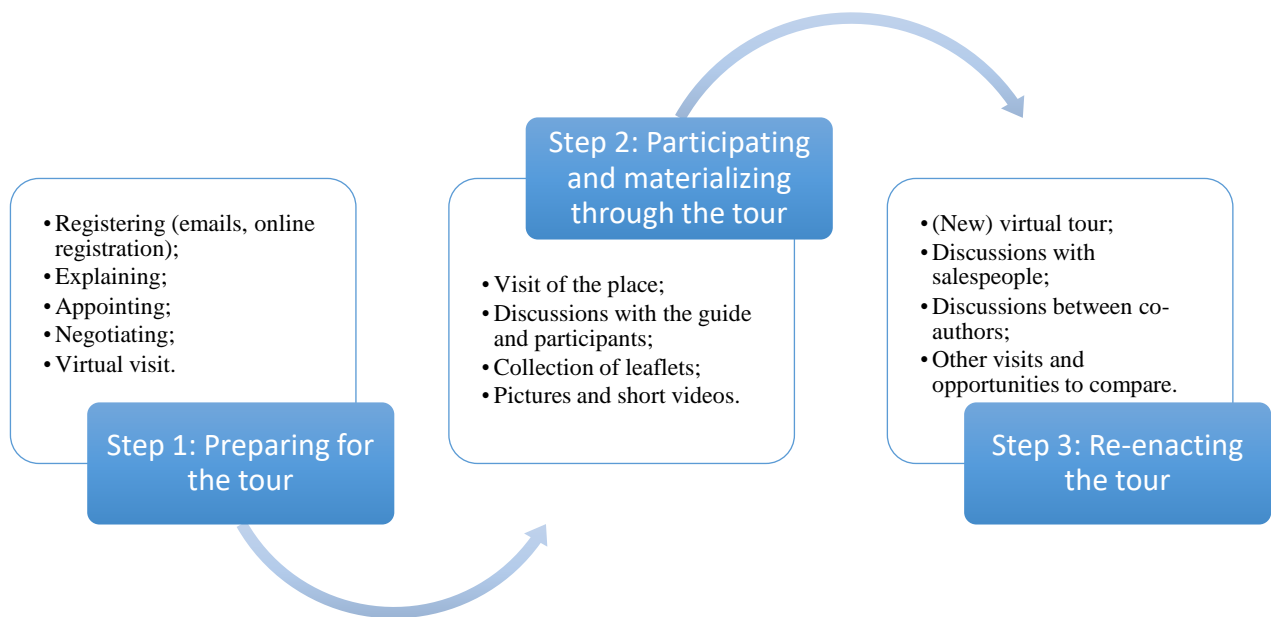
Step 2: Participating and materializing through the tour

- Registering (emails, online registration);
- Explaining;
- Appointing;
- Negotiating;
- Virtual visit.

Step 1: Preparing for the tour

- Visit of the place;
- Discussions with the guide and participants;
- Collection of leaflets;
- Pictures and short videos.

- (New) virtual tour;
- Discussions with salespeople;
- Discussions between co-authors;
- Other visits and opportunities to compare.

Step 3: Re-enacting the tour

Figure 3: The three-step tour process

Moreover, in line with an emotional and experiential perspective, we also drew on Merleau-Ponty's (1964) categories of visibility-invisibility (as two sides of the same coin more so than as opposing categories involved in perception). We have subsequently stressed the emotional and perceptual continuity between visibilities and invisibilities as they were enacted by each guide through her/his comments, gestures, rhythms and trajectories. As such, one is the necessary extension or counterpart of the other (see Figure 4 below). These "visibilities" and "invisibilities" were accordingly at the heart of our analysis.
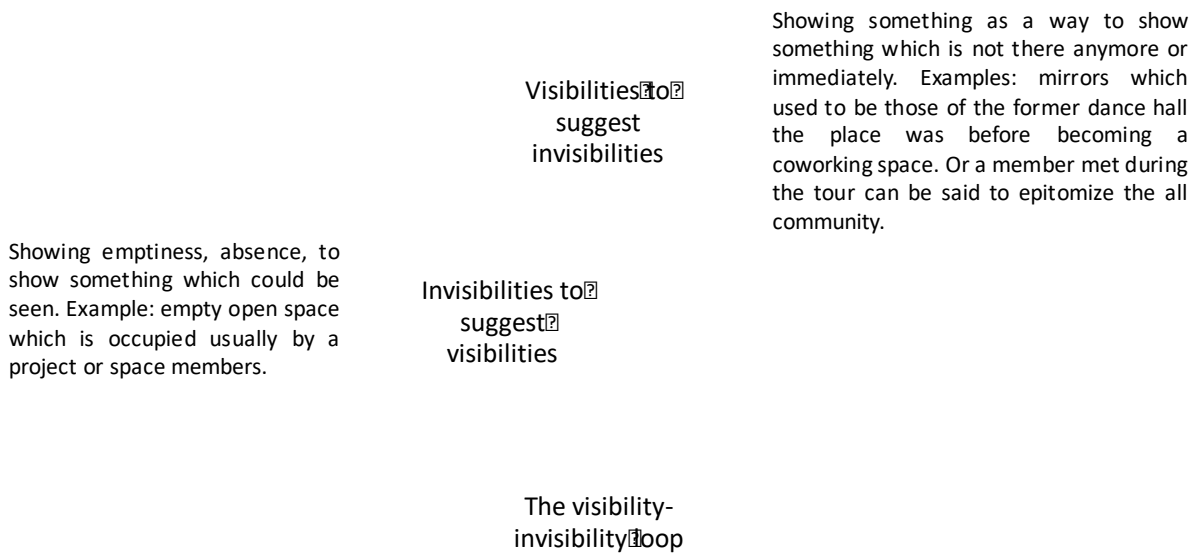
Visibilities to
suggest
invisibilities

Showing something as a way to show
something which is not there anymore or
immediately. Examples: mirrors which
used to be those of the former dance hall
the place was before becoming a
coworking space. Or a member met during
the tour can be said to epitomize the all
community.

Showing emptiness, absence, to
show something which could be
seen. Example: empty open space
which is occupied usually by a
project or space members.

Invisibilities to
suggest
visibilities

The visibility-
invisibility loop

Figure 4: Visibility-invisibility loops

We have also drawn on Merleau-Ponty's notion of continuity versus discontinuity. We were
particularly interested in the rhythm and pace of each tour, the breaks (where, when, how, and
their status in the context of storytelling), and any explicit detours within the space. In line with
Merleau-Ponty, we saw discontinuities as moments that made deep continuities visible within
collective activity, and in turn came to understand continuities as requiring numerous
discontinuities in order to be maintained and sustained. After several discussions and rounds of
coding, we also added four additional categories in our coding table: "key artefacts shown,"
"trajectory through the space," "thematic dimensions emphasized during the tour," and
"temporal structures of the activity."

In regards to the issue of the status of legitimation during the tour (pure legitimacy claims or
deep legitimation), the emotions of the researcher himself/herself were at the heart of our
research. We kept daily logbooks with detailed descriptions of the tours, their characteristics,
and so on, as well as accounts of our own feelings and perceptions. What did we feel, touch and
smell during the tours? Did we have the same experiences as the other participants? In order to
follow the temporal structure of Merleau-Ponty's holistic approach, we also recorded/wrote our
personal past experiences as they related to the lived tour experiences. For example, one co-
author lived in a college town in France some ten years ago. This co-author visited an

independent urban coworking space that was near her former student coworking space. During the tour, questions about the area and the profiles of the coworkers were mixed with past memories. In her notes, she explicated her bias: "I knew that I had high expectations for the tour, the community and the space; I was looking for that 'at home' feeling that I felt years ago."

These observations were formalized in a report which has been coded by means of Nvivo software. We first collectively elaborated a set of tags (28) that described our emotions about the space during each respective the tour (sharing, sense of mutual help, gift, well-being, kindness, conviviality, history, desire, imitation, unease, seduction, closure, sense of mutual interests, caring, pleasure, fun, etc.). Beyond basic emotions (anger, happiness, fear, etc.), our first line of tags also included emotional perceptions, i.e. what we felt emotionally as part of the tour, an embodied thing.

That said, a psychologist would perhaps not view "sense of sharing" as an "emotion." Just using an emotional word (such as "empathy") would not be relevant in describing what we pre-reflexively felt about the place (and which we later reflexively described as a place where a *sense of sharing* was obvious). Our tags thus included both the feeling of an emotion (a "basic" emotion) and our ability to feel emotionally. We clustered these tags into four categories (ritual, sales pitch, gamification, and learning expedition). This led to a set of emotional registers that lie at the heart of our results.

Results: from three steps in the tour to four emotional registers in the legitimation of space

We will next introduce the main results that we identified for each of the three steps of the tours. We will then provide an ethnographical account of our experience of the 110 collaborative spaces. Finally, we will use Merleau-Ponty's dimensions (in particular, visibility versus invisibility) in order to animate the four emotional registers involved in the legitimation process that "starts" with the tour. In doing so, we will also chart how this emotional view enabled a better understanding of the design tours of collaborative spaces.

The tour process: three steps, from preparation to post-visit

Here, we describe the tours' general narratives as well as their temporal and material structures.

Step 1: Preparing for the tour

In most cases, tours required on-line or offline registration. At this stage, it was obvious that facilitators had already commodified the tours. Some collaborative spaces regularly offered tours, while others had online portals for tour registration. Beyond requiring that participants register, several spaces charged a fee for tours, while others simply encouraged donations. This is not altogether surprising, especially when one considers that a number of leading spaces (such as "Botega" in Berlin) are known as leaders and innovators themselves, and moreover, that consumers accordingly seek out tours to such spaces. For example, the founder of a major space in Portugal visited "Botega" because he was planning on opening his own space in Lisbon.

In the cases that we observed, there was a great variety of approaches and means of valorizing tours. While some guides worked on guiding "experiential tours," others did not consider the practice as having any added value. We wish to highlight that many of our attempts did not result in a tour, but did teach us how to introduce ourselves and to make such a request. For instance, the position of an "academic" at times came off as "intrusive" or uninteresting, as we as visitors were at times not viewed as prospective customers. Corporate makerspaces and coworking spaces are more dedicated to internal communication; accordingly, we at times were only given tours due to our friendly or professional relationships with individuals working in or related to these places. Indeed, given the diversity of our profiles (as external and internal, or at times as employees of the (large) companies that owned the spaces being visited), in some cases, our "business card" facilitated the organization of a tour, while in others, it made visits more difficult.

We also took the opportunity to participate in packaged tours of collaborative spaces ("learning expeditions"), such as one with the Conseil Régional Iles de France in Paris or the Research Group on Collaborative Spaces (RGCS), an academic network devoted to the study of collaborative spaces. This latter network recently organized a learning expedition in Berlin (in March of 2017) which is a part of our sample. In Paris, the association organized a tour that lasted for half a day and that led us through five collaborative spaces.

We can conclude by noting that we had the opportunity to prepare for tours online: there, we found pictures of the spaces and of related events, as well as 3D-virtual visits and other resources. That said, the key stake in these online searches was often simply finding directions to or general information about the space in question.

Step 2: The shared experience of the tour itself

The tours that we took lasted from 10 minutes to over an hour and a half. Sometimes, these visits consisted entirely of a tour, while at other times, an interview was involved. Tours largely consisted of a tour guide(s) presenting key artefacts and facilities (3D printers, shared desks, open spaces, ping-pong tables, artwork, etc.); through them, each place's **services** (1), **skills** (2) and elements related to its **atmosphere** (3) were revealed. Each individual that we talked to had their own method of storytelling and of (at times) conveying key information about the commercial offer at hand. These were also opportunities for (chance) encounters with members of the community and short discussions with them and other tour participants.

We can also note here an initial element that was common to all of the places that we explored: their visibility within the broader spaces in which they were inserted. For independent spaces, visibility might be aimed at attracting prospective customers and/or at communicating with the surrounding neighborhood (see Figure 5), while for corporate spaces, visibility might instead be aimed at the organization's employees or at external clients. For example, we had a single experience in Paris with the innovation lab of a major auditing firm, which functioned both as a showroom and as a makerspace. The space was meant both for "making" and "showing" services to customers unaccustomed to buying their (i.e. the auditing firm's) digital products. For all three of the related cases (a fab lab, a place dedicated to design and a creative space), the spaces were located near reception desks and/or elevators, which demonstrated that the places occupied central locations in their respective corporate spaces. Clearly, location choice is a key element of visibility for coworking spaces. Other such examples came from Singapore, where location choice was related to centralizing public policy and the existence of specialized commercial areas, as well as from Sydney, where it was more market-driven. At times, an entire ecosystem was visible within a particular territory or campus.

Figure 5: Collaborative space, "Le Credo" – France (source : authors' own)

During our tours, we were struck by the extent to which aesthetics is also a key element of collaborative spaces. More specifically, we observed that spaces highlighted specific characteristic artefacts of their collaborative environments: lockers, photographs of the members, members' business cards, mascots, maps indicating the location of ongoing projects, typewriters used as decorations, sewing-machine tables converted into working tables, etc. For independent spaces, aesthetics play a central role in attracting customers, as customers are often in search of a particular aesthetic. For corporate spaces, design is often met with ambivalence; in these spaces, we noted the desire to differentiate the company from others we well as an attempt to also conform to the company's more general aesthetic. For example, in a building dedicated to design and architecture, the aesthetics of a lab evoked the industrial past of a former car production plant that the site had formally housed.

The spatial settings and tools that are likely to be found in many collaborative spaces (3D printers, digital milling machines, member creations, etc.) allow people to "touch," to "manipulate," and to create an environment conducive to creation itself. This key point was emphasized by the guides in our sample: innovation was materialized in each space. During several of the visits, another interesting material element was also mentioned: the movable geographical location of the space. Once, for example, this was evoked by a plaque bearing an inscription of the space's opening date. In many cases, places (mostly fab labs, in our experience) seemed to exist *beyond* themselves. These spaces would often change location, inserting themselves into larger spaces. They thus represent the same concept, the same idea of a place as an animated space endowed with tools and practices, and simply move from location to location.

Figure 6: The community charter of "Love & Win" in Sydney (source: author)

Lastly, all of these spaces were extremely similar in their communication practices. Tours (given by space managers, community managers, facilitators, interns or other members of the space) **were a key way of showing, performing, and materializing the services being offered.** The notion of "community" was always central to this promise. Not only will you join a space, but you will become a part of a "community," a "family": people here help one another, and have a fun time doing so.

Beyond this (as was particularly clear for "Hub" and "FreeStone"), customers were promised a "network," a place where they could connect with other people. The events organized in and by the various places also played a central role in communicating and enforcing these promises – events (and their management) were at the heart of building a sense of community. For some spaces, such events are the DNA of community life and represent the most time-consuming activity for the insiders.

Beyond such communication practices, we were surprised by other various global tendencies that we identified in the aesthetics, spatial arrangement, furniture, facilities and gestures that we saw during the tours (but also during our stay in collaborative spaces). Of the 110 spaces visited, one of the most amazing elements related to this was a general impression of isomorphism (in particular for coworking spaces). It is a real "same same," as the saying goes in Thailand: the same pieces of furniture (post-its, acoustic bubbles, ping-pong tables, chalk boards, Ikea seats, pride in having Steelcase furniture, or pride if having cheap or free furniture (social entrepreneurship)), the same space design (welcome desks, general L- or U-shaped layouts), the same emphasis on a "community" (see the charter of "Love & Win" above), and the same general use of open spaces, at times punctuated by small, closed offices.

Step 3: Re-enacting the tour

Interestingly, the tour process did not stop with the end of each visit, nor did the emotions related to it. Like the other participants, we all had several opportunities to re-enact the tour, such as through talks with community managers that we used to ask other questions or talk further about the visits, virtual tours made after the visits, emails sent after the visits, and so on. For example, the Parisian ecosystem of collaborative-space management is also a collaborative community. This means that when a new collaborative space opens, other community managers often visit. One of the co-authors, involved with an independent urban coworking space, accompanied her boss to the opening of another coworking space located in a rural area in January of 2016. This is a concrete example of the multileveled nature of the researchers' experience of the tours: they were both guide and guided, able to compare urban and rural spaces, as well as corporate and external collaborative spaces.

Other factors also allowed for us to re-enact the tours. For example, one of the co-authors organized a tour of three spaces for a second co-author in order to introduce her to the spaces' managers she worked with. As such, the coding of multiple tours in the same space by different co-authors provided an interesting ground for making comparisons, and also helped us to define relevant criteria and to answer some of our global research questions (see "II. Material and methods").

The experience of the tour as a legitimation process: visibilities, emotions and embodiment

The phenomenological categories identified above were clearly at stake in the spatiality and temporality of the tours. However, one most important dimensions of our research relates to how the embodied experience is constitutive of the legitimation process.

One of our first shared impressions – which themselves are known to strongly influence our cognitive experience of things (Damasio, 2012) – was how we were welcomed. Strangely, a number of collaborative spaces did not have welcome desks or clear entry points. This generated a sense that we were in a "non-place" (Augé, 2015), that we had not arrived "somewhere" until a guide finally welcomed us. The presence of the guide's "welcome" was inexorably felt within our experience of the tours. Moreover, the personality of each guide impressed the space's atmosphere on us.

As mentioned above, **tours often appeared as a first step in a community, particularly in the context of coworking spaces**. When being welcomed, potential customers are invited to get a feel for the space before then moving on to a second step: a free half-day trial, or potentially becoming part of the community. That said, however, from a phenomenological point of view, the *very* first step could in fact be the space's name. Some such names are highly evocative, such as "The Lighthouse," which might evoke other places such as the Eiffel Tower (due to the light at its top) or the Atlantic coast (which for French people is synonym for the holidays and vacation more generally). From this point of view, a name provides a certain level of visibility, and thus may shed light on the invisibilities of our mental connections. These invisibilities may become perceptible through language or names, or through anecdotes and projections. For example, in a corporate fab lab that we visited, the tour guide mentioned forthcoming plans for the space, including the addition of furniture, machinery, tools and so on, that would all be created by fabbers. Such plans represent an invisible category that can be found through the visibility of discourse.

In order to quickly embody the promises made by the space, the tours were at times organized by a coworker, while at others emphasized stops intended to facilitate conversations between visitors and coworkers. However, the majority of the spaces that we visited (in particular coworking spaces) were silent. Visitors often felt embarrassed about conversing with coworkers, as they were largely worried that they would be disturbing them. Depending on how such interactions were prepared for, it seemed that coworkers were pointlessly primed, as visitors did not use these opportunities to deepen their experiences.

Tours clearly represented an opportunity for the guide to convey a feel for the atmosphere, and for visitors to see and to touch the facilities, to smell (sometimes literally) the place, to have chance encounters and discussions with interesting members/coworkers in order to get a feel for the space's (potential for) events, to hear stories about the space during events that invoked this potential, etc. The "invisibilities" that guide's storytelling alluded to represented powerful modes of materialization and legitimation: participants were invited to imagine an event, a project, or even members (we often visited spaces that were nearly empty).[4] What remained to be seen, to be felt – i.e. what would be seen and felt if one were to join the place – were key

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[4] This was an emotional issue that we found to be particularly striking.

stakes during the tours. In other words, convincing visitors of *the materiality of these invisibilities* was at the heart of the legitimation process.

Vignette 2: Sometimes tours provoke emotions, just not the ones you might expect!

I remember one coworking space in which I felt like an intruder. The guide led a very quick visit lasted less than 5 minutes. My guide, a coworker, explained to me that this place had lost its values – Conviviality and Exchange – "with the recent arrival of a company that [hadn't] stopped eating up space." While my guide informed me that he was leaving/looking for a new place which would fulfill his need for a third place, I myself was hoping to leave the space as soon as possible, as the atmosphere there was too heavy. I felt incredibly disappointed.

The difficulty involved in accessing some of these places also increased their perceived selectivity. That said, a number of highly selective places were in fact easily accessible for one researcher due to their direct relationship with the related organization. Others, despite being open to the public, were more difficult to find, largely due to the fact that the researcher had not been introduced to the space by a knowledgeable member of the organization.

These tours highlight how open and global our world is becoming. People share the same information, the same training (e.g. standardized MBA programs), the same service providers, the same buzzwords, and at times, the same problems (such as the cost of real estate in large cities, economic competition, the need for more sustainable development, and so on). Beyond these general trends, we also noticed shared niche markets, which at times focused on gender positions (such as "Ventura" in Sydney), entrepreneurs in digital areas and communication (geared towards collaborative work, such as in Singapore), academic labs (LabUM in Singapore) or fintech ("Love & Win" and "Wild Talk" in Sydney). The presence of international networks (e.g. "Hub," "Botega," "FullDay," etc.) and the emergence of global social movements (notably coworking and maker movements) likely reinforced this impression of globalism.

However, despite the real advantage of these spaces' being both global and local, there was also an associated feeling of loss: loss of identity, loss of the pleasure in traveling around the world and discovering new cultures/routines/habits, loss of orientation, etc. The homogeneity of furniture, communication, etc. of such spaces can thus lead to an homogeneity of wishes and of

will, and in turn becomes a dangerous means of trapping people in a single way of thinking (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Nap rooms abound – invisible at "Hub" (Singapore), visible and tested at "Uni-Lab Paris" (France) and visible at "The Flat Rennes" (France) (source: authors'own)

Four registers of emotional legitimation in collaborative spaces: Initiation, Commodification, Selection, and Gamification

The logics of visibilities and invisibilities that we have highlighted thus far can accordingly be seen as contributing to the construction of legitimation, a process which itself was common to all of external collaborative spaces that we visited. More generally, we identified four emotional registers that emerged from our coding of emotions, each linked to specific visibilities and invisibilities: initiation, commodification, selection, and gamification (see Table 4).

The "initiation" register is epitomized by both the process and by our experience of visiting corporate collaborative spaces and a handful of independent spaces. Each tour was clearly a ritual made up of explicit and particular rules, values and practices of the "community" being channelled. The next implicit step was simply to take a seat and become part of the space (and thus the community). Surprisingly, the communities themselves were largely invisible (most of the time we visited empty spaces), and made visible through artefacts and the guide's storytelling, which together conveyed the spaces' collective dynamics.

In contrast, the "selection" register was based on less inclusive emotions and experiences. Clearly, some places were not intended to include everyone: this is mainly due to their

respective areas of specialization (e.g. spaces devoted exclusively to IOT or to design) or to the projects that the space was focused on. Such selectivity can be also noted in the organization of space itself: areas where one "should not go," areas whose teams "do not like to be bothered," etc. This emotion is paradoxically increased when teams are not present: moving into empty offices in a space described as "very innovative" gives one the strange impression of visiting a museum-like organizational space.

"Gamification" was another emotional register that tour guides tended to draw on. This was particularly emphasized when guides made references to an omnipresent and invisible "rest of the company" or to society at large. "Having fun" clearly looked like a very open, liquid practice. This process of legitimization can thus be understood as being constructed through the reference to this "other," and is in turn materialized through a set of mobile artefacts, such as plush seats or foosball tables. It is in this sense that these spaces represent new working environments for employees, attracting them and encouraging them to spend time in the space. During our visits, we observed that the spaces reserved for innovation and creativity were also used as places for gathering, exchanging, or even escaping. Unsurprisingly, similar "nice" and "convivial" details were accented during our visits: cushions, hammocks, relaxation areas, mindfulness rooms, and so on.

Lastly, "commodification" was a prevalent register, and was often associated with "selection." Moreover, this dimension was present in guides' framing of visits for external clients and for future collaborators through their use of the "showroom effect." For customers that have paid for a service, seeing that the company hosts this type of space can represent the promise that they are part of an innovative organization. We observed that this type of space mainly emerged within companies' head offices or strategic centers: the number of m2 invested in therefore served as a showcase for the space and also as internal advertising for the group. In such cases, gaining access to these spaces was not a question of payment, but instead, one of hierarchy.

	DESCRIPTION	EMOTIONS (we felt the guide wanted to evoke)	VISIBILITIES
INITIATION	The tour is a first step towards the "community." It makes explicit particular rules, values and practices. The next implicit step: taking a seat and becoming part of the space. The tour is: a **RITUAL**	Sharing, sense of mutual help, gift, well-being, kindness, conviviality, history	The "event" room, large open space, people chatting in the kitchen (opportunity to partake in the community's atmosphere). **Implicit invisibility:** the community **Key gestures:** showing the event room, stopping in it, stopping in front of the wall of member pictures, shaking hands of members during the tour, etc.
COMMODIFICATION	The tour is a means of showing, materializing, and experiencing key services offered by the place, its employees, and its community. The tour is: a **SALES-PITCH**	Desire, imitation, unease, seduction, closure, sense of mutual interests, expertise, communication, disappointment, dismay, liminality, aesthetic	Facilities, up-to-date furniture, aesthetics, description of good practices, etc. **Implicit invisibility:** the value of each service **Key gestures:** mentioning fees, distributing leaflets, showing and walking through up-to-date facilities, etc.
SELECTION	The tour is part of a process that can lead to a "club," an elite group, and a set of "happy few." The guide (quickly) makes one feel what would remain to be done for those in the group who might wish to be a part of it. It is: an **INQUIRY**, the first part of an **EXAMINATION**	Ambition, joining the "club," caring, competition, sense of possession	People are taken "close to," to the entry of, but not inside (yet). Visibility from afar. Invisibility of what could be experienced once inside. **Implicit invisibility:** excellence, success, power **Key gestures:** showing different areas for different member profiles, visualizing the selection process, pointing out areas from afar that cannot be accessed (until one's possible admission, etc.).
GAMIFICATION	The tour is a first opportunity to learn something, to have fun together. The tour is: a **LEARNING EXPEDITION**.	Pleasure, fun, learning, co-construction	Rhythm of a game, sense of a party, people can touch, experience, and take pieces cut by machines. **Implicit invisibility:** new skills, new business models **Key gestures:** chaotic gestures and trajectory, invitation to play and test facilities, etc.

Table 2: Four registers of emotional legitimation and four universes of visibilities-invisibilities

in the context of tours of collaborative spaces

These four registers of emotional legitimation **can be combined in various ways**. For example, after a tour of "Botega" (an independent urban coworking space) in Berlin, we felt both initiation and selection emanating from our guide's practices. In contrast, during our visit to "Roadmap Digital" (a fab lab) in Paris, we experienced both gamification and initiation. **In addition, all processes of legitimation corresponded to different temporal structures.** A long-term process for initiation (as once in, becoming part of a community can be a long process), a sense of immediacy for commodification (you pay and in turn feel that you can are immediately granted "access" to something), a feeling of uncertainty and possibly of discontinuous time (trying and re-trying) regarding selection, and the bounded time of the expedition and game for gamification.

Discontinuities and rhythms also played a key role in the process. The pace of the walk (guided) and the number and context of breaks also functioned as a way for guides to suggest other continuities: the importance of silence, the importance of certain key places or more transitional ones, the importance (or lack) of spaces walked through quickly without any comment (e.g. an inner-courtyard that people might find "cool," but that might have been avoided so as to negotiate undesirable interaction with the surrounding neighbourhood, a fact not otherwise explicitly mentioned during the tour).

Discussion

Contributions, limitations and avenues for further research
From a theoretical standpoint, our research contributes to two streams of research: neo-institutional theories and theories of space and time in organizations and organizing.

In the context of neo-institutional theory, our work sheds further light on process views of organizational legitimation (Suddaby et al., 2017). When considered through the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty, the gradual taken-for-grantedness of new organizations or organizational activities appear to be at once deeply embodied, emotional, spatial, and material. Such a perspective allows us to move beyond a judgment-based view of this process (assuming that "someone" is judging), and instead to consider legitimation as an expanding, shared, and

mutually constructed emotion that might belong to one of four registers (selection, commodification, gamification and/or initiation). This embodied process involves numerous instances of *spatialization* (the creation of seemingly "closed" spaces and boundary-spanners in practice during the tour), *materialization* (gestures and the use of artefacts and instruments likely to embody the service, activities, and community described by the guide) and *temporalization* (the use of the rhythm, discontinuities, and temporal structures). Our four emotional registers, which cover all of these aspects, are themselves different yet coherent sets of emotions that are likely to be constituted by and constitutive of the tour. In regards to temporalization, we can relate these four sets of emotions to the different temporal processes that were enacted by the guides: a long-term process for initiation, a sense of immediacy for commodification, a feeling of uncertainty and the possibly of discontinuous time regarding selection, and the bounded time of the expedition and game for gamification. Interestingly, the act of physically entering a community appears to be phenomenologically indivisible from the symbolical and material co-constitution and entry into the organization itself. The embodied practice of walking into/entering an organization is thus a critical time and space, one that was clearly identified by many of the guides as being important for both "selling" the space and for the step following this "sale" (in particular in the context of initiation).

Our research also contributes to studies of space (Clegg & Kornberger, 2006; Taylor & Spicer, 2007) and time (Hernes, 2014), as it highlights the roles that space and place play in organizing. Moreover, the dimensions of visibility-invisibility and continuity-discontinuity borrowed from Merleau-Ponty (1962) illuminate the spatial and temporal activities of organizing. In order to "make invisibilities visible," the guides that we observed jointly created space while simultaneously focusing on the present and on the on-going experiences of tour participants. Each of the above registers relates to specific temporal structures, and each consists of long-term processes for "initiation" (once in, becoming part of a community can be a long process), a sense of immediacy for "commodification" (you pay and feel that you immediately have "access" to something), a feeling of uncertainty and possible discontinuous time (trying and re-trying) for "selection," and the bounded time of the expedition and games for "gamification."

Empirically, our research also contributes to a better understanding of the legitimization of collaborative spaces and of collaborative communities in society. Today, coworkers', makers' and hackers' communities are legitimating themselves through numerous activities, including the tours such as those that were a part of this study. These tours demonstrate the larger

importance of such places for organizations and society. Similarly, we were surprised by the number of managers and consultants (often innovation-oriented) and journalists that also took part in these tours.

From a managerial perspective, our work makes two key contributions to the existing literature. The first is our identification of the four emotional registers related to the design and management of tours of collaborative spaces. Each of these requires an ever-increasing degree of bricolage, as well as tour guides that will be likely to be involved in (and enjoy) such instances of bricolage. Moreover, the forms of identification that were accessible to guides represent a precious managerial tool. There were thus several levels of inter-subjectivity in this phenomenological meshwork. Like the iceberg metaphor, the surface inter-subjectivities are obvious: being a woman (or not), or introducing oneself as a researcher, both have clear impacts on one's interlocutor(s) perceptions. As such, if one is to understand the experiences that arise from such visits, a deep sense of reflexivity (and work) are required beforehand, both during and after such tours.

In our case, this consisted of deepening our subjective questioning of what was felt during the tours, a process that required us to dig into the various layers of sensation associated with the visits. Moreover, this also consisted of establishing which elements would contribute to our appreciation (or lack thereof) for a particular visit. For example, we felt close to the members of one community thanks to a figurine of a famous movie character that we noticed in the office, but also thanks to a guide's age and impassioned way of speaking: it was as if we were experiencing the material artefacts as Proustian madeleines. All of these hidden (and potentially unconscious) dimensions – which revealed themselves through the sensations of heat, well-being, or, on the contrary, anxiety or indifference – impacted our perceptions of the visits, and for potential customers, the choice of whether or not to become members of the space in question. This means that a guide must not only be understandable, funny and a good conversationalist, but also, that he/she must be able to "make people dream," to allow them access to a future world that will transform a one-time visit into a desire to become part of the space's present community. In the same way, the guide must be able to identify people that would not be a good fit for the community, and in turn, must possess the ability to dissuade them from applying, even if this means a loss of potential income for the company. Indeed, sometimes short-term profits can lead to long-term dilemmas.

Our research suffers from three limitations. Firstly, it includes a very limited number of rural collaborative spaces. Such a context would have been interesting to incorporate into this study, as associated territories and business models are likely different from those of the urban spaces that we visited. Secondly, as we did not follow-up with other tour participants, we were unable to chart how the emotions elicited by the tour led to forms of legitimation, and in turn, to participants' decisions following the tours. Lastly, we did not systematically link our physical experiences of the spaces to our online experiences of them (only a part of collaborative spaces offered virtual visits and podcasts).

In addition to considering the aforementioned limitations, future research could also investigate the relationship between the four registers of emotional legitimation and business models. Interestingly, business models were often part of the invisibility that was being created and maintained; almost nothing was said during the tours about the place as an entity. What was made emotionally visible was a community, not the larger organization itself (Ahrne and Brunson, 2008).

Future research could also focus on how embodied phenomenological processes and practices impact customer relationships in other contexts, such as after the signature of a contract. Moreover, such studies would be a next step towards a greater understanding of phenomenology within the everyday life of collaborative spaces.

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