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Responsible heterogeneity and intercultural tensions: the example of the building sector

Annick SCHOTT¹

¹ Senior Lecturer HDR, Bordeaux Montaigne University, Mica- Icin, E-mail: annick.schott@iut.u-bordeaux-montaigne.fr

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Abstract

This article initiates a reflection on the porosity of socio-economic constraints and its tension between intercultural diversities in the building sector, illustrated by a field study with ten or so neo-Aquitaine SMEs. How do the dozen SMEs apprehend the combination of intercultural feelings with their socio-economic responsibility? Interculturalities constitute a management constraint, in what are they a source of tension or wealth? What can make the link between the same and the not the same, not to make them all the same, but to conjugate them? Business culture, because of its intra dimension, can play this trait-union role. This raises the impact of the role of the (socio-educational) habitus of SME managers in the conduct of their business (ies). Habitus gives, in effect, the impulse - facilitating or preventing - to do something, in particular otherwise.

The building sector highlights its long tradition of integrating diverse and even vulnerable populations. Ten years after the financial crisis, there is a high level of job vulnerability in this sector. We are in this sector of activity, notably faced with difficulties in the working conditions of the teams which have worsened with the retirement of a number of business leaders.

Keywords: Building, Trades culture, Interculturalism, Habitus, Hybridization, SMEs.

Introduction

To admit, like Granovetter (1985/2000), that the economy is embedded in the social, is also to place greater emphasis on cultural pluralism. It is no longer sufficient to have an automatic association between economic (technical) progress and social or environmental progress: innovations are not simply technical or economic, they constitute intercultural transpositions. Culture, because defined as a vision of the world and a set of references (Iribarne, 1989), makes intelligible everything we do in a given organization.

This widening of the scope poses a problem for the company: the potential for multiple conflicts of interest and points of view.

The object of the proposed reflection therefore relates to this question: to respond to this renewed “greater openness to interactions between oneself and the other in the individualization of singularities”, what management and organizational choices do companies make, what actions in legitimacy of the leaders? What about SMEs in the construction sector?

The challenge here is therefore to identify if (under what conditions) taking the time to do things differently is part of the - facilitating - pulse of the strategy of the head of the company and of the organizational implementation. (intercultural, economic, social) of this strategy. It is also about trying to invest what has been missed.

Responding to these questions, first of all, puts in context the habitus of the manager and the culture of the building trades to which companies can refer; then, in a second step, we will observe the recent practices identified with a dozen of Gironde SMEs in the building sector.

1. The theoretical framework in context

According to Philippe d'Iribarne (1990: 265), the company constitutes "a form of community which, more than many others, owing to the difficult environment in which the economic pressures exerted on it place it, is subject to strict requirements in terms of the quality of internal cooperation. »The social links of the 3 Cs (Communication-Coordination-Concertation) depend on the mode of governance, the management and organization choices of the leaders in order to really invest in the historical-socio-cultural contexts and the relational singularities of all parties internal stakeholders.

Faced with distinct interests but emanating from groups of actors registered in the same logic and historico-socio-cultural contexts, the development of the company seems to follow the same slope. However, the information transmitted, sometimes generously, on strategic themes, makes it possible to build a common cognitive framework but in the appropriation of often unequal resources (Supiot, 1999). Company directors have in fact mastered management issues and "soft regulation", based on so-called permissive moral commitments (Thuderoz, 2000). Will the pluralism of intercultural interests go beyond the social imperative of integration, to enter into an approach, a state of mind and then a process as so much of transposition of things otherwise allowing to give birth to other creativity, other rehabilitation, other innovation.

The articulation between the two universes - managerial and historico-socio-cultural - can be fulfilled by both the singular habitus of the leader, guarantor of the representation in their pluralism of like and not like, (1.2.) And the significance of business culture as a hybridization vector (1.1.)

1.1. Business culture as a vector of hybridization

The construction sector remains a sector of integration and professional advancement of people with an immigrant background. In Nouvelle-Aquitaine, construction trades represent almost 8% of the workforce, which is to say its economic weight (source Panorama emploi-training building and public works Nouvelle-Aquitaine - 2018).

One of the points in common that brings together a majority of construction stakeholders relates to a type of vocational training combining theoretical training and application of knowledge and know-how in a professional environment. The construction industry is one of those that uses the most transmission approach through learning and / or professionalization (mastery of professional knowledge, the acquisition of which takes time and practice).

Thus 18.5% of neo-Aquitaine apprentices are trained in one of these building trades (source: Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region - 2016/2017 school year).

This approach promotes the dissemination of business capital both in terms of formal knowledge (initial training and / or work-study) and informal knowledge (practical experiences not recorded but transferable in a community of trades).

Using the term community of trades is to refer to the specific skills of the trades, that is to say to particular knowledge, but it is also to correlate them to situations of exchange and reciprocity in ways of doing to solve both technical and operational questions and also human (place of integration, socialization and also learning of socio-educational bases - for foreigners, young people, people breaking) with the requirements of a level socio-cultural.

In any business, group cohesion is necessary to strengthen the effectiveness of the resources involved. Likewise, the regular transmission of information and experience to all levels of the company helps to build and enrich the corporate culture.

In the case at hand, this community of construction trades refers to a transversal or rather trans-company posture, but not "universalizable". Régis Debray (2007) indeed shows that if the standard norm relating to an old or new technique or technology unifies according to the lowest common denominator, culture does not. In addition, there is something irreversible about technique (no turning back possible), whereas culture is a long journey which not only can include breaks but also back and forth; "In other words we inhabit a culture and not a technique".

There is therefore an importance to inhabit the culture in particular of its profession, consubstantial importance with its long history and tradition, as in the Building industry. To go back only a century, at that time the building was very labor-intensive, and its wealth lay in the quality of its personnel. If the immigrants have maintained their establishment, it is because the construction site has gradually asserted itself as a place of common identity. According to Mareilla Colin (2001), people circulated there and so did know-how, and these transpositions of technology and sociability in the field facilitated the transmission of a culture other than the operational one. In addition, this growing sector offered opportunities for high professional and social mobility (shifting from worker to employer status) often through intermediate statuses. We are no longer dealing with a collection of individuals recruited because "better pros" », but rather, because of this type of relationship to the profession, to actors who have co-developed common meaning. Thus the success of the worker / boss is judged as the result of an ethic based on the values of effort, the spirit of sacrifice, and solidarity. To strengthen this social cohesion, it is in the clan that a priori shares these values that we will recruit, look for new blood so as to regenerate. This means that the context in which the interaction between two subjects carrying different national cultures takes place acts as a catalyst for meaning. There is condensed, each time started again and deeply "situational", the emergence of hybridized meanings. This is what Alex Mucchielli (1988/2015 : 104) emphasizes : "Meaning (...) emerges from the situational configurations in which activities take place. Meaning is the result of multiple processes, it is co-constructed by the actors present in the situation which also occurs. "

"Product of a history, heritage of know-how, of way of acting and thinking, common vision, ..." according to Maurice Thévenet (1987) who, like Fons Trompenaars (1994/2008), defined it as the way in which a group of people solves their problems", culture, culture here Building allows to approach meaning in action. Since at least part of the elements that make it up will give rise to explicit and implicit rules. As Michel Crozier (2007) points out, we are in the ambiguity of a social construction : it is a "promise ... which makes it possible to regulate all human interactions, it is the basis of any contract". And it is precisely here that the incompressible of the sensible are hidden in their hybridization.

In the first place, hybridization can represent a windfall effect, when it is understood as a saving of time and energy making it possible to meet the challenges linked to the triple confrontation with new situations, new actors, new social productions. Moreover, Bhabha (1994/2004) and Pieterse (1994) confirm this, by situating any culture in a perpetual construction, transformation and hybridization, resulting from coupling giving birth to new mixed cultures, hybrids. This process is anchored in our sensitive connections about something or someone, mesh connections to our socio-historical contexts.

For example, in the building trades, we find ourselves in a model of "expertise and ordering of events" which refers to a "connectionist" reality, which means that the borders are just as formal (a large number of norms) than informal. The organization is lived in construction mode, always in co-activity and the engine of the experiential ... of varying dimensions.

Of course, in co-activity, we work with each other and for each other, but what meaning do the self and the other assign to their actions at work? What level of commitment does each one agree to put - or even give in - at the service of the common project?

Is this meaning, this commitment so natural, even at the heart of the genesis or genetics of building culture? Do they manage to overcome the stereotype which according to Rocheblave-Spenle (1970, p. 10) determines the opinions of the members of a group, "targets a particular group, results from a dispute or a conflict, varies from culture to another and learned through social interactions".

Sahlins (1976) or Geertz (1973) teach us that there is no one-size-fits-all best practice that can be applied everywhere and in all cases. It is, in fact, the socio-historical contexts which frame and determine managerial practices. For example, Philippe d'Iribarne (1989) applies the logic of honor in the mode of action of a Frenchman. It is likely to be found in some way about the way a Portuguese acts. Rather, it will be the logic of the contract that will apply to a Polish.

There are also different conceptions of time and space, depending on the organization and level of development of a society. This illustrates the plurality of conceptions and living conditions. Thus, the great diversity of ways of doing things can be disruptive, because each way of doing things, and refers not only to the type of relationship one has with the person in a given context, but also to the history of this relationship (Guigo, 1994). Management practices evolve through interactions that are sometimes confused, often opposing and even contradictory (Ozbilgin and Tatli, 2008).

Therefore, the management of intercultural pluralities should, at best, be based on learning the various ways of 'doing things well' (Ghadiri, 2014). This raises the question of the leader's singular habitus and whether or not he welcomes the diversity of acts in their pluralism.

1.2. Question of the leader's singular habitus and of welcoming or not in their pluralism of the diversity of acts

The act of "relationship management" in a business cannot be freed from the intentionality that drives it. This is one of the reasons why our research focuses on the role of the leader's unique habitus in the conduct of their business (ies). It is in fact the habitus that gives the pulse - facilitating or stopping - in what I call the spirit of informal laws of the **house** (perceptions - representations)¹.

In 20 years of study in SMEs (Schott and Jurquet, 2013), I have observed that:

- the presence of the spirit of the laws of the house, as part of the manager's habitus, is informal rather than formal in nature,
- there is acceptance of "he who does is he who knows" and at the same time in the co-adaptation and disadaptation of the policy and the organization of work,
- co-activity: we work with each other and for each other,
- this social and economic dynamic is based on the legitimization by the leaders and the supervisors of different paths of all.

By habitus we mean what is acquired and internalized through education, "convenience and fashions, prestige" (Mauss, 1950/2013: 32). Habits (Bourdieu, 1972/2000) relate to both perception (ways of perceiving the world), appreciation (ways of judging it) and action (ways of behaving in it). They are inherited and then implemented by individuals. These are "systems of regulated, durable and transposable arrangements ..." (Bourdieu, 1980: 174) which thus resist permutations.

Here the habitus of the SME manager serves as an entourage, a context (or at least in his way of seeing it) which grants or does not grant to doing in an otherwise revealing itself. This is what will exert an attribute of the containing function. It fulfills this containing function in which this doing in an otherwise is enveloped, which thus frees itself. Indeed, according to Albert Ciccone (2001) "a containing function [which] consists in containing and transforming via the mechanism of

¹The spirit of the laws of the house refers to the resumption of the concept of Montesquieu (1748/2013) expressed in *De esprit des lois*. When Montesquieu tries to understand what he calls "the spirit of the laws", he tries to connect the laws between them as in a system then to relate them to the structure of the societies which, at a given moment, in a given space, engendered them. The society, in our work, is the company

projective identification". The habitus of the leader is containing insofar as it allows a "space in which experience of whatever nature will be received and contained" (Cicccone, 2001). Containing an experience means positively understanding it in order to give birth to the views and experiences of others.

How to make co-exist, in an imperative co-activity, various human groups of origin of the country, region, district, language, culture, age, gender, skills ... aspects, personalities, Visible or invisible if plural?

It will therefore be necessary "to think about how to optimize the multiple potentials within the company. It is the bringing together of all the differences and the acceptance of the diversity that surrounds us and that we must learn to manage. This does not only mean « managing the cohabitation of differences" (IMS, 2007), above all, it is moving towards hybridization.

Of course, hybridization revisits complementarity with the new, considering that what will emerge can be a source of innovation, and is part of cultural learning. But what to do with human actions, if they are only an extension of an instrument (Dewey & Bentley, 1949/1991)?

Three forms of learning were theorized over twenty years ago by Jack Mezirow (1998). Instrumental learning refers to an understanding of the experience, everything that aims to master a given environment. Mobilizing a hypothetico-deductive logic, this learning is based on the postulate that the experience refers to a reality that it is possible to objectify. The cognitive, associated with the knowledge and skills of the person, in his knowledge and know-how, is here fully mobilized.

Communicational learning refers to the ability to learn to understand the meaning given to a shared experience, and the intentions, values, feelings, ideals, to which it refers. This learning is based on numerous exchanges and a logic based on an agreement on the meaning of the interpretations exchanged. This makes it possible to explore the normative and intersubjective nature of the meanings attributed to experience. The construction of a socio-professional in a socio-historical context in which feelings and motivations are revealed are thus housed in the interstice of all these intersubjectivities. Finally, emancipatory learning involves the development of a capacity to identify the nature and origin of our meaning perspectives in order to question the organization of meaning schemes, through which we interpret the meanings associated with learning (instrumental and / or communicational) resulting from our life experiences. This learning requires putting into "fantasy" our critical thinking, our desire to experience things that are rooted in and influence our personal, family, professional, social and cultural history. This also assumes a certain dose of openness, empathetic listening and qualities associated with our psycho-emotional commitment.

Here is played in this interpretation, the desire for a verse, which will orient itself towards new acts and new acts.

This means that it is accepted that repetition is not the reproduction of the same, that the fixing of a score can be slippery, that the manipulation is not an outside suffered but also a wanted inside.

So what if here the one who admits, authorizes, is the leader? So, is there a continuum that feeds on itself and nurtures things, a continuum necessary for the expression of creativity and the emancipation of subjects? Does this can channel interactions and facilitate cooperation in autonomous regulation, and does this naturally goes in the right direction.

The challenge here is therefore to identify if (under what conditions) taking the time to do things differently is part of the - facilitating - pulse of the strategy of the head of the company and of the organizational implementation. (intercultural, economic, social) of this strategy. It is also about trying to invest what has been missed.

2 - The field study and results

Before presenting our main results, we need to explain our methodology and corpus.

The case method was favored because it is “an empirical investigation of a current phenomenon [...] within its present context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly defined” (Yin, 2009/2013). This method makes it possible to use mainly semi-structured interviews as a means of collecting data.

We also rely on the methodology of the life story (Pineau and Legrand, 1993/2013). As these two authors underline, “every social actor is caught, in his existential journey, in combining complex pasts and uncertain futures, internal impulses and external intimacies”. The life story falls within the typology of in-depth and longitudinal interviews. For our part, it is a question of welcoming, if it so wishes, the life story of the leader (s). Through his words, he re-constructs his actions and practices put into self-reflection and the making of the meaning of his lived experiences. Daniel Bertaux (1996) states "that there is a life story as soon as there is a description in narrative form of a fragment of the lived experience". Whether it is a question of modifying or introducing something or someone new, it is indeed the real behaviors of the actors that will be modified, whose words used function as a revealer (Osgoog and Walker, 1959).

The size of the companies was a factor of choice, since our study looks at SMEs (10 to 250 employees), as well as the age of the company (5 years and over).

The managers we meet are in 8 out of 10 cases at the heart of the company's strategy. The average seniority of the manager's mandate is 20 years, the average age is close to fifty, his training: bac or even bac + 3.

Of the 10 companies we met:

Nature of the structure	Age of the company	Breakdown by activity	Breakdown of workforce
Family SMEs Manager = owner at 50% minimum of the share capital	from 5 to 20 years = 5/10 from 20 to 60 years old = 5/10	Structural work = 5/10 Second work = 3/10 Other = 2/10	10 to 49 employees = 4/10 50 to 99 employees = 2/10 100 to 249 employees = 4/10

60% of the companies surveyed have less than 100 employees, a fairly consistent figure compared to the national trend which confirms the significant weight of the building trades: 60% of the working population (employees, non-employees combined) are concentrated in companies with less than 20 employees (CAPEB, 2019b).

Here are our main results relating to the perceptions of managers (2.1) and those of employees (2.2.).

2.1. Perceptions of managers

6 out of 10 managers consider their actions in terms of diversity to be structuring, because this helps to consolidate the marks of respect for others and the ways of thinking and spirituality.

Excerpt from the responses: "to embark on such a path refers to human problems, that is to say that it is all at the level of **ethics**"

For 8/10 it is an ethical question, even if "**The imperative of the turnover**" remains inescapable. It is about a higher awareness because it is based on experienced values, for example in the observation and contribution of singularities.

Katz (1964) emphasizes that an organization is based above all on the refusal of predatory behavior among its members and, on the contrary, values -he emergence of a concern for conservation and development, based on global integrity

It is therefore in the capacity to distance itself from external and internal constraints, learned behaviors, and even rules, that this ethical posture is renewed.

Another almost unanimous anchoring, 8/10 admit to questioning the role of business and society. Excerpt from the responses: "How can the company contribute to the well-being of all, for example by integrating vulnerable populations, by accepting others and their differences".

Excerpt from the responses: "Even if the interests of the company must come first, in a labor-intensive sector, people are the company's main asset. It is therefore necessary to see with him where and how he feels at ease, where and how he adapts best, - to make social à la carte, with its singularities, especially since there is a shortage of labor in our businesses".

Excerpt from the answers: "We do not just respect the law. Because of the social role of our companies and the weight of human relations, we go much further". Behind this posture there is the will and the profile of the leader².

Extract from the answers: "the problem is to free up time to keep the commitments alive of social policy".

These voluntary little extras may entail additional obligations; "There is no responsibility without sanction, there is no commitment that does not bind" (Trébulle, 2003).

To say that employees have the most influence on the development of the company should be put in perspective with the contingency factors of the construction sector: current and potential shortage³ of labor, low attractiveness of trades.

Company-employee commitments are not formalized. The lack of formalism finds its source not only in the long tradition of the oral characteristic of the building sector, but also in the reign of informal relations, the relation *intuitu personae* and the detailed application of the standard. We are in the realm of benchmarks, a "soft regulation"⁴ (Moreau Defarges, 2003/2011).

This orality, this communication, this regulation are the ferment of diverse and adjusted encounters which make it possible to nourish and be nourished by disparate thoughts and cultures that have become common. Here, the inescapable and ancestral functioning of the construction site mode involves time and energy and above all two essential qualities: the acceptance of difference and the courage of divergence.

²A typology of building companies is proposed in the study that the Stravia firm (Pierre RIVARD conducted for the FFB (cited in "The three faces of the building craftsman", in *Constructif*, Nov. 2004). Three faces are proposed: the first two (the local craftsman and the specialist craftsman) are emblematic of building craftsmanship; the third (the artisan manager) appeared about ten years ago.

The local craftsman:

- Strong local reputation,
- Proximity to customers,
- Personalized relationship with customers,
- Flexibility and responsiveness.

The specialist craftsman:

- Holder of rare know-how, sought after by a target clientele,
- Often present on construction sites,
- Transmission of know-how to companions,
- Expanded market: customer network,
- Adaptation of know-how to market niches.

The artisan manager:

- Organizes and manages the company through management tools,
- Prioritizes cost control and site monitoring,
- Often present in the office,
- Delegates the technical mastery of the profession to an employee,
- Defines a development strategy by targeting customers.

³10% of craft businesses failed to meet their need for skilled labor, while 19% sought to hire during the first half of 2019 (economic situation 2nd quarter 2019, July 2019, source CAPEB, 2019a).

⁴For Alain Supiot (2006: 267), "to codify is to dictate rules from the outside, while to regulate is to observe the rules necessary for the homeostatic functioning of an organization".

The leader's Habitus also plays its part. However, the recurring economic difficulties of this sector, which, from rebounds to falls, seems to experience only fleeting respites, weakened resistance to disturbances of the habitus of the leaders encountered. Thus, it is in a capacity that does not envelop enough. One may wonder, how to take an observant position in order to better face the complex situations encountered. In other words, how do you take the time to observe each time a complex situation plunges some of the leaders encountered into a state where they experience this feeling of being overwhelmed?

Of course, they can still position themselves in their role and their prerogatives as a broadcaster, facilitator, organizer, regulator, re-adjustor. But, that no longer goes without saying. Cracks weaken the communication-consultation-coordination triptych which constitutes the hard core of the facilitating pulse of the entrepreneurs encountered. Relations with socio-professionals are in the process of undergoing some ruptures. Because a little overwhelmed and in too much of a hurry, managers only invest in the normative processes of their teams, functions linked to often ritualized behaviors, in search of an objectification of automatism ...

Affect is forgotten, all these subjective elements, these judgments, these preferences, these emotions which, as Emma Violland-Sanchez (1998: 28) points out, with "the activation of previous experiences are essential to motivation" in the act of taking and learning. The conative intended to make the Other react, this strange other, in a certain sense, to guide his behavior, his action is forgotten. These psychic processes making it possible to lead to an action (Florin A. and Vrignaud P., 2007) are neglected

It seems that the ability to adapt to solve problems, the ability to make sense of and take on unexpected choices, all too often turn out to be based on the trial and error of teams.

To go beyond these general points of view, three of the leaders of the ten companies studied allowed me to freely investigate some of their construction sites.

2.2. Employee-side perceptions

What the teams of the construction sites investigated are experiencing seems quite different from the statements and perceptions of the managers. We are on the register of economic risk amplified by an abandonment of management and an obligation for teams to find findings so that they adjust to "ingest" in exponential mode more and more European posted workers, coming from all walks of life.

Some numbers :

In three years (from 2017 to 2019), out of the 8 sites surveyed, on average, the progression of European posted workers per site was as follows: 15% Portuguese posted qualified workers (paid € 12 gross / h) then 30% and finally 30% more (which makes 60% of posted workers) but of Polish origin (paid 9.27 € gross / h). As a reminder, a French skilled worker is paid € 17 gross / h.

The working conditions are deteriorating, in particular due to-

- increasingly short deadlines: "instead of building a building in 1 year, we have to do it in 6 months"; "The work is done more and more in a hurry"; "The constraint on deadlines leads to planning errors in the hierarchy"
- less and less important resources: "for three years, we have to do with half the material and human resources"

In addition: "the increasingly heavy cost reduction, poor quality of work, sometimes strained relations with management, ..."

Maintaining the level of response to calls for tenders has only been possible by increasing the use of posted European workers accordingly.

"In 10 years, their number has multiplied by 10, that's too much". "The ways of working are not the same, nor the pace, in addition to the language barrier. "

The rules of the art and the demands of the profession do not fit in the same register, neither do attitudes towards authority, and relationships become problematic. In addition, non-compliance with safety rules is piling up.

All this is not simply due to the low literacy levels of some. Supervisors support their teams, but are deprived because they are neglected.

Each human interaction is embedded in temporalities that are culturally specific to each person (Bauman, 2004). Group life requires a number of shared elements - language, rules, beliefs, values. These elements are learned and internalized in such a way that they become natural to people in the same or close group. But what about in our case?

The Polish workers did not share the common notion on "the way of working" of the Portuguese and French workers considered by them too "empowering". They need strict instructions; they take this flexibility as a risk-taking for them and a shortcoming for the supervisors (team leader and site manager) and their companions. Without understanding cultural differences - or even anticipating their existence - Polish workers tend to interpret actions that are supposed to be positive negatively.

In addition, as Hall (1979/2016) points out, the connection to one's personal space provides the spatio-temporal distances that regulate our social relations. Thus, Mediterranean and Latin cultures allow people to touch each other more easily and look each other in the eyes without feeling invaded in their personal space (Hall 1984/1992). For a Polish worker everything quickly becomes intrusive and confirms that the other would have harmful intentions against him. Regarding the time dimension, humans follow two main ideal types of time use, monochronic or polychronic. "Polychronic time can be represented by a point more than a ribbon or a road, and this point is sacred" (Hall 1971/2014, p. 22). It is present in Mediterranean and Latin cultures. Here priority is given to interactions and to the social context, the sensitive, the informal.

"Monochronic time is linear and segmented, like a road or a ribbon that unwinds from the past to the future" (Hall 1971/2014, p. 24). It dominates in northern and central Europe. Here, priority is given to discipline, to the rhythm, to the objective, to the formal.

How to maintain a sufficient rate of social integration between members with very different intercultural variants, such as Latin societies as opposed to those of the North and East, for example (Chanlat, 2012).

Of course, in the building trades there are already possibilities for journeymen to access a common world, but it is not always easy to understand what others are feeling, to say what they understand and to agree on what is being said. Especially since under economic pressures, it is difficult to manage this particular type of interculturality, which generates "extra-time". This "extra time" component popularized by Savall and Zardet in 1992 refers to "time spent in the company to perform tasks that do not correspond to the creation of added value" (Savall H., Zardet V., Bonnet M., 2008: 53). These overtimes thus correspond to a loss of earnings insofar as they represent non-creation of employee potential, because by dint of having to add time, because it is not allowed to do otherwise, the dysfunctions accumulate, performance is delayed, employee potentials are bogged down! As Savall and Zardet (2001: 128) point out, "a delay in intangible investment can compromise the profitability, even the survival of the company: it is therefore a strategic hidden cost... the non-creation of potential has an impact mainly on the results of subsequent years."

The combination of all these elements results in latent suffering: which makes the employees met say: "I am no longer proud of my work at all; I can no longer do my job properly; the desire to work is declining, even though I love my job; we no longer have the desire, but we love the job; I remain proud of my job but in my company we pay less and less attention to our fate".

This means that the impact in terms of suffering of all these dissonances is no longer contained at all by the relationship management policy. This no longer gives enough meaning to the collective game and no longer sufficiently combines the capacity that each person has to reinvent in their knowledge-acting in a situation.

Conclusion

The building sector combines a long tradition of integration⁵ with a mixed reputation.

Integration: Most of the managers we met consider the employees as specialists and experts, women and men working around a project. They operate in autonomous production centers, organization and construction site culture oblige. This also means that the building specialist and expert above all has a duty to succeed.

Mixed reputation: If it is recognized by the leaders themselves, that they personally drive social and trade policies according to their own vision and their convictions, - some of them adopt a militant side⁶ - it is also recognized that building trades are difficult and demanding.

The scarcity of certain profiles on the labor market creates tensions; these tensions require an economic, socio-intercultural harmonization between the old and the new, which is far from being the case, because this represents a very high cost for an SME. This situation is all the more problematic in a sector where skilled labor is becoming increasingly scarce (for example in 2010, a deficit of 100,000 people)⁷.

Being concerned with particularly unqualified personnel who are often people worn out by the profession from an early age is part of the company's obligatory role to prevent the health risks of these populations.

However, the current system of coordination of interests, based on the distribution of an organizational rent, reaches its limits when the partners multiply and no common cause or finality can reconcile their vision of the world and the meaning given to it. corporate action in this world. In this case, what are the fundamental limits of the role of the company, can it include a societal project in its economic program?

⁵See actions of the foundation of the building federation

⁶In addition to a strong anchoring in the territory, it is a question of supporting young business creators, of carrying out various actions with Pôle Emploi (guiding job seekers), with the ARACT on the improvement of conditions working, ...

⁷With 100,000 construction workers to be replaced over the next 10 years, recruitment difficulties persist. They are likely to worsen with the retirement, over the next 10 years, of 80,000 business leaders (source: KPMG 2010, Building Trends and Perspectives).

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