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Whistleblowing and resilience: Analysis of an individual trajectory

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Abstract

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of illegal, immoral or illegitimate practices under the control of their employer by (past or present) members of an organisation, to people or bodies with power to remedy the situation (Near and Miceli, 1985). Generally speaking, the subsequent outlook for whistleblowers is pretty bleak as they are often the victims of reprisals shortly after making their allegations and subject to sidelining, downgrading, ostracism, termination of employment, etc. (Perry, 1998). However, to date, there has been little discussion in the literature on the trajectory of whistleblowers, especially over the long term, and little has been said about why and how whistleblowers manage to overcome -or not- the difficulties they subsequently face. Our qualitative exploratory study therefore sets out to examine the post-denunciation trajectory of one French whistleblower, Jacques Glassmann, the footballer at the origin of the famous VA-OM football club scandal in France, exploring the role of the social system in his resilience process. Long considered as an informer in the world of French football, he finally managed to make a come-back in his professional sphere. We follow his story over a relatively long period (from 1993 to 2011) and analyse the role played by the governing bodies of football and other stakeholders in his resilience process (Cyrułnik, 1999; Bonanno, 2012). In theoretical terms, the paper focuses on two areas that are usually studied separately, namely, whistleblowing and individual resilience. We propose a dynamic model of the resilience process as the outcome of interactions between whistleblowers and their social system. Our findings identify a specific stakeholder (the fans) as agents of reprisals, but also as agents of rehabilitation. Furthermore, our findings highlight the role and conditions of mediation by tutors in the resilience process.

Key words: whistleblowing, reprisals, trajectory, resilience, social system

INTRODUCTION

Sherron Watkins is one of the most emblematic whistleblowing figures in the world. As former vice-president of Enron, she is famous for sending an internal email to the then CEO, Kenneth Lay, expressing her deep anxiety regarding accounting irregularities in the company's financial reports. In August 2001, her email was made public and the fraudulent accounting practices organized by the American managers, designed to camouflage the firm's losses, were laid bare. In 2002, several scandals of the same nature led the US Congress to adopt the Sarbanes-Oxley law in order to restore the trust of investors by imposing stricter internal oversight. This law included a whistleblower provision. Although the Sherron Watkins case is often mentioned in the literature (e.g. Near et al., 2004; Vadera et al., 2009), the authors show little interest in her personal and professional life after she raised the alarm. Studies, especially empirical ones, have paid scant attention to what becomes of whistleblowers following their disclosures, and are mainly divided into two streams. Some studies adopt a more or less normative approach in an attempt to improve the conditions of whistleblowing practice (Boyle, 1990; Rothschild and Miethe, 1994; Weaver and Trevino, 1999; Stansbury and Barry, 2007; Regh et al., 2008), while others explore the risks involved in such practices, both for organisations and for the whistleblowers themselves (Parmerlee et al., 1982; Perry, 1998; Alford, 2001; Pesqueux, 2007; Charreire Petit and Surply, 2008).

In the second line of research, the lack of interest in the whistleblower's fate may come as something of a surprise. In effect, the literature highlights the reprisals that whistleblowers are generally subjected to, indicating that the fear of retribution is a major deterrent to sounding the alarm. Thus, understanding the long-term impact for whistleblowers that report misconduct would help to inform the expectations of those who discover a case of wrongdoing. In addition, an examination of the trajectory of whistleblowers in their environment can help us to understand how they overcome the difficulties encountered after raising the alarm, while seeking to determine if they display resilience (Egeland et al., 1993; Cyrulnik, 1999; Bonanno, 2012) or if they give in to despair. Generally speaking, the literature has paid little attention to the environmental variables that explain the trajectory of whistleblowers and the role that the social system can play – here understood in the sense of the system of relations within a social environment (direct professional sphere, institutions and society) – in their capacity to bounce back or not (Du Plessis and Van Breda, 2001; Peters et al., 2011). Recent research in the field has underscored the importance of whistleblowers' interactions with their social, professional and personal network (Uys and Smit, 2011) and this is the focus of our study. More specifically, our paper seeks to understand the post-disclosure trajectory of a whistleblower in the long term, examining the role of the social system in the resilience process.

In order to clarify the issue through an empirical study, we decided to qualitatively investigate an emblematic case of whistleblowing in France by reconstructing and analysing the trajectory of Jacques Glassmann. In 1993, the latter became famous for speaking to the authorities about the corruption of some players during a football match and, because of this, was the victim of reprisals. To this

end, we conducted a longitudinal and retrospective case study – from 1993 to 2011 –, supported by secondary data, mainly from articles in the written press about the affair. To process the data, we used a combination of methodological approaches (narrative approach, quantification and temporal bracketing), as suggested by Langley (1999), and developed interpretative codes (Miles and Huberman, 2003). Finally, we built a dynamic model of the resilience process as the outcome of interactions between the whistleblower and his or her social system. This main outcome enabled us to draw two innovative and related theoretical conclusions. First, we highlighted the decisive and varied role of stakeholders (here, the fans) within the social system, not only as agents of reprisals (Richardson and McGlynn, 2011), but also as agents of rehabilitation. Second, we identified the role and conditions of the intervention of tutors of resilience in the whistleblower's professional comeback.

Thus, in the first, theoretical section, in addition to studies on whistleblowing, we use the concept of resilience at individual level to analyse the whistleblower's trajectory in relation to the perceptions and actions of actors within their social system. In the second section, we detail the study design used to develop the empirical findings, which we present and analyse in the third section. Finally, in the fourth section, we compare our results with those of the literature.

WHISTLEBLOWING AND RESILIENCE

While whistleblowing often marks the beginning of severe difficulties for whistleblowers, can resilience be envisaged as the end of their difficulties? If so, what role does context play in this process? In particular, how do the stakeholders consider the whistleblower and how do they react? The literature provides some answers, enabling us to examine whistleblowing and resilience within the same interpretative framework that can be operated from an empirical standpoint.

Thus, in order to study the post-disclosure trajectory of whistleblowers and their eventual turnaround after a certain period of time, we need to include elements linked to the specific context in our analysis. We thus consider how the different stakeholders perceive whistleblowers (1.1. and 1.2.) and how they react towards them following the latter's accusations, i.e., whether their behaviour is negative in the form of reprisals (1.3.) or, on the contrary, positive through shows of support and the external encouragement of a tutor in resilience (1.4.).

Issue and Perception of whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is a practice that aims to fight bad practice and misconduct, especially accounting and financial fraud, by reporting it to someone liable to do something about it. Near and Miceli (1985: 4) consider that whistleblowing corresponds to "the disclosure by organization members (former or current) of illegal, immoral or illegitimate practices under the control of their employers, to persons or organizations that may be able to effect action." This definition gradually found its way into the literature and today is the accepted view, even if it is considered difficult to use in practice (Bjorkelo et al., 2011). To get round the problem, Boyle (1990) identified four constitutive characteristics of whistleblowing: 1) the information must be divulged in good faith, 2) the

disclosure must be made in the framework of a professional activity by a past or present employee from the organisation, 3) the information divulged must be linked to (real or perceived) wrongdoing by the employer and 4) the person who blows the whistle must have proof of the misconduct and must be able to identify those responsible.

In general, studies on whistleblowing seek to gain insights into the multiple issues involved in the practice, as much for the organisations involved as for the individuals who set the wheels in motion. In other words, individuals who blow the whistle generally do so in the common interest, drawing attention to harmful behaviour liable to threaten the company's future (Near and Miceli, 1985). This attitude thus reduces the likelihood of the organisation concerned having to pay damages at a later date in the event of a serious outcome arising from the wrongdoing denounced. Moreover, if the media are not informed of the reason for the whistleblowing, it not only avoids costly and time-consuming court cases but also – and above all – preserves the image and the legitimacy of the firm within its environment, especially with regard to public opinion (Boyle, 1990).

The cultural dimension and the specific perception of whistleblowing according to the contexts add to the complexity, but also to the richness of the process studied. In France, the term whistleblowing is easily associated with denunciation, taking people back to the darkest hours of the German occupation during the Second World War. According to de Bry (2008), whistleblowing is generally perceived as a particularly distasteful act of betrayal, and the terminology associated with it has very negative connotations: e.g., a 'grass', a 'snitch' or an 'informer'. There is a wide gap between, on the one hand, the almost heroic Americans, who contribute to the organisation's performance and preserve its interests, and, on the other, French 'informers' who are disloyal to their employer and their colleagues. This may explain why the French are so reluctant to report wrongdoing and do not embrace the whistleblowing culture, especially when it involves denouncing a work colleague (Larue, 2007).

Whistleblowing as an act of resistance

For Fincher (2009), employees who believe they have discovered fraudulent behaviour by their employer have four potential, non-exclusive choices: 1) to keep quiet, 2) to distance themselves from the illegal activities, 3) to inform their employer or 4) to publicly disclose the wrongdoing. Those who adopt either (or both) of the last two options are considered as whistleblowers. Even if the whistleblowers are not directly affected by the dishonest practices (Rehg et al., 2008), for them, reporting the incident is a matter of conscience and saying nothing would be even worse. From the organisation's perspective, it is, on the contrary, an act of dissidence which threatens the structure of authority and the firm's cohesion and image. Thus, whistleblowers face an ethical dilemma in that they are torn between the wish to do their duty as citizens on the one hand, and the wish to remain loyal to their employer on the other (Claveau and Séville, 2004). Charreire Petit and Surply (2012) summed up the employee's dilemma in the form of a table (cf. Table 1 below). In fact, whether they speak out or keep quiet, the protagonist's free will is called into question, and the responsibility of speaking up or not forces them to weigh up the pros and cons, aware that it boils down to the public interest (risk prevention) or their own interest (avoiding reprisals).

Table 1. The employee's dilemma (Charreire Petit and Surply, 2012: 1803)

The employee	Speaks out	Keeps quiet
Obedience	Obedience to the charter/the code of conduct	Crime of obedience ¹
Loyalty	Loyalty to the organisation	Loyalty to the hierarchy

Thus, potential whistleblowers observe and then assess an activity as illegal or non-ethical. They then weigh up the cost/benefits ratio for the organisation concerned and for themselves (McLain and Keenan, 1999). If the psychological and economic costs are felt to be great, the individual may prefer to keep quiet (Tepper et al., 2007), especially when they are afraid to put their career on the line by reporting what happened (Miceli and Near, 1994). It therefore appears that individual bravery – whatever the price to be paid – is the cornerstone of whistleblowing. However, despite the strong likelihood of reprisals, whistleblowers are generally willing to raise the alarm when it concerns violations of the law (Charreire Petit and Surply, 2008) and when they consider that their action will be beneficial (Near et al., 2004).

In other words, when whistleblowers' personal morals come into conflict with what they observe, they may consider that there is no alternative. The different cases reported by the literature show that whistleblowers have neither the power nor the means to prevent corruption or fraud (Rothschild and Miethe, 1999; Tillman, 2009; Richardson and McGlynn, 2011). They thus resist, and the act of whistleblowing is even called an act of ethical resistance (Uys and Smith, 2011). Recent empirical studies in the world of sport clearly illustrate the dialectics of power and of the whistleblower's resistance in the face of federative, often patriarchal and masculine structures (Benford, 2007; Butterworth, 2008; Richardson and McGlynn, 2011), including when the assessment of risk goes against the whistleblower. In other words, an individual's value system and societal expectations play a key role in triggering the alarm by pushing him or her to act.

However, there is little in the literature about the typical characteristics of whistleblowers. Some findings are also contradictory. This impression is strengthened by studies written on the topic that often deal with the intention of blowing the whistle and then actually going through with it, without making a distinction between the two (Bjorkelo et al., 2011). Some whistleblower characteristics can be identified, however. One key condition is to be an insider (Uys and Smit, 2011), and this factor alone is liable to generate hostile reactions. In effect, only insiders can betray or violate the loyalty or confidence of their group (Ben Yehuda, 2001). However, all organisations have an obvious interest in ensuring that any practices that could damage their interests are denounced. Moreover, generally speaking, whistleblowers do not resist out of self-interest, but because they hope to change a system that they judge to be, at least partially and momentarily, failing or threatened. The social system then resists in turn, exposing the whistleblowers who wish to change the system to reprisals.

1. The social psychologists, Kelman and Hamilton (1989), speak about crimes where the 'criminals' are not so much 'actors of crime' as individuals manipulated by the hierarchy. Committing a 'crime of obedience' involves individuals doing what they're told to do, rather than what they should do.

Reprisals against whistleblowers

The literature suggests that the fate in store for whistleblowers is pretty bleak (Parmerlee et al., 1982; Perry, 1998; Beard, 2007; Dyck et al., 2010). Reprisals are defined by Regh et al. (2008: 67) as “undesirable action taken against a whistleblower – and in direct response to the whistleblowing – who reported wrongdoing internally (i.e. within the organization) or externally (i.e. outside the organization).” Such reprisals may be formal (professional downgrading, frequent warnings, unfavourable assessments, etc.) or informal (ostracism, sidelining, persona non grata, etc.) (Bjorkelo et al., 2011). They generally begin with attacks on the whistleblowers themselves, thereby casting doubt on the latter’s credibility. At this point, the whistleblower is frequently described as a “naïve, hysterical, idealist, emotional...” individual (Richardson and McGlynn, 2011: 132).

In practice, whistleblowers are often defined as the outcome of the reprisals they are subjected to (Alford, 2001), indicating the extent to which the reprisals are consubstantial to whistleblowing. For example, among the eighteen cases studied by Uys and Smit (2011), all were punished before being fired, and all of them experienced significant financial loss due to both the loss of their salary and the impact on their career. Similarly, in a study by Glazer and Glazer (1989), over two-thirds of the 64 whistleblowers questioned lost their job. The study by Dyck et al. (2010) also revealed that 82% of non-anonymous whistleblowers were fired, banished or victims of verbal or even physical attacks. In this sense, whistleblowing may be considered as certain professional suicide (Perry, 1998). Alford (2001) talks about the ‘broken lives’ of these whistleblowers who were sacrificed by their organisation.

Some quantitative studies have shown that the strongest predictors of reprisals are: the seriousness of the situation, the power struggle between the accused and the accuser, and the support they get from their superiors (Parmerlee et al., 1982; Near and Miceli, 1986; Miceli and Near, 1989). In particular, the higher the whistleblowers position within the organisation and the more critical resources they hold (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978), the more they will be protected against potential hostile reprisals (Near and Miceli, 1986). On the other hand, the higher the wrongdoer’s place in the organisation, the more likely it is that there will be acts of revenge against the whistleblower (Cortina and Magley, 2003). Moreover, intimidation appears to be even more severe when the whistleblower turns to outside stakeholders (the media, institutions, associations, etc.) to sound the alarm (Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran, 2005; Miceli and Near, 1989). Van Es and Smit (2003) show that once the wrongdoing has come to public attention, the dynamics of transformation change and other stakeholders can get involved, becoming actors in the process. Few published studies have examined the role of external stakeholders in the whistleblowing activities (Johnson et al., 2004), and very few empirical studies have explored the perception of whistleblowers by these external stakeholders.

In a study of thirteen cases of whistleblowing in the world of collective sport in the United States, Richardson and McGlynn (2011) partially fill this gap in knowledge. Their study considers the close links between various external stakeholders (media, sports federations, clubs, fans, etc.) and shows the importance of a key external stakeholder (i.e., the fans) in the process of sidelining the whistleblower. They may thus act as agents of reprisals, by getting involved in the relationship between the player and his employer

(club). As Rothschild and Miethe (1999) point out, the employer is not the only stakeholder that can isolate or sideline an individual who does not conform to the group.

Overcoming the difficulties generated by whistleblowing: dimensions of individual resilience

For the whistleblower, the reprisals generate post-whistleblowing stress, together with various emotional responses such as ambiguity, anxiety, fear or guilt (Uys and Smit, 2011). Furthermore, they frequently have health problems in the post-whistleblowing stage, such as trouble sleeping, smoking more, mental problems or suicidal tendencies, all of which have been mentioned in the literature (Lennane, 1993; Faunce et al., 2004). In a study on a population of nurses, Peters et al., (2011) show that the symptoms they suffer from (anxiety, distress, nightmares, etc.) can occur more than a year after raising the alarm. The whistleblower's close entourage plays a key role. In some cases, it forms a support structure that helps the whistleblower to cope with the situation and to bounce back. At other times, the entourage falls apart, especially because of the whistleblowing outcomes. This draws the whistleblower into a downward spiral (Perry, 1998). Whistleblowing is therefore a 'disruptive life event' (Uys and Smit, 2011: 10), which is why it is so important to explore the consequences for whistleblowers of raising the alarm, both in terms of their trajectory and their potential comeback, especially with respect to their career.

The aptitude to spring back is called resilience. The term originally designated the capacity of a metal to resist a shock and to return to its original state. This concept was picked up in psychology by Boris Cyrulnik in the 1990s. The literature on resilience mainly concerns a large number of studies on the dynamics of well-being, especially the well-being of children exposed to stress. More recently, authors like Bonanno (2004) set out the conditions for transposing the concept to traumatised adults. According to Bonanno (2012: 753), work on individual resilience is based on three approaches: the first considers resilience as a primarily personal characteristic, the second sees it mainly as an absence of psychopathology, and the third considers it as a relatively general term that underscores the "average levels of psychological adaptation." Bonanno (2012) suggests we go beyond these traditional approaches to study individual resilience longitudinally as trajectories, with several ways of measuring the phenomenon over the long term. Some studies adopting this concept have paid little attention to the environmental factors liable to foster individual resilience (Du Plessis and Van Breda, 2001; Peters et al., 2011). However, the few studies² that took an interest in resilience in the whistleblowing process (Uys and Smit, 2011) considered it as a coadaptation process between an individual and his or her environment.

Table 2 below sets out some definitions of resilience used by management scholars, mainly based on the three approaches by Bonanno (2012). The resources identified for resilience are endogenous, except for the last two definitions, which suggest that interaction with the environment informs the individual's trajectory. Our contribution fits in with this perspective.

2. A dozen of articles published in leading academic journals have combined the terms whistleblowing and resilience in their papers since 1995.

Table 2. Resilience in the literature: definitions

Authors	Definitions of resilience	Key notion
Egeland et al. (1993: 458)	"The capacity for successful adaptation, positive functioning or competence...despite high-risk status, chronic stress, or following prolonged of severe trauma"	Adapting successfully
Vaillant (1993: 248)	The "self-righting tendencies" of the person, "both the capacity to be bent without breaking and the capacity, once bent, to spring back"	Bending without breaking
Kaplan et al. (1996: 158)	"Resilience is the capacity to maintain competent functioning in the face of major life stressors."	Continuing to function
Strümpfer (2001: 36)	"...a pattern of psychological activity which consists of a motive to be strong in the face of inordinate demands, which energizes goal-directed behavior to cope and rebound (or resilie), as well as accompanying emotions and cognitions."	Coping
Friborg et al. (2003: 65)	Resilient individuals are often described as being "more flexible than vulnerable people"	Being flexible
Cyrułnik (1999)	An individual's capacity to get through the most difficult trials, to bounce back in the face of adversity and to continue to develop despite the traumatism they have been subjected to	Continuing to develop
Bout Vallot (2008: 4)	"Resilience is a process that, from his encounter with the environment, shocks, and others, enables an actor to activate previously inactive internal resources in order to deal with the situation"	Interacting with the environment
Bonanno (2012: 753)	"Resilience as a stable trajectory of healthy functioning in response to a clearly defined event"	Following a stable trajectory

For Cyrułnik (1999), being able to spring back from one's suffering depends, in part, on the innate capacity of individuals, enabling them to subsequently become stronger. There is no doubt that resilience depends on each individual's capacity to cope with difficult situations, but according to the psychology literature (Rutter, 1985), it also depends on self-confidence, self-worth, and the prior experiences that an individual memorises as a success or a failure. Du Plessis and Van Breda (2001: 53) identify several factors that would predispose an individual to bounce back, like "the sense of coherence, toughness, resourcefulness, competence, locus of control, power, endurance and personal causality." Thus, some employees find it easier than others to use their internal resources, not only to overcome severe difficulties, but also to seize new career opportunities at the right moment (Bernard, 2008). Others, on the other hand, need appropriate outside support. Resilience is thus built up gradually, often with the help of a third party who plays the role of tutor, giving them active support and/or encouragement. Here we define the tutor of resilience as a reference from the individual's social environment, liable to act in such a way as to help the latter to spring back, especially in career terms.

According to Cyrułnik (1999), this dynamic and complex process of interactions between the actors and their environment takes place in two stages. The first consists of the absorption of shock through a reflex of resistance to disorganisation. The second stage involves integration and reconstruction, which depend largely on the individual's internal and external resources (Bout Vallot, 2008). This reconstruction process depends considerably on the individual's capacity for tenacity. For example, whistleblowers will be more resistant and tenacious when they hold strong moral values. Their convictions and faith in justice incite them to produce meaning and suggest an aptitude

for individual resilience (Rothschild and Miethe, 1994; Uys and Smit, 2011). Antonovsky (1998) put forward an original way of considering resilience in contrast to the more traditional, pathogenic vision of the concept (Du Plessis and Van Breda, 2001), arguing that the process begins with an individual's capacity to produce meaning with regard to the situation he or she is going through. The meaning provides coherence, and this is the central principle. In short, the literature understands the concept of resilience either as an endogenous characteristic, specific to an individual, or as a process of interaction and construction of a competence or capacity at a given moment in time, which is linked to interaction with the environment. In addition, resilience illustrates both the capacity to withstand a catastrophe, a drama or a crisis, and also the capacity to absorb the impact of this event (Meyer, 1982). Finally, it appears that resilience is not only a psychological phenomenon mobilising the individual's internal resources (predispositions), but is also behavioural and depends especially on the actions of outside support (tutors). In this regard, resilience is expressed by observable empirical phenomena, especially acts of resistance by the whistleblowers, events that indicate their come-back, and the various shows of support over time from the social environment. Thus, this study considers resilience from the perspective of overcoming the difficulties generated by the whistleblowing act. According to the literature, a potentially positive outcome for an individual comprises three dimensions:

- 1) absorption of the shock experienced.
- 2) reconstruction, especially in career terms.
- 3) production of meaning from the situation experienced.

This is a useful analytical framework for resilience as we can examine its impact by noting whether the whistleblowers' discourse is calmer, whether they have begun a new career, if they are respected, if they benefit from a certain prestige, whether they feel that the experience has helped them to grow, etc. The three dimensions mentioned above should not be envisaged as steps clearly delimited in time, as in a linear and sequential perspective. They simply allow us to appreciate the absorption of the shock, the reconstruction of the whistleblower's career and the production of meaning as the necessary 'ingredients' for individuals to work their way towards resilience.

METHODOLOGY

We begin by explaining the interest of Jacques Glassmann's case in helping us find answers to our research question, and then describe the methodological approach used to analyse the available data.

Case Selection

The empirical case we decided to cover in our study is the story of Jacques Glassmann, a professional French football player from 1978 to 1994. On the 20 May 1993, he told his managers about a bribery attempt in the first division championship match between US Valenciennes (VA) and Olympique de Marseille (OM). The reservations reported by the club on the match sheet on the evening of the match brought the affair to the attention of the public and the media. The image of French football was even more tarnished by the VA-OM affair as the Marseilles club had long been the most popular club in France

(IPSOS, 2006). Thus, the Jacques Glassmann affair corresponds perfectly with the features of whistleblowing described by Boyle (1990) (cf. appendix 1). Moreover, some of the aspects of the case may be considered in relation to other studies. Among the rare studies that link the concepts of whistleblowing and resilience, some recent work (Uys and Smith, 2011; Richardson and McGlynn, 2011) has highlighted the interest of the sports world with regard to the issue, especially since there are multiple stakeholders and considerable interaction with the environment.

Data collection and processing

We chose a qualitative study design based on a longitudinal and retrospective (1993-2011) case study with the inclusion of secondary data. This approach is substantiated by our research question. In effect, resilience takes time to grow, develop and mature (Hollnagel et al., 2009). Data collection was conducted using the Factiva media database and Internet in order to follow Jacques Glassmann's personal and professional itinerary in a chronological and detailed way after he spoke out about the attempt at match-fixing. Using a highly mediatised and emblematic case gave us access to a particularly rich corpus of data, which included 160 press articles and press releases.

To structure our analysis, we used three complementary methods from the seven research strategies suggested by Langley (1999):

- First, we adopted a narrative strategy, in other words, we chronologically detailed what happened to Jacques Glassmann after he blew the whistle. This descriptive work enabled us to contextualise the case and, at the same time, to identify the main structuring aspects, moments and events that had a significant impact on the whistleblower's trajectory. In parallel, the secondary data enabled us to study the impact of the VA-OM affair on Jacques Glassmann's career. In effect, little was written in the press about the former Valenciennes defender's personal life.

- We then adopted a quantification strategy. The number of articles published on the VA-OM affair over the course of a year indicated how the public's interest in the story evolved over time, and in the Jacques Glassmann case in particular. This gave us the basis for a diagram representing the annual volume of articles featuring Jacques Glassmann's name in the body of text over the period 1993-2011. To this end, we identified the ten most widely read national papers (Le Parisien-Aujourd'hui en France, Le Figaro, Le Monde, L'Équipe, Les Échos, Libération, La Croix, La Tribune, L'Humanité and France-Soir)³, to which we added the two local papers most involved in the VA-OM affair (La Voix du Nord and La Provence). The biggest difficulty was to get hold of the data. In effect, the story broke at a time when not all of the papers had digitalised their articles.⁴ Nonetheless, we feel that the considerable number of articles published at the beginning of the period (1993-1995) largely make up for this bias and we believe it is reasonable to assume that the decrease in the number of press articles after the trial (1995) was probably even more abrupt than our study indicates. Whatever the case, this work enabled us to identify key moments and events marking Jacques Glassmann's trajectory.

- Finally, we used a temporal bracketing strategy, identifying sequences in the whistleblower's trajectory with the help of key dates and disruption events, identified not only from our quantification data (VA-OM trial, Fair-Play award, job at UNFP, publication of Jacques Glassmann's book, etc.), but also through

3.http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presse_en_France

4.As we could not always access all the articles from the twelve national and regional newspapers mentioned above, we decided to add AFP and Reuters press releases to our initial empirical material, as well as a few articles featuring Jacques Glassmann from France Football, Le Progrès, Le Point, Sud Ouest and L'Est Républicain, which were all listed in the Factiva media database.

interpretative coding (cf. *infra*). As Langley points out (1999), these sequences must not be regarded as successive stages in a process but simply help to structure the description of facts. Given that the sequences are presented according to the type of actor (media, professional football, amateur football, fans and various supporters), this also enabled us to study the aspects of social interactions, comparing them with how Jacques Glassmann's discourse changed over the course of time.

To use the different research strategies suggested by Langley (1999) we needed to conduct a preliminary analysis of the contents of the secondary data (Miles and Huberman, 2003). To this end, we introduced two types of coding. The combination enabled us to understand the dynamics between Jacques Glassmann's behaviour and the external support actions:

- The first codification centred on Jacques Glassmann's behaviour to deal with the situation. This involves examining all of Jacques Glassmann's statements and actions over the whole time period. To this end, we created a database of the former footballer's verbatim found in the press during the period 1993-2011. This allowed us to identify four very distinctive periods following the whistleblowing, as well as potential signs of individual resilience using the framework created from our literature review. Table 3 below gives additional details about this codification:

Table 3. Coding framework of individual resilience

Dimensions	Examples of descriptors	Examples of verbatim
Absorption of shock	<i>'turn the page,' 'get over it,' 'keep things in proportion,' 'step back,' 'give myself some therapy,' 'idealise,' 'laugh at things,' 'put things behind me,' 'close the chapter,' etc.</i>	<i>'This story is behind me.'</i> <i>'For me, it was over a long time ago!'</i>
Reconstruction	<i>'move on to something new,' 'rebuild,' 'get involved in other things,' 'go back to a normal life,' 'turn to the future,' 'look ahead,' 'adapt,' etc.</i>	<i>'With hindsight and with respect to my present position, I see that I had quite a good end of career.'</i> <i>'I had to turn to the future straightaway, rather than look back at the past.'</i>
Production of meaning	<i>'step back,' 'learn,' 'draw lessons,' 'rationalise,' 'grow up,' 'change my views,' etc.</i>	<i>'This affair taught me a lot about people.'</i> <i>'Life goes on, I've grown up, and my views on people have changed.'</i>

- The second coding framework focused on Jacques Glassmann's interactions with his social system, and led to the identification of his external support. In particular, we analysed the different words of support and supportive behaviour shown by stakeholders mentioned in the press, attempting to identify potential tutors of resilience for the whistleblower. This type of interpretative coding (Miles and Huberman, 2003) required a corpus of terminology on themes built around the two main categories we defined, in other words, how the different stakeholders perceived Jacques Glassmann, and whether they were against the former professional footballer (reprisals) or whether, on the contrary, they concretely supported and/or helped (tutoring). We have set out the details of this tool in Table N°4 below, distinguishing the positive perceptions/actions in green and the negative perceptions/actions in red:

Table 4. Terminology of themes of interaction between Jacques Glassmann and his social system

Category	Code	Definition	Illustrations – extracts from press articles
Perception	JG – grass	JG is perceived as a ‘grass’, or even as a ‘traitor’ for having dared tell the truth about certain practices in the world of professional football.	‘He looks good, Mr Clean.’
	JG – troublemaker	JG is perceived as a nuisance, mainly because he rocked the boat in the world of professional football.	‘One and a half years after a certain VA-OM match, which triggered an incredible upheaval because of an attempt at bribery.’
	JG – liar	JG is accused of not having told the whole truth in the VA-OM affair and of accepting the bribe at first.	‘Burruchaga denies his team-mate’s version.’
	JG – media figure	JG is perceived as a media figure, able to throw some interesting light on subjects indirectly linked to the VA-OM affair (interviews, conferences, etc.).	‘Jacques Glassmann gives his opinion on the case of Christophe Bassons, who left the Tour de France pack after speaking out about doping.’
	JG – honest	JG is perceived as someone honest and with high principles, who refused to be bought and whose discourse has never changed since the story first broke.	‘According to one of his lawyers, Glassmann, who revealed the whole story on the day of the match, is ‘morally faultless.’
	JG – brave hero	JG is perceived as a ‘hero’ who was brave enough to speak out while others before him preferred to keep quiet.	‘Glassmann to the VA jersey to new heights! He behaved in a way that does the region proud.’
	JG – ethical example	JG is perceived as a symbolic ethical figure.	‘His absolute honesty and his sportsmanship should serve as an example for young people.’
	JG – victim	JG is perceived as a victim in the VA-OM affair, who paid a high price for his revelations.	‘Give us some news about this football player, rejected from the stadiums and on the dole, because he revealed the attempts at bribery by the Marseille managers during the VA-OM match in May 1993. I mean Jacques Glassmann.’
Actions	JG – death threats	JG receives death threats following his revelations.	‘How can we accept these repeated death threats; this coffin with his name on it, received from the hands of a young boy in Gueugnon.’
	JG – rejection	JG is stigmatised (insults, mockery, banishment, etc.) following his revelations.	‘This hero would go directly to purgatory the following season. He was booed in all the stadiums he played in.’
	JG – oblivion	JG is ignored. No one tried to find out what became of him professionally speaking after his revelations.	‘After one more season at Valenciennes, he found himself on the dole where no professional French club would give him a helping hand.’
	JG – empty promises	JG faces the challenges of promises of support that were not kept in the short to medium term.	‘‘We won’t forget Glassmann, we’ll give him a job,’ his president, Noël Le Graët, promised him one day.’’
	JG – words of support	JG is encouraged by words of support about him.	‘I’m revolted by the way the honesty of this sport has been punished.’
	JG – protection	JG is protected to ensure his safety and that of his family.	‘The Valenciennes defender at the origin of the VA-OM affair has been given police protection, following UEFA’s decision to disqualify Olympique de Marseille.’
	JG – acts of support	JG is supported through concrete actions.	‘The former Cameroonian international goalkeeper, Joseph-Antoine Bell, announced today that he had invited Jacques Glassmann to his jubilee.’

To refine our coding, we felt it would be useful to distinguish between different categories of actors (protagonists of the VA-OM affair, US Valenciennes managers, French football managers, professional French football club managers, professional footballers, football supporters (Valenciennes supporters and non Valenciennes supporters), UEFA and FIFA managers, the world of amateur football, the public prosecutor, celebrities from outside the world of sport, journalists and public opinion), as we soon realised that the discourse and actions relating to Jacques Glassmann depended on the type of stakeholder. From this, we created an EXCEL database in order to observe recurrences, period by period, and then to identify the basic trends in the way the discourse evolved for each category of actors. This type of approach shows, not only, that different milieu (e.g.: the amateur vs. the professional world) react differently to whistleblowing, but also the way whistleblowers are perceived and how behaviour towards them evolves over time.

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The first step was to detail the consequences of the VA-OM affair on Jacques Glassmann, focusing in particular on the attitude of the different stakeholders towards him (3.1.). This enabled us to identify the four key periods in the player's resilience trajectory after spring 1993 (3.2.). In a third stage, we identified behaviour showing support or rejection by outside tutors, thus characterising the role of the social system in his resilience process (3.3.).

The story of whistleblowing footballer and his social system ⁵

On 20 May 1993, for the penultimate day of the French first division football championships, the Olympique de Marseille (OM) team won the match against US Valenciennes (VA) 1-0 on Valenciennes's home ground to top the league. But then the club from the north of France lodged an appeal against the result as one of its defenders, Jacques Glassmann, accused the Marseille managers of attempted bribery. In the days that followed, the national football league launched legal action. The police quickly found an envelope containing 250,000 francs (almost 40,000 euros), buried in the garden of the aunt of Christophe Robert, the US Valenciennes striker. The money was a bribe for three of the club players (Christophe Robert, Jacques Glassmann and Jorge Burruchaga), who in return were expected to play less well than usual and without causing any injuries, enabling OM to reach the final of the UEFA Champions League against Milan AC, one week later. The VA-OM scandal trial was held in March 1995. Two months later, the verdict fell, with some of those involved receiving prison sentences. ⁶ The symbolic franc for damages awarded to Jacques Glassmann by the judges could not obliterate the distress that his honesty had led to. He quickly became the 'black sheep' and the 'traitor' of French football, and even had to put up with the sarcasm of other actors involved in the scandal. Jean-Pierre Bernès nicknamed him 'Mr Clean,' for example, while others ironically called him the 'avenger'. Even worse, during the whole 1993-1994 season, the Valenciennes defender was booed and insulted at all the second division (D2) matches. ⁷ Every week, hostile banners were waiting for him in the stands and the player was regularly spat at. "After two or three matches, it became commonplace. People came to see the strange animal. I was an easy target.

5. The words in inverted commas were those used by the media. They give us an account that takes into consideration – as faithfully as possible – the context and representations of the time.

6. The President of the OM, Bernard Tapie, was given a two-year prison sentence of which he had to serve at least one year. After appealing the sentence, Bernard Tapie was finally given a two-year sentence, of which he had to serve at least eight months, plus a three-year ban and a 20,000 francs fine (a little over 3,000 euros). Jean-Pierre Bernès, the OM manager, was given a two-year suspended sentence and a 15,000 franc fine (almost 2,300 euros); Jean-Jacques Eydelie, who served as intermediary for the Valenciennes players, was given a one-year suspended sentence and a 10,000 francs fine (a little over 1,500 euros); Christophe Robert and Jorge Burruchaga, were each given a six-month suspended sentence and a 5,000 francs fine (a little over 760 euros).

7. At the end of the 1992-1993 season, US Valenciennes finished 18th and was consequently demoted to the second division.

I was surprised when there was no booing, like in Laval or Bastia,” the player remarked (Le Monde, 9 January 1996). In effect, the man who had brought the VA-OM scandal into the open was considered by many as responsible for fall of OM (demoted to D2), the most popular club in France. The player, nicknamed ‘the grass’ even received several death threats. In the face of such violence from the fanatical supporters that he had to be protected,⁸ more moderate football supporters decided to write a letter showing their support for the player. That wasn’t the end of Jacques Glassmann’s problems though. In effect, at the end of the 1993-1994 season, US Valenciennes was demoted to amateur club status after finishing 20th in the second division, losing the financial advantages of professional status (TV rights, sponsors, public, local subsidies, etc.). This meant that the club – heavily in debt by this time – had to let go of its best players.⁹ Thus, at the end of his contract, Jacques Glassmann found himself on the dole, even though he was still only 31 years old. And yet, at the time of the scandal, the former president of US Valenciennes, Michel Coencas, had promised the player a “contract for life” for his honesty over the scandal. At the end of the day, however, he was an embarrassment to French football, his career was over and no professional club would risk of helping him. The managers were certainly interested in his D1 and D2 experience, but were put off by his image as an ‘untouchable’. On the other hand, the players who had accepted the bribes and then admitted it later joined professional clubs in France and abroad. Christophe Robert, Jorge Burruchaga and Jean-Jacques Eydelie continued to play professionally, until the age of 35, 36 and 37 respectively.

In October 1994, Jacques Glassmann decided to sign up with an amateur club, the Maubeuge club. He then ‘went into exile’ for three years in the Reunion island, where he joined the sixth division of Sainte-Rose in order to “turn the page” and “rebuild a normal life.” “Life became too heavy in France. People were always talking to me about it. In the Reunion, they left me alone [...]. There were some very hard moments. Being insulted, whistled at, booed in all the stadiums in France, when all I’d done was tell the truth... anyone would have found the situation hard,” he remarked at the time of the trial (L’Humanité, 20 May 1995). On the Reunion Island, Jacques Glassmann had a job at the municipal sports office, became a consultant for a local radio and trained 15 to 16 year olds at his club. At the time, the promises made by the former President of the national football league when the VA-OM scandal first broke, Noël Le Graët – “We won’t forget Glassmann, we’ll give him a job” – seemed a long way off.

In January 1996, Jacques Glassmann was nonetheless given the 1995 international Fair-Play award by FIFA (the International Federation of Association Football), together with a cheque for 10,000 Swiss francs (around 7,600 euros). “It’s really nice to get an award like this. It’s not be-all and end-all, it’s simply recognition, that’s all,” he said at the time, even if he also declared: “I’m not sure that my example encourages others to speak out. It’s not always good to tell the truth [...]. I learnt a lot about people from this affair” (Le Monde, 9 January 1996). In effect, for many years, Jacques Glassmann was abandoned by the world of French football: “[Jacques Glassmann] is a martyr. I was incensed. I thought I’d got a promise from the League for a real rehabilitation for Glassmann. It’s sad. People who tell the truth have to get the chop... The law of silence still exists in football,” Eric de Montgolfier, the

8. The Valenciennes club decided to send two security agents to protect him. At the same time, during the trial, the local council sent two policemen to watch his house.

9. Following the bankruptcy of the US Valenciennes club, it finally left the professional league and was demoted to National 2 status. Renamed Valenciennes Football Club, in 1996, today it is back in League 1.

9. It's true that in 1998, he looked after the 15 year-olds at RC Strasbourg and was in charge of recruiting young players for the club he trained in, but this experience came to an abrupt end after just one month.

prosecutor in charge of the VA-OM affair, observed (Le Monde, 13 May 2003). In the microcosm of French football, the name of Jacques Glassmann continued to derange. Two anecdotes illustrate this. First, when Daniel Tantot, President of the Valenciennes club supporters association 'Allez VAFC', suggested renaming the stand for the most fervent fans the 'Jacques Glassmann' stand, in 2003, he got a categorical refusal from the town. Second example, on his return to France, in October 1997, Jacques Glassmann tried to find a job as a coach but got absolutely no job offers,¹⁰ even though he had obtained his diploma as a coach. In 2001, he was without a job and reaching the end of his right to receive unemployment benefit.

After a long wait, the League finally came up with an offer to help him in January 2002. He was given a position at the National Union of Professional Footballers (UNFP). Thanks to the League and the then Minister of Sport, Marie-George Buffet, an agreement was drawn up to pay part of Jacques Glassmann's salary. The former Valenciennes player was given the job of helping footballers who had reached the end of their career to start a new life. This new start, almost ten years after the scandal first broke, even led the former footballer to bring out a book about it entitled 'Foot et moi la paix' (a play on words combining football and leave me alone). In this way, the former league player "set some things straight, without pretention, while giving myself a sort of therapy" (Libération, 20 May 2003). Jacques Glassmann was obviously delighted by his reinstatement: "Some people agree to be bought, not me. They said that I betrayed my sport, my team. On the contrary, I believe that I did football, my team and even the OM a service. I played in my club which played its guts out to stay in the first division, and then they asked me to lose for money. If I had done it, I would have betrayed the supporters, the inhabitants of a whole town. At the beginning, I was something of an outcast, and I went to play for three years in the Reunion island. But after the trial, the national bodies gave me a helping hand. Today, I'm still in football. That means I was right," he concluded (Le Point, 31 May 2007). In September 2008, taking advantage of his image of probity and integrity, the Professional Football League (LFP) even fully reinstated him in the world of top level football, by giving him a seat on the new referee screening committee, in charge of detecting anti-sports behaviour in the French stadiums. By accepting this offer from the French football managers, Jacques Glassmann returned to the 'avenger' role to some extent. In effect, even if this experience only lasted two years, the former Valenciennes defender had become a symbolic figure of sporting ethics. For public opinion and the media, he is the one who, because of his professional conscience, had the courage to publicly denounce an affair of bribery at the risk of sacrificing his career. In the end, the image of 'Mr anti-cheat' helped him in his new career. Although Jacques Glassmann was a good professional football player (83 matches in D1 and 274 matches in D2), he was not a star player (no selection for the national French team and only one match played in the European Cup).¹¹ Moreover, as he himself said: 'I was a division 2 level player, or a bottom of the rung D1 player' (Libération, 20 May 2003). This is the lens through which we should interpret his words when he declared: 'With hindsight, I can even see that given my present job, I have a pretty good end of career' (France Football, 17 November 2006).

11. In comparison, Vincent Guérin, the other former professional footballer in the screening committee, had been selected 19 times for France and had played 52 matches in the European Cup. He was also voted 'French footballer of the year' by the weekly paper France Football in 2005 and has far more titles to his name than his colleague Jacques Glassmann.

A trajectory of resilience for Jacques Glassmann in four periods

After presenting the story of the VA-OM scandal, we would like to turn to Jacques Glassmann's trajectory. This can be divided into four distinct periods that we present below. In each of them we can identify the dimensions of individual resilience at different moments in time, in other words, the absorption of shock, the professional

reconstruction and the production of meaning. The verbatim enabled us to describe the periods identified in Appendix 2.

1- [1993-1995]: A search for truth and malaise

Jacques Glassmann believed the whole truth needed to come out about the affair if he was to be cleared completely. In effect, there was never any question for him of accepting bribery. However, even if he felt no regret regarding his disclosures, it was difficult to put up with the insults and threats he was subjected to by the supporters, especially as his club managers tended to overprotect him by excluding him from all the matches that were played in the south of France. His desolation came to a head when his contract with US Valenciennes was not renewed. It was the only post-whistleblowing moment when Jacques Glassmann showed any form of hostility or anger.

2- [1995-2003]: Stepping back and new beginning

The VA-OM trial was like a catharsis for Jacques Glassmann. Once it was over, he wanted to quickly turn the page and get back to a normal life by finding new sports projects to get involved in. This took him to the Reunion Island. This temporary 'retreat' enabled him to step back from the scandal and from the world of football in general. We did not discern any animosity in his statements about the different protagonists in the affair or about French football managers. The former US Valenciennes player said he did not regret giving up his career as a professional football player. He even felt vindicated for blowing the whistle, not only because of public support, but also because of the FIFA Fair-Play award. After receiving the award, Jacques Glassmann deliberately cut himself off from the media. The VA-OM affair seemed to be behind him.

3- [2003-2006]: Distancing and putting things into perspective

Ten years after his disclosure, Jacques Glassmann decided to publish a very personal book, which gave him a sense of closure, almost like a therapy, and enabled him to turn to the future. It was also an opportunity for him to set the facts straight by putting some of what the journalists had said about him into perspective. For example, the former Valenciennes player said that he couldn't stand systematically being depicted as a victim, or even a martyr of the VA-OM affair. He even denied the idea that he was rejected by the world of professional football following his revelations. He simply regretted being an embarrassment to some of the people he came across.

4- [2006-2011]: Rationalisation and idealisation

Jacques Glassmann has learnt to live with the VA-OM affair – finally forgotten and that he no longer wants to be associated with – to such an extent that he almost entirely obliterates the difficult moments and reprisals he experienced following his revelations. He even describes his trajectory as a thirty-something footballer as conventional. However, he admits that given his level as a professional footballer, he would probably never have had such a good end-of-career opportunity without the help of the French football managers. For him, it was the ultimate proof that he was right to denounce the attempt at bribery in spring 1993.

The role of the social system in the process of the whistleblower's resilience

After looking at the resilience trajectory of Jacques Glassmann, below we attempt to qualify the nature of the whistleblower's interactions with the social

system in which he found himself so as to identify the role of this system in the resilience process. We can see this system of interactions through our quantification and temporal bracketing (cf. Figure 1).

Figure 1. Quantification of articles relative to Jacques Glassmann and temporal bracketing

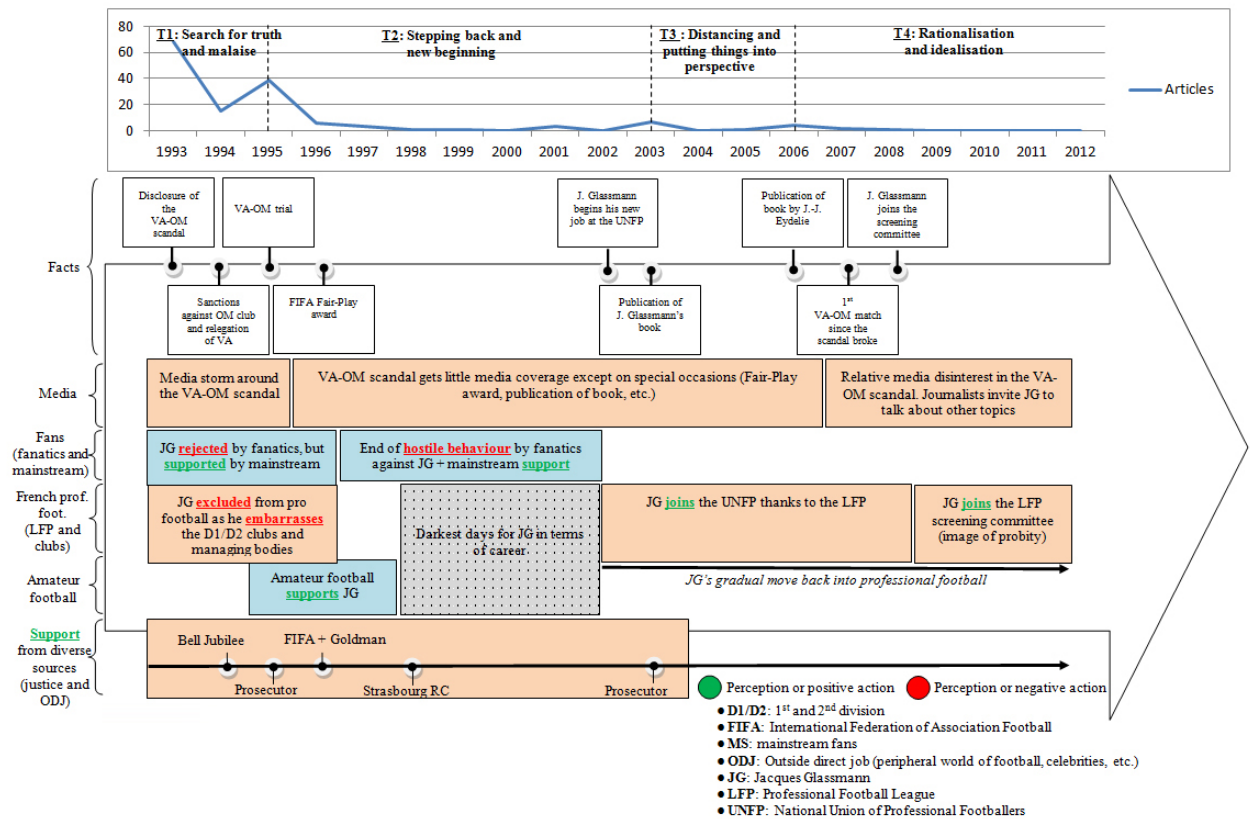


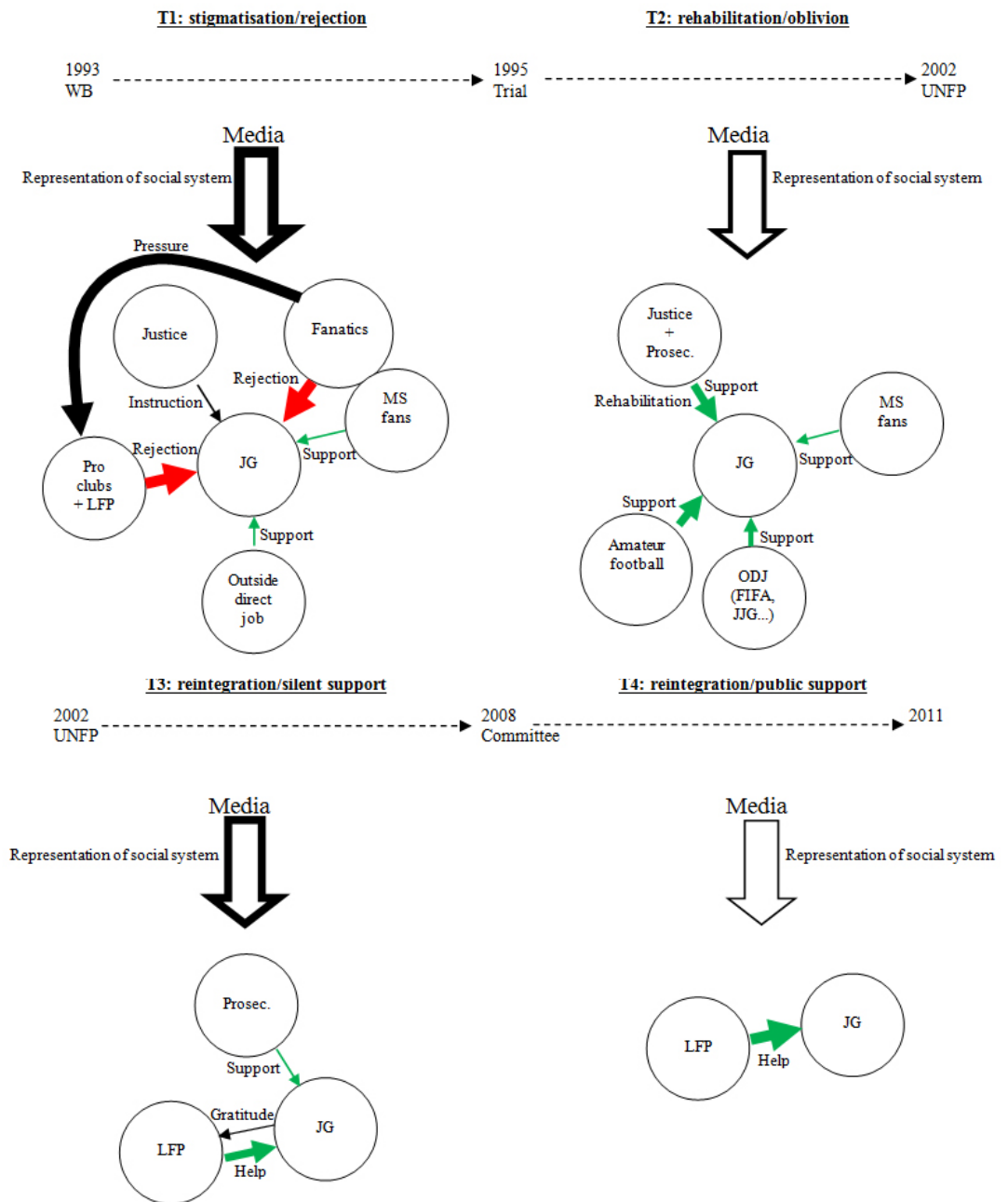
Figure 1 shows the points of inflection, which should be interpreted as disruption events in the relations between Jacques Glassmann and his social system. Figure 2, below, is the logical result of this temporal breakdown analysis. At the same time, we identify four periods (T1 to T4). For each of them, we identified the different stakeholders who interacted at that time with Jacques Glassmann. The thickness of the lines indicates the intensity of these relations. As is logical, we find the same actors as those identified in Figure 1. As the temporal bracketing revealed two kinds of very different reactions by the fans, we distinguished two sub-categories: the fanatical fans and the mainstream fans. The code colour used is also the same as in Figure 1 and enables us to distinguish, first, the negative perceptions/behaviour towards Jacques Glassmann (in red) and, second, the positive perceptions/behaviour (in green).¹² Looking at Figure 2, we can see that the hostile reactions were concentrated in T1. Some were direct (violence and insults by fanatical fans), while others were indirect (rejection by the professional clubs and the LFP as a reaction to the

pressure from fanatical fans). At this point in time, the support – which was real but far less prominent, and included letters from mainstream fans and invitations to public events by other sports personalities (e.g.: jubilee) – could not offset the ostracism that the whistleblower (WB) was subjected to, which explains his general malaise. In T2, the fanatical fans' anger had died down, especially as the legal system validated Jacques Glassmann's version, and also because the OM, the fans' favourite club, was back in the first division. Nonetheless, French football managers kept their distance from the former defender and, while they did not exactly reject him, they ignored him as a professional player. Other stakeholders, however, positioned themselves in support of the whistleblower. In addition to the continuing support from the mainstream fans and celebrities like Jean-Jacques Goldman (JJG), a well known varieties singer in France, we mainly see the emergence of discourse or highly symbolic actions that paved the way for future resilience. Firstly, amateur football offered Jacques Glassmann a new job that professional football had at first refused him. Moreover, FIFA rewarded the former US Valenciennes player for his sportsmanship, making him an emblematic figure of sporting ethics. Finally, the public prosecutor, Eric de Montgolfier, spoke out publicly at the end of the trial to rehabilitate the man who had revealed the bribery scandal, and openly invited the managing bodies of French football ¹³ to hold out a helping hand. From T3, the social system became less dense, with the gradual disappearance of some actors and a considerable decline in media coverage. This decline in media interest in the VA-OM affair made it possible for the LFP to make him an offer, fifteen years after the attempted bribery, although it occurred in two stages (T3-T4). At first, in T3, Jacques Glassmann was offered a job at the UNFP with little media exposure. His status as a former whistleblower was not mentioned. In 2003, for the first time since he had blown the whistle, the former footballer decided to take the initiative and end his media silence by publishing a book about his experience, in which he was particularly magnanimous towards the managing bodies of French football. This proactive behaviour and his positive attitude towards those who had excluded him contrasted with Éric de Montgolfier's tirade when he spoke indignantly about Jacques Glassmann's long spell in the wilderness in career terms. This made the highly symbolic tutoring action by the LFP possible, namely, hiring him as part of the screening committee in T4. From this moment, he was fully reintegrated in the system and even became an ethical guarantor of the social system.

12. To simplify things, in figure 2, the words of public encouragement or of reinstatement come under the heading of 'support', while concrete job offers designed to reintegrate Jacques Glassmann in his milieu are termed 'help'.

13. Moreover, we noted a slight upturn in media interest in the VA-OM affair at this time.

Figure 2. Interactions of the whistleblower with his social system



By professionally reinstating Jacques Glassmann, the managing bodies thus played a role of tutor in resilience and in this role form the heart of the social system. Figure 2 nonetheless shows that more peripheral stakeholders (fans, FIFA, public prosecutor, world of amateur football, even celebrities) – whose position did not change over time – also played a major role in the LFP's intervention to help Jacques Glassmann. In effect, at the beginning, pressure from the fanatical fans was such that the player was rapidly excluded from the professional circuit. At this time, he was an embarrassment as he had attacked the sport and the fanatics' favourite club and had therefore weakened a system that generated huge profits (TV, merchandising, match attendance, etc.). However, the steadfast support he got from other stakeholders – beginning with that of the mainstream fans – led to the LFP deciding to hire the former footballer. In effect, with time, the latter's status had changed from that of informer to one of guardian of sports morality. In fact, Jacques Glassmann was reintegrated into the world of football and, almost twenty years on, benefitted from celebrity that had nothing to do with his skills as a footballer, as he himself admitted. His trajectory, that was both deliberate and emergent, put him on the road to resilience.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

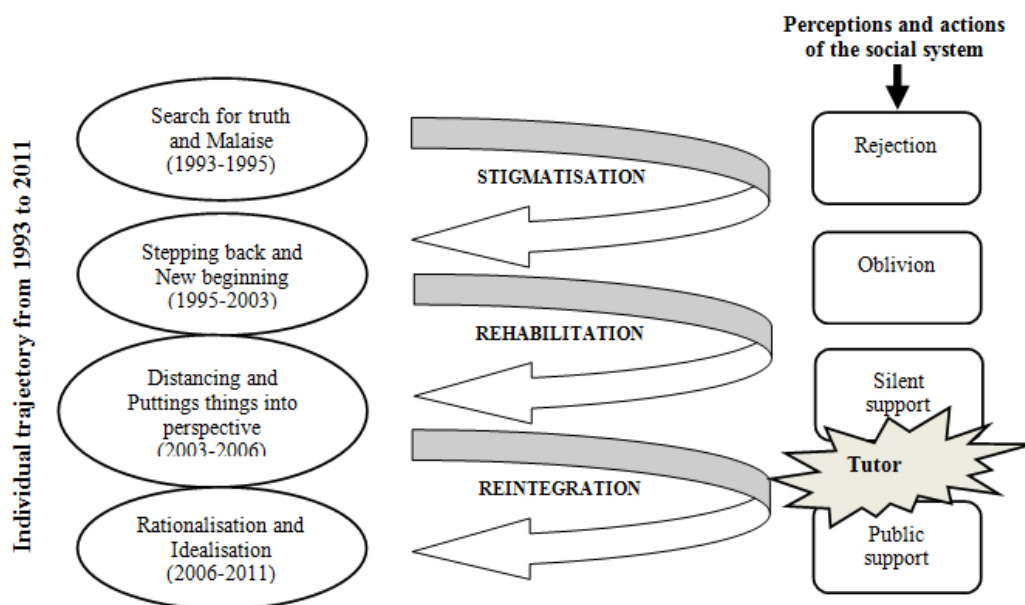
Our analysis shows that whistleblowers cannot remain in the system (or rejoin it) if they are against it. It also appears that the whistleblower's trajectory towards a professional comeback is at times hampered and at times encouraged.

The analysis of a whistleblower's trajectory (Figure 1), together with the discourse and behaviour of the social system towards the latter throughout the period in question (Figure 2), enabled us to put forward a dynamic model of resilience. This model reflects the way in which individual and social systems interact, thereby contributing to the whistleblower's professional resilience. In this regard, we attempt to redefine resilience which we believe should be envisaged as a process that, over time, combines interactions between an individual and the social system in which he or she moves. Resilience is therefore not only psychological. It can be understood more fully through the system of interactions with the environment that can be divided into three key periods: stigmatisation, rehabilitation and reintegration. This new way of envisaging an individual's resilience, career-wise, shows that, over and above the individual's innate resources, the role of tutors of resilience present in the social environment is central.

Figure 3, below, illustrates this dynamic modelling through the emblematic case of Jacques Glassmann. The left-hand side of Figure 3 illustrates the different stages of this individual resilience, during which whistleblowers activate their specific, stable internal resources, like their convictions or personality traits. As our analysis focuses on the actions and reactions of the social system towards the whistleblower over time, it shows that the trajectory towards resilience cannot be separated from the link with the social system. In effect, many of Jacques Glassmann's actions can be explained by the support or the rejection of the social system over time (right-hand side of Figure 3). At first he was ostracised for sounding the alarm, then rehabilitated and finally reintegrated.

Consequently, his capacity to spring back is not necessarily expressed with the same drive (or lack of drive) over time. The way in which whistleblowers absorb the shock, rebuild a career and construct meaning also depends on their interactions with their social environment.

Figure 3. Dynamic model of the interactions between whistleblower and social system



Thus, predispositions to resilience combine in a process of adjustment to the social system to overcome the post-whistleblowing difficulties. Consequently, we agree with Bonanno (2012) who argues that resilience is not simply a personal characteristic.

The dynamic model of resilience constitutes our main contribution, enabling us to discuss two complementary findings:

The decisive role of the fans: agents of reprisals and rehabilitation in the whistleblower's social system

First, our study is in line with recent work by Richardson and McGlynn (2011) who argue that the fans can play a significant role in the process of sidelining a whistleblower. Our analyses show that the fans may effectively be considered as agents of reprisals, playing a key role in the individual's stigmatisation (cf. Figure 3). However, our research allowed us to develop and add to their work. In particular, two opposing categories of fans can be identified: fanatical fans and mainstream fans. These two categories of fans play two distinct roles; the first are agents of reprisals, whilst the second play the role of agents of rehabilitation. Over time, the modest but continual actions of mainstream fans (e.g., letters of support) resulted in overcoming the malaise provoked by the reprisals of fanatical fans. As soon as the power struggle reverses between the two categories of fans, the central stakeholders of the social system change their perception of the whistleblower and the nature of their behaviour shifts from rejection to support.

Thus, by considering powerful stakeholders over a period of time alongside others who appear to carry less weight, the present study encompasses the complexity of the social system with which the whistleblower interacts. In this way, we show that the categories of stakeholders are not necessarily one indivisible whole. There may be sub-categories that display very different perceptions and behaviour over time. This observation is decisive from a methodological viewpoint. If we aggregated the fanatical fans and the mainstream public in the case that interests us here, we would have an illusion of neutrality over time. However, our study captured the reversal in leadership of these two sub-categories of stakeholders over time, and the impact of this turnaround on the managing bodies, thereby contributing to a clearer interpretation of the nuances in the concept of stakeholder. In addition, by highlighting the divide between the fanatical and the mainstream fans, our paper calls into question the over-simplified view that whistleblowing is inevitably considered as an act of betrayal in French culture (Larue, 2007; de Bry, 2008). We show that in addition to the fanatical French fans who violently rejected the whistleblower, there are the more discreet, mainstream French mainstream fans, able to give their support to the unfortunate hero. In fact, the degree of an individual's interest with respect to the act of disclosure – like being a supporter of the guilty club, or not, for example – is more determinant than French culture in explaining his or her attitude with respect to the whistleblower.

The role and conditions of intervention of the tutor of resilience for the whistleblower

Our research also gave us a better understanding of the role of the tutor in whistleblower resilience. We showed that offers of help occur in a gradual way, depending on the reaction of stakeholders to the whistleblowing. It is only when there is an easing of social pressure that the whistleblower can be reinstated in his or her original sphere. The intervention of a tutor of resilience thus needs to be considered from a dynamic perspective. More specifically, our study shows not only that an individual may be, in turn, rejected, forgotten, reintegrated, and then valued by the managing bodies, but also, and above all, that the transition from one state to another is closely linked to the context. Thus, support from the social system is not at all spontaneous or automatic in the case whistleblowing. Indeed, such help suggests that other stakeholders incite the decision-makers in the profession to intervene. In a way, they must 'permit' the managers to rehabilitate and then reintegrate the whistleblower in a professional context. It is only when outside support actions overcome the persistence of hostile behaviour that the intervention of the tutor of resilience may be envisaged. An important finding of our study is that the more peripheral stakeholders (mainstream fans, justice, media, celebrities, etc.) not only play a role of direct psychological support for whistleblowers, helping the latter to cope with the reprisals, but they also act as an indirect driving force that guides the moment when the tutor of resilience intervenes.

In parallel, we observed that help from the social system is forthcoming when whistleblowers are already on the path towards resilience. In effect, their personal capacity for resistance is linked to their deep conviction of the legitimacy of what they did in view of the seriousness of the wrongdoing reported. This moral posture initially enables them to absorb the violence of the shock more easily and produce meaning with respect to their behaviour,

even when it is massively rejected by the social system. In line with Rotschild and Miethe (1994) and Uys and Smit (2011), we suggest that a behavioural and cognitive 'backbone' incites whistleblowers to resist and guides them through the process. Once the initial storm is over, the process of resilience is consolidated, in a second stage, by the capacity of the person to gain support from – or to provoke – the discourse and behaviour of tutors in the social system, enabling the whistleblowers to rebuild a career. In effect, even if whistleblowers have to rely on their own capacity to absorb the shock, in the case we studied, the turnaround occurred because, at a given moment, the social system permitted Jacques Glassman to rebuild his future career. We can therefore assume that an openly positive attitude and proactive behaviour by the whistleblower towards the tutor creates the conditions for a trajectory of resilience.

In short, resilience appears to be the outcome of a dynamic of interactions between the whistleblowers and their social system. Thus, we again want to underscore the interest of conducting a long-term study on whistleblowing, as our results show that the whistleblower had not rebounded over a ten-year period (the page had not been turned and there was an absence of outside support). On the other hand, we showed that whistleblowing certainly triggers a profound crisis in the whistleblower's career, but that the latter can spring back several years later despite everything. This adds nuance to the sometimes over-simplified conclusions in the literature on whistleblowing that fails to take the full extent of the temporal dimension of the resilience process into account (Hollnagel et al., 2009), and considers it as 'professional suicide' or a 'downward spiral' (Perry, 2008: 140-141). Our retrospective longitudinal approach showed that the social and professional trajectory of whistleblowers is not linear and that the latter can very well spring back after being the victims of reprisals.

CONCLUSION

Our study explores the post-whistleblowing trajectory of a whistleblower by looking at the social system's role in the process of resilience. To this end, we conducted a longitudinal and retrospective case study (1993-2011) using secondary data. Like Richardson and McGlynn (2011), we explored a specific context, that of the world of sport, examining the consequences of the VA-OM scandal for Jacques Glassmann. We showed that the former professional footballer's trajectory, which was both deliberate and emergent, put him on the path to resilience. By conducting a cross-analysis of his personal trajectory (Figure 1) with the perceptions and actions of the social system towards him (Figure 2) we were able to develop a dynamic model of resilience (Figure 3). In addition, we identified a specific stakeholder (the fans) as the agent of both reprisals and rehabilitation, and highlighted the role and conditions of the intervention of tutors in the resilience process, two findings that resonate with the literature.

However, our study presents several limitations. First, we worked from secondary data, both to understand the stakeholder's role in the process and to discover the whistleblower trajectory. Naturally, this data does not give us direct access to the human mind in the same way as an in-depth interview with the whistleblower. Consequently, we can liken the whistleblower's personal

'bereavement' period to a black box. However, the systematic collection and analysis of all the whistleblower's statements to the media during the period studied partially makes up for this shortcoming. Another limitation of our study concerns the external validity of our conclusions. In effect, we based our study on a single case in a specific milieu, that of the most popular sport in France. However, while no studies to date actually back up this intuition, football does seem to offer an image of a milieu where corruption is rife (e.g.: Calcio match-fixing scandal in 2006). Thus, it is difficult to generalise our findings, even if other empirical studies on whistleblowing in the world of sport (e.g. Richardson and Mc Glynn, 2011) appear to support our approach. However, it offers fertile ground for future research.

This study opens up interesting avenues for future research. One interesting line of investigation could be on how whistleblowers' post-disclosure trajectories impact on the propensity of other observers of wrongdoing to make it public or, on the contrary, to simply ignore it. In effect, while whistleblowing is, above all, an act of resistance (Richardson and McGlynn, 2011), the fate of earlier whistleblowers must certainly have an impact on the decision of individuals subsequently confronted with similar situations of fraud or corruption. The question of whether knowing about past reprisals against former whistleblowers has an impact on the likelihood of individuals denouncing wrongdoing has been raised in the literature (Miceli and Near, 1985). However, to date there has been little discussion about this aspect. Taking this further, we would suggest that a system that supports whistleblowers will create a favourable context for the revelation of new cases of serious wrongdoing. We argue that if managing bodies wish to see an end to corruption, they should show that there is some benefit in reporting it.

The challenges of future research are multiple in managerial terms. One key issue for the organisation is to understand how a past media scandal can be used to create a psychologically reassuring work environment (Edmondson, 1999, 2004) that can incite individuals to report attempts at bribery or corruption without fearing for their career. Whatever its form, the organisation's strategic management is directly concerned by this question. In this respect, our study indicates the key role that stakeholders in the social system must adopt from the outset in their role as tutor of resilience for whistleblowers. At the same time, we need a clearer understanding of the whistleblower's role in the fight against corruption or fraud in general. In effect, from a more institutional perspective, whistleblowing could be studied as a process that regulates or clarifies the unwritten values and rules between stakeholders. The so-called ethical alarm could thus have a regulatory impact on the social system.

Globally, and without being too naive, we argue that by supporting the whistleblower who raised the alarm, we also support the social system they belong to. There are many examples in the world to illustrate that the short-term protection arising from the eviction of the whistleblower is counter-productive in the longer term with respect to the legitimacy of the same social system. In France, Doctor Irène Frachon's struggle to expose the dangers of the Médiator drug offers a good example. The violent way she was at first treated was highly damaging to the image of the pharmaceutical industry in the public's eyes and openly raised the question of the legitimacy of the industry's control organisms. Over and above the whistleblower's personal situation, it would be interesting to study whether or not it is a good idea to keep a whistleblower within the

system, rather than temporarily sidelining them to stabilise the crisis generated by the alarm. Organisational denial does not seem to be an adequate answer for organisations or stakeholders in a scandal. The dilemma facing the employee (to speak out or keep quiet) has the same dilemma as the stakeholders of a social system that could be summed up by 'let them speak out' or 'shut them up'. Our study aims to underscore the limitations of the option of 'shutting them up', including for the social system, as, at the end of the day, stakeholders get few advantages from this solution. If stakeholders could take this on board, then whistleblowing could cease to be a source of traumatism, both for individuals and organisations.

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Appendix 1. Application of Boyle (1990)'s theoretical framework to the case studied

Characteristics of whistleblowing	Application to the Jacques Glassmann case
The information must be divulged in good faith.	Jacques Glassmann acted out of loyalty to the club and out of complete honesty.
The disclosure must be made in the framework of a professional activity by a past or present employee from the organisation.	Jacques Glassmann acted within the context of his position as a professional footballer for US Valenciennes.
The information divulged must be linked to (real or perceived) wrongdoing by the employer	The incriminating information was linked to wrongdoing by two of the club's players who had been bribed.
The person who blows the whistle must have proof of the misconduct and must be able to identify those responsible.	Jacques Glassmann was a direct witness of the bribery attempt and knew the people involved very well.

Appendix 2. Verbatim relative to the four periods marking jacques glassmann's trajectory

Period 1: 1993 to 1995 – In search of truth and malaise

"The legal system has to see it through to the end, as it will be a good thing for football" (28 June 1993).

"It was clear, distinct, specific, it was 200,000 francs (around 30,500 euros) for each player. [...] If they'd offered me 100 million or 200 million, it would be exactly the same. It's the gesture, it's bribery, it's dirty money" (30 June 1993).

"I've told the truth right from the start, and the only good thing is that the procurer, Eric de Montgolfier, believed in me. The affair has already gone very, very far. But, in law, you need proof, more and more proof. At present, we were lucky enough to find some money, which is considerable proof" (30 June 1993).

"In my head, I'd decided to refuse from the very beginning" (10 July 1993).

"I'm looking forward to a positive outcome from this confrontation and that Bernès, who always denied it, finally admits that it was him who phoned. I hope that everything will work out and that we'll finally know the truth" (20 July 1993).

"I took it really badly, ¹⁴ especially as I was only told just three hours before the move to Nice. [...] There will always be the threatening phone calls against the club and the ultra-Marseilles letters of insult that I get. I'm not afraid. [...] In the long term, if I can only play 50% of matches and have to stay on the touchline as soon as we go south, then it's better I leave. [...] Even if I have to stop playing football, I don't regret anything" (31 July 1993).

"Listen I'm tired. [...] I'm an honest person and this kind of thing disgusts me. I'm well aware of the accusations I've made. [...] [D2 is still] my worst memory. [...] I didn't deserve it. [...] The club president didn't even phone me. So, you know, you have to understand why I want to keep my mouth shut because I wouldn't be very nice if I had to speak to those people. And as it's not my style... [...] I must be an embarrassment or a nuisance" (24 October 1994).

14. Moreover, we noted a slight upturn in media interest in the VA-OM affair at this time.

Period 2: 1995 to 2003 – Stepping back and new beginning

"I met the managers from Sainte-Rosienne in Paris and I was immediately interested in their offer. After the first interview, we agreed that I would go there to see what I could expect. That's what I did last December.... and I liked it. [...] The concrete offer from Sainte-Rose changed the equation. Because it's a new experience and a new life that I want to adapt to as quickly as possible. I can't wait to discover the grounds and my new team-mates. The Reunion is the first serious job and offer I've had after a particularly difficult year and a half. For me it's a chance to show that I'm not yet finished as a player. I can still give something to an ambitious club. And why not Sainte-Rose, who have just reached the local top league? [...]. I'm waiting [for the VA-OM trial] with impatience. For a year and a half, I've been under huge pressure in France. It's time it finished" (1st February 1995).

"[I joined the Sainte-Rose club] simply to rebuild a normal life. [...] The trial will be my last difficult moment. [...] [I hope] that everyone will be able to get back to a normal life afterwards, and that Christophe Robert, Jorge Burruchaga and Jean-Jacques Eydelie will be able to go on to a great career as a player or coach" (10 March 1995).

"[I'm not afraid of the trial]. On the contrary, I'm clear, clean. I can't wait for it to finish. I always said the same from the

very beginning of the affair; and in a hundred years, I'll still say the same thing! After all, I'm only a witness in this affair, I'm not the one being accused. Obviously, there will be some difficult moments because there are some people that I don't particularly want to see: we don't live in the same world. But I hope to go back to the Reunion before the end of the trial, in a fortnight if they don't need me anymore. [...] For the last two years, with all the media pressure, I could have gone over the edge. But I kept cool. I have a clear conscience" (13 March 1995).

"What I did, I did from the heart. [...] Football can exist and develop without cheating. [...] For me, it finished a long time ago. Life goes on, I've grown up, the way I see people has changed. Full stop. [...] It's nice to get an award [like the Fair-Play award from FIFA]. It's not be-all and end-all, it's simply recognition, that's all. [...] The French managers felt that I no longer had the qualities needed to get to a higher level. Over there I feel good, I've made new friends. [...] It's a fantastic sport. I think that people really enjoy going to a stadium. I hope that there will be more and more of them and that if football is clean, I think it's even better" (8 January 1996).

"[The 2000 letters of support I got] really moved me. There was a whole section of the French population. Children and older women. Unemployed people, priests, doctors, teachers. [...] I learnt a lot about people from this affair" (9 January 1996).

« [Christophe Bassons] was right to say what he thought. When people try to destroy him because of it, it gets me thinking. I don't think it's normal. They speak about a clean Tour de France and we can see that it's not what's happening. There was a lot of hypocrisy and very little solidarity. People keep making big speeches about the need to clean up sport and, at the end of the day, we continue to see some pretty questionable practices. [...] What I find not right [is] that people think it's extraordinary that someone speaks out, as in cycling at the moment. For me, and I think for Christophe Bassons, it was just normal behaviour. That's why I never asked for justice or for some kind of recognition. It's a question of human nature: there are those who put their head down and accept everything and those that are brave enough to speak out and to accept the consequences. [...] Maybe one day, the percentage of people who believe in these values will outnumber those who believe in money above everything else. It's something we'll have to fight for a long time. As for Christophe Bassons, he has to continue to be himself, to fight to exist as he really is in his milieu. I believe that today at least he's at peace with his conscience" (24 July 1999).

Period 3: 2003 to 2006 – Distancing and putting things in perspective

"[Through this book, I just wanted] to put things straight without pretention, at the same time giving myself a sort of therapy. [...] When I say that, it surprises people, but I didn't suffer for ten years and I even laughed at some situations. [...] [The insults] don't matter to me anymore, it's become trivial. [...] [What should I be afraid of], and then, after all, it's my destiny to get shot... [...] They tried to make me out to be an outlaw, rejected by everyone and forced to go into exile in the Reunion to continue to play. It's ridiculous. I didn't go to play at PSG because I opened my mouth. The reality is that I was D2 level, or perhaps bottom D1, and that the few offers I got didn't interest me. As for the so-called exile, quite frankly, that's stupid! I'm not Napoleon. [...] [I would like to see] some people being less embarrassed when they meet me" (20 May 2003).

"I'm neither an avenger nor a martyr, I simply acted like a human being. [...] [I don't expect anything from the milieu, except] to see some people no longer embarrassed when they meet me." (24 May 2003).

"There was some exaggeration as not much happened in most stadiums, even if there were always two or three fanatics. [...] I'm a bit fed up hearing about these thirteen years of purgatory, it's too easy. I had to look to the future immediately, rather than look back at the past saying that we'd been hurt. The affair was an excuse for years" (4 May 2006).

Period 4: 2006 – 2011 – Rationalisation and idealisation

"No, the VA-OM affair did not impact on the end of my career. I experienced the same difficulties as a lot of former professionals. With hindsight, I can even see that with respect to my present job, I have a pretty good end-of-career. [...] This story is behind me. I've got nothing else to say. I know that the pressure is mounting before this Marseille-Valenciennes match, and I don't want to contribute in any way to this commemoration. It's the last thing I want, but imagine just for one second that there are any problems with this match. I don't want to get involved in it." (17 November 2006).

"At first, I was a bit of an outcast, and I went to play for three years in the Reunion. But after the trial, the national body

gave me a helping hand. Today, I'm still in the world of football. That proves I was right" (31 May 2007).
"I continued my life by looking straight ahead. [...] [At the time the scandal broke], when I was back home with my wife, we would say: "It's the others who're crazy" (21 June 2009).

