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SPECIAL ISSUE OBSERVATION

Multi-Shadowing: A Gateway to Organizing? The Case of Hunting with Hounds

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Abstract

Organizations can be approached both as entities and as constantly evolving phenomena. The former are associated with the term 'organization,' while the latter are specifically associated with 'organizing.' In the second meaning, organizations, such as constantly evolving flows, can make observation problematic. Three of these problems deserve special attention. Many events take place at the same time, which poses a challenge for observation. Then there is a question of what to observe, especially for the researcher outside the organization. And finally, the coordination between the actors is not always directly observable. This paper shows how observation by means of multiple-researcher shadowing (Czarniawska, 2007) or 'multi-shadowing' makes it possible for the observer to tackle these three difficulties. For the observer, shadowing (McDonald, 2005; Mintzberg, 1970) involves physically following the actors of the organization as part of a weak or even nonparticipating observational approach. 'Multi-shadowing' combines simultaneous instances of shadowing different actors in the same unit of time but not of place. We compare shadowing and multi-shadowing with other approaches of solo and multiple-researcher observation. Then, we show the interest and the limits of using multi-shadowing to observe hunting with hounds, which involves activities that, while traditional, borrow a number of characteristics from modern organizations if considered through the prism of organizing.

Keywords: *Hunting with Hounds; Ethnography; Multi-Shadowing; Organizing; Shadowing*

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Observation is one of the best ways to capture both individual and collective practices inside an organization. It offers a view, from the inside, of the shortcomings and successes – the real activities and practices. It also equips the researcher with a set of methods that meet the requirements of the comprehensive approach (Dumez, 2013, 2016) and clearly identify the actors and their action. It is undertaken in different ways to meet the requirements of the research objective, take account of the specificities of the field, and obtain the expected data. In this article, we focus on the shadowing method, which, according to several authors, allows access to organizing (Czarniawska, 2007, 2008, 2014, 2018; Vásquez, Brummans, & Groleau, 2012). In line with Weick (1979), we define organizing as processes inside the organization, which are continuously executed to create, maintain, and dissolve social collectivities.

Understood as a set of constantly evolving flows (Alter, 2016; Hussenot, 2016), organizations pose challenges to observation. Three of these challenges require special attention. First, many events take place at the same time but in different parts of an organization: capturing some of them simultaneously presents a problem for the observer. Second, there is a question of what to observe and what not to observe: this is the central issue for the researcher outside the organization. Finally, if the organization succeeds in generating action, it is because it produces coordination that may not always be immediately observable.

The goal of this article is to show how observation through multi-shadowing makes it possible to deal with these three challenges and, thus, offers better access to organizing processes. For the researcher/observer, the shadowing principle (McDonald, 2005; Mintzberg, 1970) involves physically following the organization's actors in order to engage in weakly participant (or even nonparticipant) observation. Multi-shadowing means simultaneously shadowing different actors, who are often involved in the same organizational action, over the same

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period of time but not in the same place. In this article, we show that multi-shadowing provides access to several flows inside an organization – flows that are concurrent and connect to each other. As a result, it grants greater access to organizing in its temporal dimension and to the ways in which the activities' multiple trajectories are interwoven.

We rely on a multi-shadowing approach deployed in the context of observing hunting with hounds, which can be considered extremely traditional activities but actually borrow many characteristics from modern organizations – in particular, the increasingly complex, fragmented, and dispersed forms of organization in terms of both time and space (Rouleau, De Rond, & Musca, 2014). Thus, with regard to space, there is a shifting and unstable nature of organizational boundaries, as well as the fragmentation of activities and the various forms of "mobility and interconnection" that characterize contemporary organizational life (Jarzabkowski, Bednarek, & Cabantous, 2015, p. 6). And with regard to time, the activities' simultaneous and often asynchronous character, as highlighted by Czarniawska (2007, 2014), as well as the unstable and ephemeral aspects of contemporary organizing (Van Hulst, Ybema, & Yanow, 2017), characterizes the way the hunt is organized.

Our work here is structured into four parts. First, we present elements from the literature regarding how different observation methods – shadowing, in particular – can help in gaining access to organizing. Second, we present the field, in which we undertook a multi-shadowing approach, namely hunting with hounds. Third, we detail our approach and the observations we were able to make. Finally, we discuss the scope and limits of multi-shadowing when it comes to the study of organizing.

The observation of organizing: Combining shadowing with multiple-researcher observations

We have structured our theoretical part into three sections. First, we will look at the specificities of shadowing, particularly how it allows access to organizing. Second, given that shadowing is a specific observation methodology, that is, both mobile and situated, we will compare this method with other solo (or 'lone ranger') observation methodologies, that is, when only one researcher is present in the field. And third, we will explore the literature methods on multiple-researcher observations. We will examine to what extent the simultaneous presence of several researchers in the field can provide access to organizing by enabling a multifaceted and simultaneous perspective that reveals 'synchronous' connections or, on the contrary, divergent trajectories that can lead to a disintegration of the organized.

Shadowing and organizing

Shadowing: A mobile, situated, and spatialized observation

Shadowing is a mobile observation: over a defined period of time, the observer follows someone performing their day-to-day activities. Often, the observer 'walks with' the person being observed.

The primary characteristic of shadowing is the observer's ability to access the activity of an individual in their daily life inside an organization (McDonald, 2005) without adopting an imposing position over the person who is being observed. On the contrary, by making the observed person's point of view the center of the observation, the observer takes a situated position (Vásquez et al., 2012). The researcher stands in the shadows; he or she follows the person, usually on foot, and looks through that person's eyes. In this way, a mutual relationship develops that helps to develop the research (Vásquez, 2013; Vásquez et al., 2012). Czarniawska (2008, p. 10) mentions a "peculiar twosome – the person shadowed and the person doing the shadowing – in which the dynamics of cognition become complex and therefore interesting." The specificity of this mutual relationship leads to a wide variety of approaches, according to the choices made regarding the positioning of the researcher, the degree to which the data collection is co-constructed between the observer and the observed person (Vásquez et al., 2012), whether the researcher allows them selves to speak or not, and what they permit themselves to say. There are a few key authors behind the method, and the theoretical sources of shadowing are multidisciplinary (see Appendix 2), that is why the method can take different forms. While acknowledging this variety, McDonald and Simpson (2014) nevertheless agree on several commonalities: the unit of analysis is an individual or, in exceptional cases, a nonhuman actor, a project or an object; the fieldwork takes place over several days; and the goal is to discover the ordinary life of the subject in its continuous unfolding inside the organization.

Organizing through shadowing

While McDonald and Simpson (2014) present and define the shadowing method as individual-centric and not focused on the organization, many discussions – in line with the perspective developed by Czarniawska (2008) – show that the shadowing method can provide access to organizing, in particular because it gives access to three central elements: its deployment in time and, therefore, its processual character; the situated point of view to which it gives access and that allows a perspective on the real activity; and this activity's relationship to space.

For Czarniawska (2008, p. 5), the study of organizing is "the study of what people do when they act collectively in order to achieve something." In this approach, organizing refers to organizing ' in the making' and *in situ*, and, in this regard, Czarniawska follows the perspective developed by Weick (1979), who defines organizing as the processes inside the organization, which are continuously executed to create, maintain, and dissolve social collectivities. Consequently, she emphasizes one of the first strengths of shadowing in terms of access to organizing, namely that it monitors the actors over time and, therefore, has an intrinsically temporal dimension (Czarniawska, 2007, 2008, 2014, 2018).

The second strength of shadowing which has been highlighted by some authors with respect to access to organizing, is the 'situated' point of view that is given to the observer. By mobilizing shadowing with an approach that they describe as subjectivist, Vásquez et al. (2012) explain that their goal, beyond observing an actor in their day-to-day activity, is to reveal the meaning that the organizational actors themselves ascribe to their activities in real life. These authors consider it "the most appropriate method for investigating aspects of *in situ* organizing" (Vásquez et al., 2012, p. 145) because it allows us to understand "how actors enact organizations through interactions in everyday situations" (ibid). Therefore, one of the strengths of shadowing is its 'situated' aspect, which provides access to the fundamental dimensions of organizing – in particular, interactions between members of the organization.

Finally, the third strength of shadowing regarding access to organizing is its relationship to space, which makes it possible to track people as they move, often on foot, and to observe the actors' and activities' relationship to space (Bayart, 1999; Raulet-Croset & Borzeix, 2014; Raulet-Croset, Collard, & Borzeix, 2013). This property is particularly interesting in the case of organizations that are firmly anchored in space (Dale & Burrel, 2008; Maréchal, Linstead, & Munro, 2013; Van Marrewijk & Yanow, 2010; Weinfurtner & Seidl, 2019). Thus, it is a question of identifying how space can be a resource for activity (Bayart, 1999; Lussault & Stock, 2009) and how the constituent spaces of the organization under study connect to each other.

Therefore, shadowing seemed to be particularly appropriate for an empirical study of organizing. Vásquez et al. (2012) highlight the importance of shadowing's contribution to the study of the organization of a science and technology week in Chile, the monitoring of doctors participating in a *Doctors without Borders* (Médecins sans Frontières) mission, and the influence of evolving work technologies on a small team of designers. Czarniawska (2008) cites the example of an IT company studied by Strannegård, Friberg, and Wilson (2001), in which the people being observed are constantly "already elsewhere" (Czarniawska, 2007, p. 6) or freelancers of the new economy, like those studied by Barley and Kunda (2004). These fields are characterized by their evolutionary, changing character, which is linked to fragmented spaces and sometimes to strong technological developments and the rapid pace of evolution and mobility, as well as organizing processes that are not stable but continually adapt to the mobility of the organizational object being studied.

Shadowing versus other methods of solo observation: Specificities and access to organizing

To better understand the advantages and difficulties of shadowing in the study of organizing, we have chosen to compare it from different angles with other observation methods[1] and, first of all, with other solo observation methods (see Appendix 1, Summary Table 1). In particular, we distinguish between observation without interaction, an observation sometimes described as passive (Journé, 2008) or complete (Martineau, 2005), which can be expanded with feedback from the people observed (Journé, 2008); observant participation, in which the researcher plays a preexisting role in the organization (Martineau, 2005; Soulé, 2007); and participant observation (Lapassade, 2002), in which the researcher is present in the organization – the observed environment – but does not have a well-defined or preexisting role, and their presence is tailored to align with the expectations of the observed environment. We also identify different types of solo ethnography when the researcher participates in the observed environment over a long period of time (Van Maanen, 1991, 2006, 2011) and has access to the processes of enacting the social order, which are always negotiated by the actors (Beaud & Weber, 2019).

To identify how shadowing helps to access organizing, we will compare these different forms of observation with each other. First, we will inquire into the specificity of shadowing in relation to other recent ethnographic methods. Second, we will look at the researcher's relationship to the field, which varies according to the type of observation and contributes in different ways to the study of organizing. Finally, we will compare the methods with regard to the work on the data, that is, the specificities of the nature of the data and how they were collected, the work of reflexivity, and the goal of reaching theoretical saturation.

[1] We will not revisit the contribution of shadowing compared to the interview method, a point that Czarniawska (2007) and McDonald and Simpson (2014) have already explored in depth.

The ethnographic dimension of shadowing: Similarities and differences in access to organizing

Recent work in the ethnography of organizations has looked into the ways of accessing organizations that are now more dispersed in terms of space and time (Grosjean & Vidal, 2017; Rouleau, 2013; Rouleau et al., 2014; Ybema, Yanow, Wels, & Kamsteeg, 2009). In particular, some ethnographies have considered their relationship to time and the organization's processual character, while others have sought to account for the wide array of spaces in which an observed phenomenon can take place. We highlight their specificities in the access to organizing and compare them with the contributions of shadowing.

First of all, it should be noted that the term 'ethnography of organizations' covers a set of methods that are characterized by a particular relationship to the field; what the researcher's writings contribute to the analysis is not what has been said to him/her but personal experience based on these statements and his/her own feelings. Citing Van Maanen (2011) and Jarzabkowski et al. (2014, p. 275) remind the reader that "ethnographic data is not like other qualitative data. Its 'truth claims' are not primarily based in what research participants have said to researchers, but rather on the researcher's 'personalized seeing, hearing, and experiencing in specific social settings'" (Van Maanen, 2011, p. 222). Shadowing is, therefore, close to classic ethnography, particularly because of the bonds formed with the field. But the two are not identical, especially because shadowing gives the observed person a greater role in constructing the research, choosing the paths that are followed, and highlighting certain aspects of the activity. Shadowing also differs from classic ethnography in that it gives more weight to the situated voice of the people being followed. Through the 'twosome' comprised of the researcher and the observed person, the word of the latter is integrated with the experience of the researcher.

Because of this proximity, it is especially interesting to compare certain ethnographic approaches with shadowing because they deepen our understanding of two characteristics of organizing: the temporal dimension and the spatial dimension. This is the case of process-centered ethnography (the temporal dimension) and global or multi-sited ethnography (the spatial dimension).

With respect to the temporal dimension, several authors hold that ethnography – because of its situated nature and proximity to micro-events – gives access to organizational processes, be they micro-processes or processes seen on a larger-temporal scale (Jarzabkowski et al., 2014; Van Hulst et al., 2017; Yanow, Ybema, & Van Hulst, 2012). According to them, because of the observer's proximity and sensitivity to the context, ethnography can help in exploring "the twists and turns that are part of organizational life" (Van Hulst et al., 2017, p. 223) as well as the processual nature of organizations, by following the actors, interactions, and artifacts in space and time (Yanow et al., 2012). "Ethnographers go along with actors, interactions, and artifacts on the move or stay in one place observing things that move around them" (Van Hulst et al., 2017, p. 224). These authors suggest that ethnography, when conducted to reveal processual dynamics, allows access to the "intersubjective processes" of the construction of social reality because of its "situated, unfolding, and temporal nature" (Jarzabkowski et al., 2014, p. 282). This perspective of an ethnography that can be described as 'processual' is close to shadowing, especially in the case of a mobile analysis, which follows 'micro-processes.' However, shadowing places the spoken word of the persons being observed *in situ* at the center of the analysis and endeavors to follow the individuals as they construct the organizing, without looking directly at the processes themselves but through the intermediary of the persons being followed.

The comparison of shadowing with multi-sited or global (Marcus, 1995) or multi-situated (Grosjean, 2013), ethnography also provides noteworthy insights, as these ethnographies focus on the connection between the different spaces where the phenomenon is present and where it is followed throughout its development. Jarzabkowski et al. (2015) recall the importance for Marcus (1995) of following (tracing) a phenomenon: "Marcus (1995) argues that tracing (or following) something is central to constructing the global in ethnography" (Jarzabkowski et al., 2015, p. 6). Mobile ethnography (Novoa, 2015; Sheller & Urry, 2006), for its part, studies mobile phenomena (travels, explorations, etc.) by drawing attention to the need for the researcher to move and, above all, take into account how mobility structures both the representations and the feelings of the actors observed. Global ethnography and mobile ethnography offer a different way of accessing organizing than shadowing does, insofar as access to the phenomenon prevails and not the points of view (situated and unfolding in time) of those who participate in the organizing.

Shadowing versus other solo observation methods: What is the relationship with the field? What expertise does the observer need to have?

What does shadowing require in terms of the relationship with the field and the necessary expertise to access organizing? Simple shadowing makes it possible to follow a person inside an organization and to have access to some parts of their activity. Unlike some ethnographic methods, it is not necessary (although it can happen and be useful) to develop a strong familiarity with the field nor to be an expert in order to gain access to this understanding: as the observation continues, the researcher asks for clarifications, locates the connections made with other members of the organization, and constructs a situated viewpoint through the eyes of the person being followed. The researcher can follow while initially understanding little about what is happening because their understanding will increase as the shadowing continues. While the researcher's visibility can weigh on the organization and those who are being observed and create a certain amount of disruption in the field (Aumais, 2019; Quinlan, 2008), their relationship with the observed person or persons and the explanations obtained during shadowing can nonetheless make it possible to reduce the amount of time the researcher spends in the field. A trade-off has to be made between the time in the field and the amount and relevance of the data obtained.

Shadowing and other solo observation methods: Who speaks in the data? Who selects the data? How are reflexivity and saturation constructed?

We will now compare the specificities of shadowing with other solo observation methods in terms of data collection and selection, as well as their analysis and validation through reflexivity and saturation.

According to McDonald and Simpson (2014), shadowing differs from participant observation and ethnography in that it allows for a clear distinction between the researcher and the observed subject. The words and thoughts of both parties are distinct and can be the focus of specific analyses.

We also note that, depending on the modes of observation, the selection of the data may depend more on the researcher or more on the field itself. In configurations of passive observation, ethnography, and participant observation, the researcher decides when, where, and whom to observe, while recognizing that sometimes the data may depend on the researcher's positioning inside the organization, with potentially fewer opportunities to have multiple points of view. By contrast, some methods do manage to introduce diverse points of view into the observation. Journé (2005, 2008) proposes a method known as the 'flashlight strategy,' which is centered on a storyline (a problem, a management situation) and encourages the researcher to change the person being observed so as to remain connected to a developing storyline. In the case of shadowing, access to organizing relies on data access co-constructions. Vásquez et al. (2012) show that researchers 'frame' research by identifying and separating what will be 'in the foreground' of the scene from what will be 'in the background,' and that these choices are made through their interactions with others and, more concretely, in the case of shadowing, with the person being followed: "researchers co-construct foreground-background distinctions through their interactions with others (i.e., research collaborators, peers, and, most importantly, the people they are studying)" (Vásquez et al., 2012, p. 148). Shadowing leads to both parties continuously defining the object under study and jointly answering the questions 'when, where, and how long?.' This means, among other things, that they jointly decide which activities they observe, which events they stay with, and also which places they pass through.

Another source of the co-construction of research is related to 'walking with' (Raulet-Croset & Borzeix, 2014). The selection of data also depends on the movement (in both time and space) of the person being observed. The researcher and the observer may discuss choices regarding the route before the shadowing begins. The observed individual may wish to show this or that part of their activity, just as the observer may ask to follow them through this or that space. The choice of the space is not neutral because the co-construction of the data also occurs in relation to the stimuli linked to the environment in which the duo moves. A person, an object, a tool, and so forth that the observer comes across can spark a discussion, either because the observed person recalls an event or an element that they wish to share with the researcher or because the researcher asks for an explanation on the spot.

Finally, the construction of the data relates to the conditions of reflexivity and saturation choices. Regarding reflexivity, Vásquez (2013) indicates that it can occur, in part, during observation within the framework of the observer–observed duo. For its part, saturation is very often linked to the length of time the researcher has spent as an observer in the field, as well as the number and variety of situations and/or actors observed. In the context of access to organizing, different saturation paths seem possible and may even complement each other to increase access to the various connections between actors; thus, a researcher may wish to extend the duration of shadowing for the same actor or choose to follow – in their shadow – a greater variety of actors.

Organizing as seen through multiple-researcher observation

In their consideration of so-called multi-situated approaches, Grosjean and Vidal (2017) reflect on the richness of following a variety of trajectories but ask themselves "how do these trajectories form a story?" and contemplate the relationships that are established between "actors, objects, situations, and temporalities" (Grosjean & Vidal, 2017, p. 3, our translation). This same issue applies to access to organizing. The relationship to time, through connections and disconnections, simultaneity and non-simultaneity, is also central to organizing. What are the advantages of multiple-researcher observations, which can definitely make use of the simultaneous nature more easily, when it comes to apprehending organizing?

Multiple-researcher observation refers to different research methods and practices that appear to be much more emergent and less developed in the literature than solo observation (Jarzabkowski et al., 2015). We have selected several observation configurations found in the literature (see Appendix 3, Summary Table 2): team-based ethnography (Creese, Bhatt, Bhojani, & Martin, 2008; Erickson & Stull, 1998), team-based global ethnography (Jarzabkowski et al., 2015), and approaches that combine various solo observation methods, such as the 'observatory of the organizing' (Rix-Lièvre & Lièvre, 2010; Lièvre & Rix-Lièvre, 2013) and multi-event ethnography (Aguilar Delgado & Barin Cruz, 2014). We also propose to consider the method of 'diary studies' (Czarniawska, 2007, 2008; Journé, 2008) in the 'multiple-researcher observation' category, since the researcher is alone as researcher but creates a collective by mobilizing actors in the organization to simultaneously collect data for him/her.

Global and team observation mechanisms

For team ethnography (Creese et al., 2008; Erickson & Stull, 1998), different researchers are present at the same time and in the same place. The so-called global and team ethnography, referring to the globalization of the economy and societies, develops at several sites because there is a need to understand a global research object, that is, a phenomenon that goes beyond a circumscribed place (Jarzabkowski et al., 2015). Thus, the different researchers are present at the same time but not in the same place. The aim is to analyze multi-faceted phenomena that can only be understood by accessing distinct spaces. The researchers, who are fully in charge of collecting and selecting the data, wish to reach saturation by accumulating data within the team. However, simultaneity is relatively overlooked; it is not a question of precisely following (which is what detailed access to organizing requires) the temporal connection between what happens at the same time at each site.

With regard to the relationship with the field, it is worth noting that team observation methods, insofar as they combine different types of solo observation or individual ethnographic immersion, refer in part to issues similar to the latter, such as being more or less familiar with the field or having the expertise required to access the field. However, the fact that several researchers are present in the same field creates methodological particularities, including issues relating to the division of labor within the team (Jarzabkowski et al., 2015), relating to data sharing, particularly through writings that are characteristic of ethnography (Creese et al., 2008) and relating to reflexivity within the team (Barry et al., 1999). Global and team ethnography relies on distance communication between researchers at scheduled times: exchanges at the end of the day, for example, via videoconference. Observation notes not only help to refresh the researcher's memory but often facilitate collective discussion and idea generation (Creese et al., 2008). Reflexivity is also specific. The researchers participate, through collective discussions, in regular debriefings (Jarzabkowski et al., 2015) and gradually and collectively develop the meaning given to their observations.

Situated forms of multiple-researcher observation

In more narrowly focused contexts, other forms of observation are developed to access the actors' situated points of view, often to better understand distributed organizations that require strong coordination between the different activities. This is the case of the method that Rix-Lièvre and Lièvre (2010) and Lièvre and Rix-Lièvre (2013) call the 'observatory of the organizing.' The explicit objective of this method was to gain access to organizing on a polar expedition project by linking the observation of each individual in a project team with that of their collective. They combine a multimedia logbook, made up of videos recorded at meetings or other key moments and kept by one of the researchers, who is in an observant participation position; the other researcher, who was in a participant observation position, conducted retrospective *in situ* interviews. For the analysis of multi-faceted and ephemeral events such as a sports competition or an international conference, Aguilar Delgado and Barin-Cruz (2014) propose a multi-event ethnography that combines simple shadowing with data collection by actors in the field (practitioner's diary) and with reflexive notes. In another context, Roberts (1990) mobilized several observers to study the organizing of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier: one positioned on the bridge, one on the deck, and one in the control tower. This type of method combines the positions of different observers to produce a multi-situated perspective on organizing.

As for diary studies, although the researcher carries out their observation alone, the method also seems to allow access to simultaneity and a rather detailed synchrony, since the different actors in the field time stamp their notes on actions/events in diaries or on schedules. Even though the research is conducted at the initiative of a solo researcher, the diaries kept by the actors in different locations inside the organization represent one of the methods to collect data simultaneously from actors other than the researcher alone (Czarniawska, 2007, 2008; Journé, 2008). This method also limits the intrusion of the researcher, who is not present during the note taking but will be able to make use of the diaries written by the actors.

Pros and cons of multiple-researcher observation methods for access to organizing

Access to organizing requires multiple perspectives, including from the inside, for the researcher to analyze the activity in its multiple facets and regarding the connections between the actors.

In their own way, each of these multiple-researcher observation methods is different from and similar to what would be multiple-researcher shadowing. In some of these methods, the researchers are present at the same time and in different places but focus is neither on the situated approach nor on the simultaneity of the different activities with a detailed and time-stamped description of the observation. This is the case of global ethnography in teams, which allows this multiple access but prioritizes the researcher's viewpoint over that of the people observed and does not emphasize the synchronous nature of the collected data. By contrast, other methods such as the observatory of the organizing (Rix-Lièvre & Lièvre, 2010; Lièvre & Rix-Lièvre, 2013) have both a situated character and a simultaneity in the collection of data and, therefore, seem appropriate to study organizing *in situ*. They require that the observers have a strong presence within the organization. To the best of our knowledge, there has been little previous methodological reflection on shadowing conducted by several people, which would combine the considerations of shadowing with those of ethnographies or observations that are conducted by several people.

Our knowledge project focusses on the dynamics of organizing, and we show how observation by means of multi-shadowing can help to understand it in terms of both spatial and temporal dynamics. Using a comprehensive approach (Allard-Poesi, 2019; Dumez, 2013, 2016), we seek to access the constructions and meanings that actors attribute to their environment. Thus, we consider social reality from an interpretative perspective – from the perspective of the actors' interpretations and practices, which leads us to consider organizing as a 'situated production.' Our goal is to contribute to the understanding of an organization that is difficult to access as a result of its distribution in space and its dyschronies (Alter, 2003, 2016) by considering it from the angle of the interwoven flows it consists of. Therefore, we take a processual perspective on organization (Chia, 2002; Hussenot, 2016), according to which an organization is in a state of perpetual becoming (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002), in motion, and can be considered as "interwoven processes, occasionally stabilized in the form of structures but never in a sustainable way" (Alter, 2016, p. 32, our translation). With the multi-shadowing method, we propose to apprehend organizing in its spatial and situated dimension, which is already specific to simple shadowing, as well as its temporal dimension, by considering the different flows that comprise it both dynamically (the flows' evolution over time) and simultaneously (connections between the flows at a given moment).

Field access, context of hunting with hounds, and data collection

We use a conception of organizing related to the specificities of our research field, hunting with hounds, which constitutes an organization that is, in some respects, very traditional but includes elements echoing modernity, as described by the authors cited above (Czarniawska, 2008; Grosjean & Groleau, 2013; Rouleau et al., 2014). These elements include: the shifting and unstable nature of the organization's spatial boundaries; the multiplicity of places and their character as resources for situated action; an openness to multiple stakeholders; the importance of coordinating of time scales, which is associated with the often asynchronous nature of activities; and the coordination that takes place around an object limited in time. In our case, this object is a performance – a kind of show that is repeated with regularity and requires an ad hoc management method (Beaujolin-Bellet, Boudes, & Raulet-Croset, 2014) and a specific organizing.

Here we will present some elements relating to the context and how we, engaged in shadowing approaches, gradually built a methodological scheme based on multi-shadowing. This multi-shadowing consists of several instances of shadowing carried out at the same time to access the organizing's temporal dimension. We used the actors' situated points of view to look for moments of 'synchrony,' when the nodes are knotted, or 'dyschrony' (Alter, 2003, 2016) – sometimes even disintegration. In particular, we describe our point of entry, the followers of the hunt, whom we show as participants and, thus, as points of access to the organizing.

Field access

Our project of observing hunts with hounds was born out of an opportunity to access the field and to engage in theoretical inquiry. The opportunity for access arose through a personal connection that one of the researchers had with a hunting crew. This connection allowed the researchers to get to know the world of the hunt and to create relationships that made it possible to conduct an initial observation *in situ*, from which two surprising findings emerged. On the one hand, the hunt takes place in a setting exposed to various contingencies and disturbances: among others, the forest is accessible to the public, the prey does everything to escape the hunters, including crossing the roads, and hunting with hounds is the subject of controversy and has its detractors. There is a permanent risk of the hunt being disrupted. On the other hand, these hunts attract many participants. In addition to the hunters, many 'followers' experience the hunt as an open-air spectacle. Depending on the moment, there may be a handful, a few dozen, or even several hundred followers. However, we do not regard the followers as mere spectators of a codified tragedy taking place in an open-air theater (Beaujolin-Bellet et al., 2014): many of them actively contribute to the organization of the hunt as volunteers, even though they are not members of the crew.

Building on the relationships that had been forged with four deer and roe deer hunting crews situated in the same geographical area, a research project was launched to understand how these hunts can generally be carried out smoothly despite many uncertainties. The researcher formed a team to increase the capacity for interaction with the field.

The hunt takes place on horseback and in a formal setting: the hunters belong to an association, and there is a protocol, as well as numerous customs and codes. For these two reasons, it soon became apparent that the researchers would have neither the legitimacy nor the skills to conduct participant observation: they were not part of the hunters' association, and they lacked the expertise to ride a horse as required. However, given the research question, our approach needed to enable us to observe both the hunt in progress and the underlying organizing – in an open space. This is why the methods of shadowing and then multi-shadowing were chosen: the idea was to observe the hunt via the followers and to gain access to the organizing and, thereby, other actors through them and their point of view.

Hunting context

In France, hunting with hounds is legal, and such hunts take place twice a week between 15 September and 31 March in forests in rural areas. Two types of actors participate in the hunt: the hunters (known as the crew) and the followers. The hunters are organized hierarchically. At the top of the pyramid is the master, supported by the huntsman who manages the pack and can be assisted by a kennelman, who takes special care of the dogs. Next come the hunters, who are on horseback. Some of them are permanent members of the association that manages the hunt. Others are invited and only attend because of the hunt. The followers, whether on foot, bicycle, or in a car, are not hunters but live the hunt to the fullest. Some followers are present on a very regular basis and have a specific role assigned to them, for example, securing road crossings, looking for stray dogs, etc. The hunt takes place on public land rented for the occasion by the association: anyone can be an occasional or a regular follower. The crew specializes in a particular animal, for example, red deer or roe deer, and hunts only this type of animal. The annual subscription paid by the association to the State provides for a maximum number of catches (purchase of 'rings'). France's national association for hunting with hounds (la Société de Vènerie) lists 400 crews, 7,000 horses, and 30,000 dogs for about 10,000 hunters and 100,000 followers.

A hunt is conducted as follows. After greeting each other, all the actors meet up with the hunt master: dogs, riders on their horses, and followers of all kinds. In a very coded protocol that Pinçon-Charlot and Pinçon (2003) lay out in detail, the master confers with those individuals who have been to the wood early in the morning to check the presence and location of possible preys. After this ritual exchange, the huntsman chooses which animal to hunt and gives everyone instructions, which are mostly safety rules. The hunt begins. It is the dogs that hunt. The master guides the pack on the track and ensures that the group of dogs and riders stays together. Sometimes, riders can get lost or injure themselves, and some dogs can run in the wrong direction or even lose interest in hunting and go off on their own marauding adventures! However, a hunt only targets one and the same animal at a time: the one whose line of scent is being followed, also known as the quarry. The risk is to have the group scattered across several hectares. The hunt alternates between moments of lively agitation and moments when nothing happens. It ends with the capture and killing of the quarry or when the decision is made to abandon the chase because the scent is lost or the quarry has taken refuge on a property where hunting is prohibited. In both cases, it is the master who decides. Once the hunt is over, the whole group of hunters and followers gets together for a picnic. A hunt lasts 3–4 h.

We gained access to seven hunts (see Appendix 4, Summary Table). For each hunt, we were informally introduced to different hunt masters and presented them with our project to understand how a hunt in progress is organized.

Data collection based on the type of shadowing

Masters, huntsmen, and sometimes hunting association presidents were systematically interviewed before the observation sequences. On the day of a hunt, we came to the forest when they had invited us and headed to the meeting point. We were briefly introduced to the hunters and followers at the first meeting, and we were introduced by crew members to the followers, who agreed to take us along in their cars. In this operation, the members of the crew introduced us to followers who served as 'volunteers' and, thus, were actively working in the association, or 'regulars,' who attended very regularly and had already followed this crew around on hunts for a long time. It happened that we had to ask several people before they accepted; it also happened that we had to change vehicles, and, thus, the person being shadowed, during the hunt.

Depending on the circumstances, we carried out simple shadowing with one observer, multi-shadowing with two observers, or multi-shadowing with two observers and simultaneous timing of their observations on all occasions throughout the entire hunt. Each hunt can be considered an episode during which an organizing dynamic is built. Every time at the end of the hunt, we held debriefings between the observers. However, the data collection and debriefing methods varied according to the type of shadowing carried out.

Data collection methods during simple shadowing

We aimed to observe how the hunt unfolds from the point of view and the path taken by the followers who regularly follow along or even become involved in the organization of the hunt itself and contribute to the organizing. In fact, during our first immersion in the world of the hunt, we were struck by the number of followers, their many interactions with the hunters, our perceptions of their roles during the hunt, and, generally speaking, their involvement in the hunt. Following them, their journey and their actions allowed us to share their impressions right then and there and to fully understand their interactions with hunters or other followers or even people outside the hunt. Furthermore, we were able to grasp their roles and their choices, such as staying in place and observing nature, getting in and out of the car, walking in the woods, waiting in the car with the window open or near the car, listening to the sound of the horns, leaving for another spot, talking with other followers, exchanging information with other protagonists, getting out from the epicenter of the hunt, etc. We let ourselves be guided by them during the hunt and did not interfere with the choices they made. However, we did not remain silent, nor did we refuse to be involved, but asked questions as we went along to clarify and figure out what was happening. Moreover, while we were following the followers, we also met others, introduced ourselves again, and took part in their exchanges. It was an opportunity to get to know other followers, collect their opinions and impressions regarding (and the analyses they made of) the hunting process, and observe the interactions between the followers and between the followers and the riders. It was also an opportunity to observe their interactions with other people they crossed paths with during the hunt, for example, a horse renter, people taking care of the horses, photographers, etc.

As we were constantly on the move or attentively observing, taking notes was a complicated and unreliable endeavor; in addition, during our first observation, we had been struck by the multitude of sounds in the forest at the time of the hunt, which also serve as markers for its protagonists. Therefore, we chose to leave the microphone switched on for almost the entirety of every hunt and record all the dialogues involving the followers. These recordings captured not only the discussions but also all the noises in the forest during the hunt: horses' hoofs, the dogs hunting, car engines, rustling of dead leaves, sound of the wind, etc. Sometimes, we included commentary during the recording to explain what we saw or heard, adding to the Dictaphone that we were making a clarification or a comment. These recordings were subsequently transcribed in their entirety, including not only the words but also the sounds. One of us also took pictures throughout one of the hunts.

Data collection methods during multiple and timed shadowing

After our first experience of shadowing a hunt, we decided to observe the hunts with two researchers. The factors in this decision included: the perceived complexity of the organization of the hunt; its moments of acceleration and dispersal; an environment that was not at all familiar to us; the large number of codes that we did not know; the variety of roles the followers could play; and the multitude of exchanges between the actors that had to be grasped. However, it also seemed rather unrealistic for three of us to be present at the same time at all the hunts because of scheduling conflicts and the challenge of placing three researchers with three different followers at the same time. Therefore, we adopted a principle of simultaneous observation by two researchers, each following one or more followers as the hunt progressed. Observer #2, who had a prior connection to the crews, was always there to introduce their teammates and remind them, if necessary, of the overall reasons for our presence on the ground.

At the end of the multi-shadowing observation sequences, whether timed or not, a collective debriefing session was always held the same evening. It often took place on the way back from the hunt, by car or over coffee, and allowed us to freely discuss the feelings we had during the day and the moments when we had crossed paths with each other or looked on the map to find our respective routes. This post-observation session was necessary not only to take a step back and share the emotions we had experienced but also to compare the activities we had observed and the different emotions and forms of engagement we had had at different times during the hunt. These debriefing sessions were recorded and transcribed. A second collective debriefing session was organized after receiving the transcripts of the recordings. The goal with these sessions was to go back more precisely over the facts, the progress of the hunt, the actions carried out by each person in parallel, the times we crossed paths, and how and where we were positioned.

The first few tries with multiple shadowing and the debriefings that followed revealed a difficulty: although we could share in detail what was happening from each follower's point of view during the main parts of the hunt, we did not have enough reference points to understand what was happening at a specific time with each of the followers we were shadowing. This was all the more true because we had very few spatial reference points, as the hunt was taking place in the open air and, more importantly, without any real spatial markers.

Thus, we decided to time our observations so that we could later better situate in time the observation sequences that we examined. In concrete terms, we started recording at the same time, indicated the time on the soundtrack, and stopped the recordings at the end of the hunt. In addition, we frequently reported the time on the Dictaphone to anticipate possible recording problems. We also marked out each 10-min time sequence on the transcription. The idea was to follow several people by identifying time sequences so that we could then, sequence by sequence, analyze the data obtained by each researcher. We chose 10-min sequences and compared the hunting experiences within these blocks with each other.

Empirical analysis: From shadowing to multi-shadowing the hunt

We consider the hunt as our unit of analysis. It constitutes a temporal episode during which an organizing dynamic is built. There are key moments in all the hunts observed and analyzed: the moment when the hunt starts; the moment when there is a change in hunting location (each area is surrounded by roads, which the quarry can cross, thus producing special moments enabling people to 'view' the animal); the moment when there is a change in lines (dogs start following another animal, it means that they 'change,' which is not allowed) the moment the hunt is stopped, either because the animal has been caught or because it has not been caught but the hunt has already lasted long enough or because it may have escaped and gone to an inaccessible area. But there is no way of predetermining the pace at which these moments will occur, where they will happen, or even who among the riders, the followers, or the other actors involved in the hunt will participate in such an action. The risk of the hunt becoming desynchronized or even disintegrating is almost constant: the dogs and the riders may be injured, get lost, and/or lose track of the quarry; different actions may take place in different places, thereby scattering resources and steering the hunting action away from the prey; lastly, since the action does not follow a predetermined course in time but unfolds depending on the opportunities in play and the obstacles along the way, the various protagonists may also become lost or confused – particularly as to whether the hunt is over or not. We were told during the introductory interviews that one of the fundamental rules of the hunt is to focus on a single preidentified animal toward which the crew must direct the pack; therefore, one of the crew's missions is to ensure that the pack is always united and moving toward the prey of the day.

Simple shadowing: Quickly getting used to an unknown environment

Simple shadowing allowed us to become more familiar with the field by interacting with the followers we accompanied during the action, seeing what they showed, and learning what they explained to us.

While using simple shadowing to observe a red deer hunt, we shadowed Henri, a photographer whose passion is to chase after pictures of wild animals in the forest. Following the hunt is an opportunity to see them in action, and he has been coming every week for over two decades. He explained to us that the likelihood of capturing such a quality image is rare: "You have to be in the right place at the right time, be ready, not leave your camera in the car, not argue with your neighbor, stay focused. A beautiful picture is the one in which the deer does something interesting, for example, when it makes a sudden jump while still gaining momentum. That happens once every five years, maybe even more seldom." He told us about what seems to be a shared pursuit among the followers: to see the work of the dogs and to see their prey, or more precisely, to admire these animals during the actual hunt. While we followed him, he explained a few times how he chooses his path and activity in order to 'see it/them.'

In our interactions with the followers, Henri showed us what it means to hear and understand the sounds generated by the hunt, in particular those of the pack and the horn, which serve to situate the hunting action and help understand what is happening. Being able to interpret the sounds and identify the tracks is necessary to increase the odds of seeing the prey, and a 'good' follower, in his opinion, is a follower who does not hinder the hunting action.

Henri: So, to stop them, if they see the big dogs are lagging behind a bit – that means they're following like that, but they're not hunting. If the good dogs are not hunting, it means… we're not on the tail of the right animal. And you even have to know how to recognize the dogs' voice, their true sound. They don't bark, uhm, while hunting, you mustn't forget that. They give tongue…

Researcher: They give tongue.

Henri: They're giving tongue, and they bay when they reach the deer, when it is at bay. And besides, the music of a pack that hunts is completely different from that of a pack that has a deer at bay.

[4 seconds of silence]

Henri: So, the 'bàt-l'eau', that's b, a with a grave accent, t, hyphen, l, apostrophe, e, a, u, that means the animal is about to hit the water or is in the water.

Researcher: Oh.

Henri: It can be, uh… Often it's at the point when it's caught, but it can mean that it's crossing a stream, there aren't any over there, or a pond. And there are some there.

[3 seconds of silence]

Henri: But that would be surprising. That would mean the deer is wounded. Or sick. If it's really the bàt-l'eau, but I'm not completely sure.

Researcher: It's not easy to know the music. The hunters have to know it, right?

Henri: Well, yeah! You have to know the fanfares…

Researcher: The fanfares, yes.

[14 seconds of silence]

Henri: So… it's this way, I think.

Henri: And, well, there are several kinds of fanfares. There are the so-called circumstance fanfares, which are sounded during the hunt. There is the bien-aller, a classic, which confirms that everything is going well, just as the name indicates.

There's the débuché, there's the bàt-l'eau, there's the compagnie, when the deer being chased is with other deer… Uh… I mentioned the débuché. The deer's head is also sounded sometimes. The dagué, as well as the second head, and so on.

On this hunt, each time we came across other followers, sometimes even isolated riders, everyone seemed rather lost, like they were trying to find where the hunt was; this allowed us to meet a whole range of followers who were able to share with us their reasons for coming to follow the hunt every week.

At the end of the hunt, the hunters explained that the hunt had been stopped because "there were two hunts in one": one part of the crew was hunting in one place, and the other in another place. Part of the pack had followed and attacked a boar and, thus, lost track of the deer's scent. We asked them how this happened, and they mentioned a "problem in the crew": the master did not succeed in holding the pack together and followed a track with only part of the pack, while the huntsman followed another track with the other part of the pack. When, finally, the one part of the pack got very close to the deer and was able to catch it, there were not enough dogs to go at it, and it escaped. One hypothesis emerged for our analysis, that of a kind of two-headed form of governance (bicephalism) of the hunt, which in this case led to a divergence in the organization, which the actors referred to as "two hunts in one." On this occasion, however, the way that we were shadowing the followers did not allow us to fully understand the action as it was taking place.

The followers we shadowed rely on their expertise in sound, tracks, weather, animals, and the forest to imagine the hunt as it unfolds, deduce what might have happened, and make predictions about what could happen. Looking for tracks and interpreting them is at the heart of discussions between followers who share what they have seen/heard/felt with each other and with the people they meet (occasionally with riders whom some know very well) and make a diagnosis, always provisional, of the situation. By sharing these clues and their analyses with us, they introduced us to the vocabulary and even the way of speaking about hunting; they facilitated our access to the complexity of a visual, auditory, and olfactory reading of the hunting action. In so doing, they helped us to penetrate the uniqueness of the hunting world and to follow it by being a little more 'inside' and less 'outside.'

Multi-shadowing: Identifying a variety of phenomena at work

Multi-shadowing allowed us to grasp the diverse facets of a hunt according to the location and the concerns of the followers we were accompanying and to access several flows that make up the organizing: in the following example, for one follower, the hunt means following the pack, while for another follower, the hunt involves finding dogs that went astray. Everyone is connected to the hunt in a different way, has a particular activity, and is linked to the other actors in their own way.

During a roe deer hunt that we followed using two observers at the same time, the same scenario played out: while hunting, part of the pack and crew had headed toward a doe, leaving few riders and dogs to pursue the deer being hunted. But the situation played out differently: after half an hour of splitting and diverging action, those who had gone off on the wrong track realized their mistake and managed to hit the main line of scent again. At the end of the hunt, during the debriefing, the two observers compared what they had grasped of the course of the hunt by reconstructing the sequences of the hunt which were happening in parallel and the followers' interpretations of the events.

One of the observers (#1) shadowed Julie, who is usually a rider but was pregnant at the time and had decided to follow the hunt by car. The other observer (#2) shadowed Sabine, the kennelman's companion, who drove a van and was in charge of recovering any dogs that may have got lost that day. Comparing the two hunting observations with each other made it possible to identify several phenomena that contributed to the temporary split in the hunt. Moreover, through meetings with other followers or hunters, we gained a better understanding of the dangers threatening the organization in terms of safety and how members try to prevent them.

Let us start by taking the point of view of Sabine, who was shadowed by Observer #2. Sabine was away from the center of the action for quite a long time because she was looking for a dog that had gone astray. In so doing, at one point, she clearly identified that several dogs were following a line of scent and that a few riders were following them. It was obviously not the whole pack, and this piqued her interest. She decided to return to the hunt's starting point to find out, going by the sounds, where the action was and understand what was going on. There, we came across another follower, on a bicycle, whom she spoke to, mentioning beforehand that he was very competent and often goes to the woods the morning of the hunt to check for deer. He said he had seen part of the pack heading for the "wrong deer" but had not told the riders because otherwise "it undermines the rules of the game of venery." Sabine, however, decided to look for the riders to inform them of the situation. Then, without mentioning anything else or following the riders, she said we had to go back to look for Coyote, the dog that had gone astray, and we moved away from the center of the action again. So, she set out to search for it in the woods by car and on foot, asking other followers as she went on her quest. While searching for Coyote, she stumbled upon two other dogs and ultimately brought back a total of three. During this search operation, which lasted more than an hour, Sabine spoke about her passion for dogs and how she regularly goes to see them at the kennel. She also explained which clues she used to look for the dogs in a particular spot.

When we returned to the meeting point, with Coyote having been found, the hunt had been over for some time already: the 'honors' ceremony was taking place, which meant the deer had been caught by the pack.

Now, let us take the point of view of Julie, who had been shadowed by Observer #1. While following Julie, Observer #1 was always close to the part of the crew that had stayed on the 'right' track. Julie was following her usual crew from a distance and knew their hunting practices and this part of the forest well. She took the time to tell Observer #1 about the history of the crew, its internal organization, how it operates, and the relationship they have with their followers, which allowed us to increase our knowledge of the context in which the hunt takes place. At one point, she met Sabine, who was accompanied by the other observer, and both (quickly) shared the information they had:

[Discussions in the background]

Julie: But apparently they're pulling back, uh… back to the road, uh…

Sabine: I'm sure they're not going through there… Sébastien, his dogs are crossing the road, and then uh… and then, well […too far away to be understood…] doe, I think they're going through there.

Julie: And … and I have information that says they're pulling back to the road…

Sabine: Well now.

Julie: …that says they're going back again… they could have crossed the road, gone around and come back.

Sabine: Exactly.

Julie: Uh… this is the info I got from Alain.

Sabine: There you go. Alain, in front, he has, uh, three animals, including one […]

Julie: Including one…

Sabine: … that's tired.

Julie: That's it. We've got the same information.

During this hunt, Julie was frequently worried about the way some of the followers were taking risks with their cars and, from her point of view, prone to endangering other followers or dogs: she spoke to them on several occasions to ask them to be more careful. She noted: "The risk is that the deer crosses the road and the cars hit the dogs; that can be very dangerous … The horses can also get smashed up by the cars; it's happened in the past." She explained that this is one of the reasons why the master often gives instructions at the start of the hunt. She further explained that some followers are designated to intervene as far ahead of these situations as possible by placing their vehicles in such a way as to alert other vehicles passing by. In fact, during our observations, we passed the cars of followers who had parked on the side of the road, put a flashing light on the roof of the car, and went out along the road to signal to cars on the road.

At one point, Julie reported that everything had been quiet for almost half an hour, wondered whether the hunt was over, and returned to the starting point. There, we found all the riders, still on horseback. They had caught the roe deer. Julie called out to a rider, who told her: "part of the pack changed lines at one point, but we managed to get them all together again, and the deer that we were hunting was already very tired, so it was over pretty quickly." Julie tried to find out more by asking around. Based on what she found out, along with her earlier observations, she concluded that there was a split along the way between the two crews, who did not interpret the sounds of the horns in the same way.

During the debriefing, after cross-checking the information collected by the two observers on this same hunt, we identified several phenomena influencing the dynamics of divergence and convergence during the hunt: the unicity (or not) of the way the hunt is managed; the shared competence (or not) regarding one of the elements that are a crucial marker in open-air hunting, namely how to interpret the sounds of the horns, which are the only means of remote communication; the followers' choice to share (or not) information with the riders; the coexistence of several circles of the organization with, in the center, the riders and the pack, and around, the followers who are invested (or not) in preserving the key resources of the hunt. We were able to observe different methods of co-constructing the hunt that link the followers and hunters to each other. We saw the different ways in which the followers contribute to the organization of the hunt. However, the observation methods did not allow us to record the actions of the followers over time and, therefore, throughout the hunt; we were not in a position to assess whether particular actions, for example, sharing information here and going to look for a dog there, happened at the same time or not. Based on this experience, we decided to time our observations going forward in order to better situate in time the observation sequences when shared after the fact.

Timed multi-shadowing: Accurately reconstructing the different sequences

Doing simultaneous timed two-person observations allowed us to have a common reference point in time, as we were aware that we had been operating in a space where we had no such reference point. After observation sequences, we were able to share our data by saying, for example, "at that moment, where I was, this is what was happening to the followers that I was shadowing." In this way, we could precisely identify the sequences within the action as a whole and better understand the various roles that the followers play. This allowed us to connect the data collected while preserving the dynamics of the hunt.

In the case of the red deer hunt, Observer #1 shadowed Bernard, an experienced follower whom the crew has assigned many of the attributes of a hunter, despite him not being a rider. He carries a whip and a horn and has a 'pass' authorizing him to access by car the unauthorized roads. He explained to us that the 'pass' grants him access to roads that are usually closed by the order of the National Forests Office. It is a precious permit handed out at the beginning of the hunting season and taken back at the end of the season. It allows some followers to move around much more freely inside the forest to improve their conditions for following the hunt and to increase their odds of seeing animals. Bernard is presented to us as one of the pillars of the hunt, especially because of the help he provides to the crew not only before, when he goes to the woods in the morning to spot and locate potential prey, but also during, when he can sound the horn and, thus, share key information with the hunters, and after the hunt, when he helps in the kennel. Observer #2 shadowed Emilie and Michel, a retired couple who have been following the hunt as a family for more than three decades, regularly organize meals with other followers, and make an effort to maintain the social bonds between the hunting enthusiasts.

The hunt started a little over an hour ago, but it does not seem like the dogs have started yet. Then, around 11:00 a.m., Bernard exclaims "the hunt is on!" by cross-checking several pieces of information he has just gathered: the riders are at such and such a place, the bikers have heard the starting sound, he sees the bramble moving. It is 11:20 a.m., and the hounds have been going for 10 min. Emilie and Michel draw the same conclusion but without witnessing it directly – another follower has passed the information onto them.

On both sides, everyone moves gradually to be in the right place at the right time, to see the deer and the pack at work. To this end, Bernard has taken somewhat roundabout routes; the forest is dense, and he follows the track by ear, sometimes cutting the engine to hear better. At 11:45 a.m., he stops and gets out of the car and shouts "tally-ho," while Observer #1 exclaims "that's it, I saw it!" So, Bernard managed to get close to the prey, and by shouting "tally-ho," he informed the crew where he was, in a place that looked deserted. The excitement is at its peak and shared by the researcher who 'saw it.' In the meantime, the dogs cross the path, and Bernard responds to a rider's question by saying that the prey is only 2 min ahead. During this time, Michel is on a paved road with many followers around: after having turned around quite a bit, he concludes that "it's gonna be over soon." He then decides to take a break, and a certain boredom sets in because the action of the hunt is not particularly visible.

Between 11:35 a.m. and 11:45 a.m.: being in the right place at the right time, or not…	
Observer #1 (shadowed Bernard)	Observer #2 (shadowed Emilie and Michel)
[Sound of a car door opening] *[20 seconds of silence]* *Bernard: Tally-ho* *Researcher: Oh, I saw it!* *Evelyne: That's it* *[The engine starts]* *Researcher: I saw it! [laughs]* *[Dogs baying]* *Researcher: Him, too!* *Bernard: Oh!* *[The engine stops]* *[Noise of car doors]* *[Dogs' baying continues]* *Researcher: So, actually, I saw it crossing the road… we'll park a little further…* *[The horns sound]* *Researcher: So, my fellow crewsman is sounding his horn* *[The horn sounds continuously]* *Bernard: [shouting] theeeeere… we have to get over there!* *[baying]* *[shouts ring out several times: theeeeere]* *Men, shouting: up there!! up there!! we have to go through the back!!! there! there! go go go go go!!!!* *[car door slams]* *Man #3: I got it, I got it.* *Men: Let's go!* *Bernard: Yeah! Bigoré Bigoré Bigoré Bigoré Bigoré Bigoré… no, he's got two minutes!* *Man in the distance (a rider): Did you see him?* *Bernard: Y'know, I saw him very quickly… he's gorgeous!* *[dogs baying]* *Researcher: So, now all the dogs are crossing the road, the rider asked if it has a head start, not two minutes, I saw him real quick.*	*Michel: Yeah, well, let's get out, it's gonna be over soon.* *[Seat belts unbuckled]* *Michel: OK, you'll have to be on the lookout over there… we're gonna have something to eat [laughs] We've got what we need.* *Researcher: They're setting up the picnic.* *[Cars passing]* *[Bike horn]* *[Sound of hoofs]* *Woman #7: If there aren't too many people, it will go through there.* *Researcher: There are 7, 8 bikes and a few cars side by side on the road and blocking the way, so some followers say it's not clear that the deer will pass because there may be too many cars [Dogs baying] the dogs are coming … some of the riders in the forest …* *Woman #8: You're in the way! You're in the way!* *Researcher: A follower is being yelled at for having her car in the way.* *[The horns sound in the distance, dogs baying]* *[Hoofs]* *[Horse breathing]* *[Dogs' baying continues]* *Researcher: Everybody's staring at a place in the forest, oh yes, indeed, we can see the dogs in the distance.* *[Men shouting]* *[Background chatter]* *Man #31: The dogs are coming back.* *[Sound of hoofs]* *[Dogs baying in the distance]* *Researcher: Looks like it's going the other way; at least, the bikes are going the other way. The riders are going the other way, too.* *[Sound of hoofs fades away]* *Woman #9: Well, we got here early, we got here, I told you we didn't have to, uh, go to the fountain, he'll come there; well, you see, he came there, didn't he?* *Michel: He's over there now, OK, he didn't cross the road.*

Bernard continues his search, mostly staying close to the hunt, while Michel and Emilie converse for about 30 min with their fellow followers before deciding to move on. Then, while trying to park along one of the roads, Michel is stopped by a follower on foot, Florence, who signals for him to stop. When we get out of the car, she explains that the deer has just crossed the road, but the dogs have not arrived yet. Florence is looking for a 'volcelest,' a fresh hoofprint that the dogs can sniff when they arrive, to help them stay on track. As we look up, we see several followers are actually bent over on the side of the road looking for the deer's track and moving cautiously to avoid erasing it with their shoes. They look, but they do not find any. Grumbling, Florence comments: "The cars drove past here and cut the track."

At 12:25 p.m., Bernard exclaims "Well, come on, we're packing up, it's over!" and explains that the deer has entered a private property. The crew is not allowed to enter, so we have to bring the dogs and the riders back to the starting point. A few minutes later, the information reaches Michel and Emilie, but Michel thinks we still have to wait because the deer could come out on the other side of the field. Actually, the hunt is over.

By having several people follow while tracking the exact time of their activity, we were able to identify: the different places involved in the hunt and the connections between them; the diversity of the roles and how they fit together; the strong moments around which the core of the action is defined and how the different participants connect to it or not. This allowed us to show the great heterogeneity of the different participants' involvement in the hunt, linked, in particular, to their distance from the action and to the fact of not being able or not knowing how to interpret the sound signals and not having the information required to know how far along the hunt is. This makes it possible to highlight the great range of obligations and expectations regarding the same organization and, ultimately, to identify the different flows in the organizing, their dynamics, and the moments when they cross and link with each other, thereby contributing to the coordination of the organization of the 'hunt.'

Contributions and discussion

In this section, we will highlight our contributions concerning the multi-shadowing and timed multi-shadowing methods that we have proposed in this article. We will discuss their specific contributions to helping gain access to the spatial and temporal dimension of organizing, the advantages they offer regarding access to organizing compared with other observation methods (from the perspective of the relationship to the field and to the data), and the specific modes of reflexivity and access to saturation that they require.

Multi-shadowing to capture organizing in time and space

Through the simultaneity of the flows

The 'ethnographic turn' highlights the growing importance of observation and ethnographic methods when analyzing modern forms of organization, which are characterized by their temporal and spatial fragmentation (Grosjean & Groleau, 2013; Rouleau et al., 2014). Access to simultaneity is a key to understanding organizing in such contexts (Czarniawska, 2007, 2008, 2014, 2018). Multi-shadowing, such as we propose, fits into this context since it mobilizes several participants' situated points of view via several observers simultaneously carrying out the observation – sometimes even by timing themselves, which later enables them to work on sequences that happened at the same time.

We have shown that multi-shadowing allows access to the synchronous or nonsynchronous character of actions, especially in the timed version, and to the connections between the different processes that make up the organizing. Our approach to multi-shadowing focuses on the situated perspective, in line with the work of Vásquez et al. (2012) and Vásquez (2013), but multiplies it, since the goal is to understand different actors' contributions to organizing and to establish the connections between these contributions by observing the different flows and the possible connections between the data.

Through the spatial dimension

Regarding the relationship to space, shadowing by its very nature emphasizes mobility (McDonald, 2005) and, thus, movement through space. However, the importance of the spatial aspect can vary depending on the different forms of shadowing. Some shadowing approaches draw on a tradition of research in urban sociology and geography (see Appendix 2) tied to the inhabitant's or the traveler's relationship to space (Augoyard, 1979; Raulet-Croset & Borzeix, 2014; Thibaud, 2001; Thomas, 2010). They seek to capture the crossing of invisible borders when there is movement from one place to another because of the way the observed person is moving through space. Multi-shadowing allows simultaneous access to several of the organization's constituent spaces and puts the connection between the participants, their positioning in these spaces, and the way they are mobilized as resources for the activity at the heart of the analysis.

For other multi-sited methods such as multi-sited and global team ethnography, space is only one component – the spot where the activity takes place. These methods, whose goal is to locate a phenomenon spread out over several spaces, help researchers position themselves in these spaces to gain access to the entire phenomenon. Multi-shadowing goes further: through the detailed and mobile observation that it enables, it puts the participants' very relationship to space, as well as the way in which this multi-situated relationship is a fundamental part of the organization, at the center of the analysis. In the search for even more detailed insights, timed multi-shadowing makes it possible to identify the temporary connections that are created – thanks to the actors – between the organization's fragmented spaces as the action unfolds.

These contributions of multi-shadowing are particularly relevant when it comes to gaining access to organizing in organizations that develop a strong link to spaces or include fragmented spaces. This dimension is particularly important for the analysis of territorial (Maréchal et al., 2013) and spatially anchored organizations (Dale & Burrel, 2008; Van Marrewijk & Yanow, 2010).

Multi-shadowing and the researcher's relationship with the field: Gaining access to organizing by increasing the number of situated observations

Observation methods can sometimes create strain and fatigue on the field, especially when observation takes precedence over participation (Soulé, 2007) and it is not possible to blend into the role of participant. Compared with other solo observation methods that also weigh heavily on the field because they are visible, it seems that multi-shadowing has the advantage of allowing the speedy collection of several pieces of information from different points of view, which makes it possible to follow several flows of the organizing. The enhanced collection of information in a limited amount of time has the advantage of making the research more sustainable for the field. From the researcher's point of view, this limits the risk, as the researcher perceives it, of not shadowing the 'right' actor and, therefore, not being able to 'see' the activity in depth. By contrast, however, researchers do not blend into the setting as in the case of participant observations or ethnographic approaches. Thus, the visible presence of an entire team of researchers may prove to be too much, especially for a field that is limited in size.

The relationship with the field can also be considered in terms of how the research is co-constructed. Shadowing methods, from the moment the researcher depends on the people being observed and is guided by them to unknown spaces and to understand what is happening, give the observed person a certain amount of power in the construction of the research. The status of the researcher is different in participant observation, or observant participation, when the researcher becomes or is already an expert, which increases his/her power when interacting with those being observed. Vásquez et al. (2012) call to mind the '[peculiar] twosome' specific to shadowing, which was first put forward by Czarniawska (2008) and emphasize that this method places the observed person's point of view at its center. Understanding the connections between the actors, which is fundamental to understanding organizing, also depends on the observed person's explanations. They are the experts in the field: what is at stake? What is transmitted when a follower crosses paths with a rider? This can take the form of a few gestures, a few indications that are then explained to the observer, but he/she would not have understood them without assistance from the person being observed. The observed person, therefore, co-constructs access to organizing, as well. In this respect, by increasing the number of people observed, multi-shadowing also has the advantage of reducing the dependence of an ill-informed researcher on a single actor: co-construction is based on a multitude of peculiar twosomes.

Finally, it is important to analyze the role of the affective dimension in the relationship between the observer and the person being observed during shadowing and, therefore, during multi-shadowing because this relationship is a central component of the method. Whether we are talking about the search for 'sympathetic proximity' (Gilliat-Ray, 2011) or almost intimate proximity (Vásquez et al., 2012), the act of following the same person for several days – during nearly all of their professional activities – creates a bond and allows even greater access to the situated point of view. Several researchers being present on sometimes complex terrains makes it possible to take a step back and reflect during the observation. It also allows for each other researchers to be more detached when comparing their understanding of the actors' different contributions to the organizing. As in any team ethnography, another role played by the presence of the collective under observation is to reassure each other and to discuss difficult moments in their relationship with the field, even when the action is in progress. Jarzabkowski et al. (2015, p. 19) stress the importance of 'emotional sharing,' which enables the researchers to feel less isolated and to share experiences, including negative ones, about their relationship with the field. These emotional moments can also be useful for analysis, insofar as they sometimes allow to identify connections or contradictions in the organizing. We will return to this point during the discussion of data processing in the following subsection.

Multi-shadowing and the relationship to data: Gaining access to organizing by observing the flows and how they are intertwined

Multi-shadowing makes it possible to collect very large amounts of data, but are these data relevant? Is the goal simply to collect a lot of data or to collect data that are relevant to the research? How does one strike a balance?

Because of the large amount of data that is collected at such a quick pace, multi-shadowing is prone to face the same criticism often leveled at qualitative methodologies providing material that is certainly valuable but sometimes incomplete and heterogeneous (Dumez, 2013, 2016) or collected in a way sometimes described as impressionistic, for example, collecting what seems interesting at the time but not in a systematic way.

It seems to us that multi-shadowing, especially when it is timed, avoids these pitfalls, at least in part, thanks to the use of data series (Dumez, 2013, 2016), which have a certain completeness and homogeneity to them. By creating these series, the researcher conducts the observation throughout the planned duration and can produce very comprehensive data. The researcher does not halt the observation but is able to collect the data according to a time-based connecting thread in a given episode. The different trails followed by the team of researchers form a series of data that is complete because it covers the planned time episode and is homogeneous because it follows the time-based connecting threads of the organizing. The data are first processed by comparing the written notes from the 10-min sequences, which are different instances of shadowing that were carried out simultaneously. Doing so makes it possible to identify passages that fit together. These passages will be worth considering because they help to identify moments when different actors inside the organization act synchronously or not and converge toward the same goal or not, thus making it possible to shed light on the organization's processes of cohesion or disintegration.

In addition, McDonald and Simpson (2014) point out that data collection includes selectivity. They liken shadowing to a method that involves pointing a light, such as a miner's helmet light: the researcher sees what the observed person/the miner, who is a very good data selector, shows him/her. According to them, "[s]electivity is determined by the actors' movement through time and space" (McDonald & Simpson, 2014, p. 11). From a similar perspective but specifically focused on tracking the storyline and not the actors, Journé (2008) explains that this kind of following prioritizes the data's 'relevance' rather than their completeness and says the choice is up to the researcher. Multi-shadowing produces a sort of in-between situation. Each researcher explains what interests them and can ask questions, and the observed person decides about the path and which elements of the activity he or she wants to show. The researcher and the observed person share a desire for the data to be relevant and for the data to be complete. Sometimes, some of the choices are made by the observed person, such as the paths to be followed, while others are made together with the researcher by jointly deciding what should be highlighted in the research (Vásquez et al., 2012). Thanks to multi-shadowing, one can then compare different points of view with each other and, thus, observe the organizing through connections or nonconnections over time.

Multi-shadowing, especially if it is timed, makes it possible to combine several simultaneous data collections from the same organizing episode. Comparing them with each other sheds light on observations that might remain invisible in a more classical multi-ethnography that does not try to look at the data by closely following a time-based connecting thread. Thus, our approach made us realize that the dogs get lost *during* the hunt and that there can be a difference between the official end and the real end of the hunt. In the analysis of the data, we can also look to the emotions experienced at the same time, which the researcher can verbalize and are recorded. This sometimes reveals that the spaces are not connected: for example, one researcher shows a strong emotion because he/she is in the middle of the hunt, while at the same time, another researcher seems completely disconnected from the main action and does not show the same kind of emotion at all. Thus, the proximity to or distance from the center of the action is identified, which helps to better understand how each actor contributes to the outcome.

Finally, it seems to us that multi-shadowing makes it easier to frame the data collected in time and space when the terrain offers no *a priori* frame of reference, such as walls, procedures, plans, etc. In the case of the hunt, which takes place in a very open environment, multi-shadowing helps to 'frame' the observations by providing reference points in terms of space, that is, from the paths of the people being shadowed, in terms of time if shadowing is timed, and regarding the connections between actors through their exchanges or even disagreements. Multi-shadowing yields paths that serve as reference points to represent the action in these three dimensions.

Reflexivity and saturation in multi-shadowing: Gaining a better understanding of organizing by combining reflexivity in the observer–observed duo and reflexivity inside the team

Reflexivity in multi-shadowing involves not only methods of reflexivity specific to simple shadowing but also those pertaining to team ethnography.

In simple shadowing, reflexivity is essential when it comes to the method and the data collected, especially because of the empathetic nature of the link between the researcher and the observed person (Vásquez, 2013). It develops, in part, during the observation, thanks to the interactions between the observer and the observed person – for example, when the observed corrects a misunderstanding or provides additional information. In multi-shadowing, reflexivity uses the peculiar twosome of simple shadowing (Czarniawska, 2008; Vásquez, 2013), where discussions between the observer and the observed person produce a first round of reflexivity.

Moreover, as with team observation methods, simultaneously having several researchers in the field makes it possible to have reflexive sessions at the end of multi-shadowing episodes or even later to compare notes and recordings. This can also be done by using time sequences as part of timed multi-shadowing. Thus, researchers rely on methods of reflexivity similar to those identified by Erickson and Stull (1998) in team ethnography: having collective discussions on the same issue in which everyone is involved, sharing and working on individual observation notes, or even holding regular debriefing sessions. Jarzabkowski et al. (2015) point out that reflexivity in team research leads to collective sense-making processes that are very different from those obtained through solo research. Beyond validating the data collected and interpreting them, we observe the emergence of a first collective analysis. In the same way, in multi-shadowing, there is not only a discussion about interpreting the data in a reflexive form but also the preparation of the first analyses.

For different observation methods, the traditional view has been that saturation occurs when adding a new observation no longer provides interesting elements for the research problem, in line with the proposal by Strauss and Corbin (1990). Depending on the observation method, saturation can be reached in different ways: by extending the observation's duration in the case of participant observation, observant participation, solo or team ethnography, by increasing the number of shadowings, or by increasing the number of spaces where one is present in the case of multi-sited and global ethnography. With regard to timed or untimed multi-shadowing, saturation may be reached by increasing the number of researchers present during an observation sequence, which would increase the odds of finding links between spaces and connections between actors that reveal how the organization works. However, this method of reaching saturation seems unrealistic because there would be too many researchers out in the field. It seems preferable to reach saturation by increasing the number of multi-shadowing episodes and by modifying the types of actors who are followed, which might lead to access to more of the flows that make up the organizing process.

Conclusion

In this paper, we laid out how we used the multi-shadowing method by having more than one researcher shadow several actors on the same field. We studied the contributions of this method in depth by comparing it with other better-known methods of observation, including having a solo researcher conduct the shadowing.

Shadowing is known both for providing access to organizing (Czarniawska, 2008, 2018) and for its situated aspect – by 'seeing' from the point of view of the actor being observed, it provides access to sometimes unexpected realities (Gilliat-Ray, 2011; Vásquez et al., 2012). Multi-shadowing makes it possible to penetrate the heart of organizations from different angles and to observe connections and disconnections between the organization's different actors by giving access to an understanding of how events unfold in space and time. Timed multi-shadowing also makes it possible to combine several simultaneous collections of data during the same organizing episode and then to compare points of view with each other without having to return to the field too frequently and thereby potentially putting a strain on the field.

Rolled out in the context of hunting with hounds, this method allowed us to grasp and understand the mechanisms that can contribute to synchronizing or desynchronizing the hunt. The context is marked by uncertainty and the absence of reference points, in particular for spatial orientation. We were also able to explore the difficulties regarding implementation. For example, because of the availability of the actors to be followed and the researchers' choice of situations to observe, it was impossible to always shadow the same followers from one hunt to the next. We also mostly conducted multi-shadowing in pairs. Thus, multi-shadowing requires a sufficiently large team of researchers and that the observed individuals are either always the same ones or at least relevant to the purpose of the observation.

The multi-shadowing method also offers access to the relationship between activities and the different spaces in which they take place. This is particularly important in the case of distributed organizations spread out across several spaces, as well as organizations that develop a specific relationship to space, which becomes a resource for their activities. Thus, multi-shadowing links the temporal and spatial dimensions with each other, since it allows synchronies and dyschronies (Alter, 2003, 2016) to be seen through the situated points of view of the actors being tracked.

In the case reviewed here, we used a multi-shadowing approach to study organized collective actions that lasted a few hours, were subject to precise rules, and coordinated many identifiable players within a given space in a situation that repeats several times a year. To us, this field seemed to be close to organizations that have to manage unforeseen events (unique situations inside a given perimeter) and recur constantly, such as situations handled by the police or emergency services, where it is a question of understanding, from a situated point of view, what each actor brings to the collective and how he/she connects to others (where and when). For this type of organization, the multi-shadowing method can be particularly useful to apprehend the organizing. These organizations can be characterized as ones where the joining/sharing of space and simultaneity plays an important role in reaching the performance. We also think that this type of method is worth considering in the case of organizations that are not easily approachable. Multi-shadowing can be done with all types of actors, including those who have a weaker voice than others or are more marginal but provide access to the center of the action because they may coordinate with actors who play a more central role. They do not feel threatened or destabilized by the research – on the contrary, they may even feel valued. They offer a point of entry into the organizational phenomenon by giving a peek behind the scenes, and in so doing, provide access to their own perspective on 'their' action, and possible access – even if it is partial – to the actions of others.

Lastly, we note that while multi-shadowing allows detailed access to the threads of organizing, it comes at a heavy cost in terms of the number of researchers mobilized, time spent, and burden on the field. These factors limit the organizational scale at which multi-shadowing can be used, whether it is the spatial scale of the organization or the duration of the observed organizing episode. One avenue for methodological innovation could be to consider how to combine the finesse of a multi-shadowing analysis with its use at a broader organizational scale. This would allow the analysis of organizing for cases of multi-sited organizational functioning or organizational transformation on a larger scale.

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Appendices 1-4