Organizing solidarity in public space: Non-Profit Organizations' practices towards the homeless

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Résumé :

Buildings of organizations establish static boundaries, which delimit a physical area (Stephenson et al., 2020) and private space. Then how do organizations manage to exist and structure their activities without offices or buildings, precisely as in public space? This paper tends to explore this question in the context of the city of Lyon, where many outreach organizations are seeking to help homeless people in public space. It contributes to the literature by demonstrating how socio-material and bodily practices of volunteers produce boundary and mobility and how these practices create organizational spaces in public space. Finally, the discussion explores the roles of boundary work (Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010) and mobility in organizing in public space.

Mots-clés : public space, boundary work, materiality, homeless, solidarity

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INTRODUCTION

Buildings of organizations establish static boundaries, which delimit a physical area (Stephenson et al., 2020) and private space. An organization's building provides "prestige, visibility, and a sense of collective identity"(Leslie, 2011) and "strong material anchor" (Monteiro & Nicolini, 2015, p.64). While it can express "espoused corporate goals" (Dale, 2005) (Dale, 2005, p.666), it organizes "the flows of communication, knowledge, and movement"(Kornberger & Clegg, 2004, p.1108) or workers; thus, buildings greatly structure the activities of organizations. The function of physical space as a structuring element of organizations is all the more relevant with the growing trend of telework (Sewell and Taskin, 2015), where not only homes but also cafes and coworking spaces (Fabbri, 2016) become the stage for organizational work. However, while telework is now an increasingly common way of organising work, it is difficult to imagine the long-term absence of corporate offices for reasons of legitimacy (de Vaujany & Vaast, 2014).

Then how do organizations manage to exist and structure their activities without offices or buildings, precisely as in public space? This paper tends to explore this question in the context of the city of Lyon, where many outreach organizations are seeking to help homeless people in public space. This question echoes very recent work on organizations and the street, which highlights the importance of the street as a place and a means of organization (Cnossen et al., 2020). Indeed, one can note the large number of organizations present in the public space: cultural events ((Islam et al., 2008; Munro & Jordan, 2013) ; the Police (Machin & Marie, 2011; Courpasson & Monties, 2017), firemen, street cleaners (Hughes et al, 2016), postal workers (Geddes, 2005), and many others. However, despite the large number of organizations present in the public space, there is almost no work that questions the material and physical mechanisms necessary to organize in the public space.

This article therefore questions the static and tangible aspect of organizational boundaries by taking as an empirical context the activities of outreach organizations in the public space. It analyses what the absence of doors, walls, and physical borders (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013) produces on organizations. It aims to show the mechanisms by which these

outreach organizations manage to recreate organizational boundaries that are not materialized by the tangible walls of a building. I show how they succeed in recreating organizational boundaries through their sociomaterial and corporeal practices that allow them to implement their solidarity actions.

I therefore develop different boundary practices and propose a material and corporeal perspective of boundary work (Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010). Thus, I show how boundary work allows the creation of new organizational spaces, which offer a 'spatial bubble', a new stage for the outreach activities. The paper is anchored in a perspective of space as practice and contributes to highlight the fact that boundaries are dynamic, negotiable and mobile. It seeks to contribute to other organizations that are present in the public space and that manage to organize themselves through their materiality.

This paper is composed according to the following four parts. Following a brief literature review, the second part presents the methodology and the context of homelessness in Lyon (France). The third section provides the findings and analyzes the practice of solidarity actions. After presenting the temporality and the strong emotional work involved with solidarity action, I demonstrate how socio-material and bodily practices of volunteers produce boundary and mobility, essential to the organizing of the NPOs, and how these practices create organizational spaces in public space. Finally, the discussion explores the roles of boundary work and mobility in organizing in public space.

1. ORGANIZING IN THE CITY

The literature on space and organization has mainly focused on organizational space, *i.e.* space owned and framed by the organization, which exercises control on it. Dale and Burrell (2008) have however opened a stream of research on the « organization of space » in opposition to the « space of organization »: the organization of space across and beyond organizations in opposition to internal spaces of organizations (2008). Following their work and building on the work of Henri Lefebvre (1974; 1991), a few authors in organizations studies have recently focused on a broader scale than organizational space: the scale of the city. For instance, Lacerda studies power relations through space between the Brazilian state and drug dealers in the favela of Mucuripe (Lacerda, 2018). Zhang explores the dynamics of urban space in the city of Hongzhou, China (Zhang, 2018) while Louise Nash focuses on the City of London, the symbolic and material meaning of the place and how it is performed by the rhythms of the

workers (Nash, 2018). Ofer focused on the relationship between urban space and democratization in Spain under Franco's regime until the 1980s (Ofer, 2018).

Lefebvre claims space to be a social concept in opposition to a neutral object occupied by tangible things with no social relations. Lefebvre asserts, "Social space is a social product": space is therefore constructed by social relations and every society produces its own space. Lefebvre invites us to perceive space as an entirety (*entièreté*), a whole, where every spatial relation is connected to the totality of space. Building up on the concept of entirety of space, I advance it is relevant to perceive the organization in connection to the city: what kind of space does the organization produces in the city?

In addition, it should be noted that in the public space, the organization lacks in concrete organizational boundaries, which are useful for organizing. Studies on organizations have highlighted that specific spaces can accommodate organizational activities thanks to their boundaries, which allow them to set up specific activities within them. Boundaries thus delimit distinct organizational spaces, distinguish what is included or excluded and thus impact organizing (Spencer-Brown, 1997, Weintfurtner and Seidl, 2018). For example, Hirst and Humphreys (2013) highlighted, in a study on the spatial reconfiguration of headquarters, how the physical boundaries set up between the headquarter space and a remote storage space could symbolically improve the new image of the organization.

However, boundaries are not only physical and tangible. As Hernes (2004) points out, there are several categories of boundaries: physical, mental and social. Tangible boundaries make it possible to control access to a particular place (Hernes, 2004), while social and symbolic boundaries determine the degree of inclusion and membership of actors in a specific space. In addition, other studies have focused on the individual roles of boundaries. For example, Mair et al. (2012) describes how members of an urban community create cultural and geographical boundaries through their discourses to distinguish themselves from the rest of society. Other studies highlight the action that boundaries produce within a closed space in terms of interaction between members, such as what can happen within the closed space and why an event can only occur in a closed space (Pollock & Williams, 2015; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010)

2. RESEARCH METHOD: SOLIDARITY TOWARDS THE HOMELESS IN THE CITY OF LYON

2.1. THE CITY OF LYON AND THE CONTEXT OF HOMELESSNESS

Lyon is located at a geographical crossroads of France, north of the natural corridor of the Rhône Valley, which extends from Lyon to Marseille. Located between the Massif Central to the west and the Alpine massif to the east, the city of Lyon occupies a strategic position in the north-south circulation in Europe. Lyon became a very commercial city and a leading financial center during the Renaissance. Its economic prosperity has been driven successively by silk, then by the emergence of industries such as textiles, chemicals and more recently, by the image industry. In recent years, its geographical location has also conferred a strategic place of passage for migrants: located near the Alps and the Italian boundary, many migrants pass through Lyon before reaching the rest of France. Recently, the homeless population in Lyon has become more international - Roma, Albanian, Sub-Saharan African communities among others - and I have observed that this could lead to spatial conflicts with other precarious populations, such as French homeless people, who have been living there for longer periods.

Thus, my ethnographic work is part of a particular context: that of growing precariousness, where the number of homeless people in France has increased by 50% since 2001 (INSEE report of 2012). However, since 2012, no statistics on homelessness have been compiled despite the increasing and alarming demand for places in emergency accommodation. The head of the Social emergency service (Samu) of Lyon told me that today it is estimated that there are 2660 homeless people in Lyon (among 1.6 million inhabitants) and, based on the number of calls, the demand for emergency accommodation has increased tenfold since 2010. In the meanwhile, the institutional context of budget cuts by the French government has led to a reduction in public subsidies for these non-profit organizations. As a result, these actors face many organizational and strategic issues. How do these organizations manage to mobilize, with increased pressure and reduced resources? How do they manage to sustain their social actions in this difficult context? These are the questions I asked myself during this qualitative work, bearing in mind that these issues had implications for their ways of organizing themselves in the city's space.

2.2. AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STYLE OF RESEARCH: FROM A COLLECTIVE TO 24 NPO

My research began in March 2018, when I joined a collective that brings together non-profit organizations from Lyon in contact with the homeless. I joined this group as a representative of an organization: a shelter for homeless people that provides shared accommodation with young professionals. I had already done a year of ethnographic and volunteer work in this structure, and wishing to compare this organization to others, I took the opportunity of the collective's meeting. The "*Collectif de rue"* is a collective of about thirty non-profit organizations whose objective is to help people living on the streets. The purpose of the collective is to allow organizations to meet every two to three months so that they can coordinate with each other. The organizations then communicate to others their places and days of solidarity actions. I participated in five meetings of the collective, during which I was able to observe coordination between the organizations but also power struggles around the territory and the spatio-temporal space of the City: some organizations - in particular those that initiated the collective - wanted to prevent other organizations from coming on their territory.

The field then consisted of ethnographic style work with 24 different NPOs dealing with homelessness; a total of 112 hours of participating observations (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1998) during the solidarity actions of the NPOs and 17 interviews were collected. Ethnographic work consists in studying the culture of an organization and its representation in a spatio-temporal context, i.e. the practices produced by interactions between people and the meaning given to these practices by these same people (Van Maanen, 2011). The objective for me was to participate fully as a volunteer in outreach work (mobile tours in the city by foot or by car to meet homeless people) or distributions. I took notes on my phone very quickly during the action and especially after - during the debriefing of the evening between the volunteers. Then, when I came home in the evening, I made voice memos to be able to detail the evening as finely as possible.

As soon as I could, I asked for an interview with one or several people at a key position in the organization (the director, founder, etc.) after the participant observation, in order to discuss about what I had seen and especially what the people had told me during the outreach or the distribution. Indeed, some topics are not spontaneously mentioned in interviews (violence by beneficiaries, conflicts with other organizations, difficulties as well); it was therefore easier for me to address them after one or two observations and to escape from a formatted and smooth speech that often NPOs are making. In addition, from May 2019, during my interviews, I asked

the interviewees to draw me the paths on a map of Lyon that the organization used to follow during their outreach work.

The data collected were of several kinds: first, notes and recordings of 117 hours of participating observations during the solidarity actions and meetings of the street group; second, 17 interviews; third, about thirty photographs taken by myself during the solidarity actions (such as material arrangements of organizations in the public space, volunteer postures, sleeping places of the homeless when they were not there). For ethical reasons, I was not comfortable with the idea of taking pictures of the homeless people; that is why I also used pictures posted by the organizations themselves on their social networks, some of which are very numerous. For an overview of the different organizations involved, see Table 2 in the Appendix.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. ORGANIZING SOLIDARITY: THE TEMPORAL AND EMOTIONAL PRACTICES OF NPOS

The activities of these NPOs consist in providing assistance to the homeless or any precarious person in the city of Lyon. Their activities could be described as solidarity initiatives (Daskalaski and Kokkinidis, 2017). Their solidarity actions are both material and immaterial. Material assistance meets the most basic needs of a homeless person: hot drinks, water; food: hot meals, sandwiches, cans to cook, unsold consumables donated by supermarkets; hygienic products: soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, razor, sanitary towels and tampons, diapers and baby milk; clothes, underwear, shoes, coats, blankets, sleeping bags, tents, books... This is a non-exhaustive list, but includes most of the products distributed by the NPOs. It reflects the diversity of the needs of homeless people, which vary depending on the season (the temperature range can range from -12° to +45° Celsius in Lyon) and according to the very diverse audience: men, women, young people (15-25 years), babies and children.

On the other hand, NPOs provide intangible support to the homeless: listening, compassionate communication (Miller, 2007), orientation to institutional structures or other NPOs and sometimes, mobilization for housing when possible. This aid, which is more invisible than material aid, is in fact much more important. Some actors even explained to me that material help is only a pretext to establish a contact with the street person who is isolated and allow a social connection.

The temporality of solidarity practices

Before showing how these practices of solidarity are rooted in space, I will discuss in this section how solidarity is temporally embedded in my context. First, solidarity is an ephemeral practice and occurs in public space (Raulet-Croset, 2013, Majchrzak et al. 2007, Lanzara, 1983), lasts between two and six hours and has a beginning and an end. Secondly, it is a practice that is repeated over time, which is routinized (Maaninen-olsson and Müllern, 2009; Howard-Grenville, 2005) or even ritualized. A solidarity action always begins with preparation: loading the truck that will make the outreach, preparing the meal or sandwiches, setting up the equipment (table, benches, chairs) for the distributions. Then it takes place. Finally, it ends for most NPOs with a debriefing time, which is a time of conviviality where volunteers share a drink or a meal. This moment is essential: it serves as an outlet for volunteers during difficult evenings; it builds loyalty among new volunteers and helps to improve the organization of upcoming evenings.

These different stages, pre- and post- solidarity action, are generally held in another place than the solidarity action: in the NPO's building, on a sidewalk or car park, at a volunteer's house, in a bar... Sometimes for some NPOs, the debriefing takes place where the distribution happened, but the distinction with the distribution period is clearly marked: volunteers have cleared up the tables; they stand in a circle and not facing the public, they have removed their vests. This distinction between pre-and post-solidarity action, and solidarity action itself can be interpreted in the light of a Goffmanian perspective (1959). Goffman (1959, 1966) developed the concepts of "front stage" and "backstage" to talk about individuals' social interactions and analyze how the place where individuals operate impacts their actions and behaviors. The theatrical metaphor makes sense in this case since on the stage of their solidarity action, volunteers are in a performance where they wear a jacket that distinguishes them from the crowd, and where their whole body is turned towards the beneficiaries in welcoming and listening. What is interesting is how some NPOs have established clear boundaries between the stage and the backstage, while others do not make this distinction:

> *"We go home, we "evacuate" by debriefing the marauding on the parking lot of the dance house. As Claude tells me later, when I ask her why we didn't wait to be in the Red Cross room and why we did it in the parking lot of the dance house, she tells me that it was a way to evacuate outside the room, so that it stays outside" (Field notes, Red Cross, 25.06.2018)*
>
> *"Once the distribution is complete, after the tables have been tidied up, and while welcoming the last beneficiaries who are late, the volunteers set up the meals they have brought for them: bricks, cupcakes, nutella pancakes... for the break of the fast (we are*

in the middle of Ramadan). They all start to circle around the tiny little table that you can no longer guess. They are waiting for Nadia, the leader, to give her debriefing speech to help themselves" (Field notes, Si moi j'ai froid, 19.05.2019)

Third, solidarity practices become rituals for homeless people. They are waiting for volunteers from the NPOs that are doing an outreach. They are preparing for their arrival, on this day and at that time, at that place. If an organization fails to attend, they will be blamed. It is a ritual that is rhythmic and meaningful for homeless people, whose temporality is different from those more included in society. It is often said "temporality is not the same in the street": not that time flows faster or slower in the street space, but that these homeless people have a different relationship to time. They live more on a day-to-day basis, do not project themselves or only slightly.

Finally, solidarity towards the homeless is strongly influenced by the seasons. Practices change in hot weather compared to those in extreme cold winter. Already because extreme conditions are of the order of a prefectural decree, which can requisition a gymnasium to accommodate in case of negative temperatures (the cold plan), or in period of heat wave (water distribution). Winter is often an easier time for organizations because volunteers get more involved in these times; perhaps because they are more affected by the cause of homelessness when it is cold. In summer, on the other hand, volunteers take vacations, NPOs empty themselves, whereas this is the period when there are the most people on the street and also when there are the most deaths of homeless people.

A strong emotional practice

Finally, the practice of solidarity takes place in difficult physical and psychological conditions. Homelessness increasingly affects families, children, young people, people with reduced mobility, which renders the context for helping homeless people difficult, extreme and even emotionally unsustainable for volunteers. These are themes that are often invoked during the collective meetings: young children and babies who sleep outside in winter, in very cold temperatures. Some volunteers often refer to these themes as indignation and anger. The street is also a place of violence. Homeless are often robbed; it is reported that such a homeless woman has been raped or sexually touched; Or I have witnessed scenes where some homeless people could not help but take drugs with a heroin syringe.

Finally, it was also an emotionally difficult experience for me, even though I think I have "hardened" throughout these one and a half years on the field, as surely many other

volunteers who end up getting used to, not to this extreme precariousness, but to putting a "distance" with the situation. These collective emotions, shared by volunteers during an action of solidarity, are the "glue" of solidarity (Collins, 1990; Salmela, 2014) and produce an internal cohesion within the organization and which, thus, allows the sustainability of their actions.

3.2. BOUNDARY AND MOBILE PRACTICES CREATING SOLIDARITY SPACES

In the previous section, I highlighted that solidarity practices towards the homeless are temporal and emotional practices. I intend in this part to demonstrate how NPOs manage to organize in public space through socio-material and embodied practices, which enable them to recreate organizational spaces in public space.

Solidarity actions in fixed places

After studying 6 NPOs that practice distributions in public places (see table 2 in the Appendix for details), I noticed that these NPOs, through socio-material and physical practices, produce different boundaries and mobilities and thus different spaces of solidarity. As shown in Table 1, volunteers re-create an organizational space in the public space through socio-material and bodily practices.

I observed that each of them used different materialities (Mitev & de Vaujany, 2013; Ashcraft et al., 2009), which were arranged differently according to the organizations: tables, benches, fences, and arbors... For example, on Carnot Square, on Wednesday evening, the NPO “ADSL” distributes free meals and for this end transforms the place into a "temporary restaurant" where men queue to be served while women, children and people with disabilities are served at the table, under an arbor. On Friday evening, on the same square, the NPO "les fourmis lyonnaises" also distributes free meals, but this time, the equipment used is much more basic: a few tables, aligned in rows, which constitute the food distribution chain. The NPO focus mainly on food because for them, the primary need of people living on the street "is to have enough to eat". On the other hand, for ADSL, the emphasis is on comfort: "we take care of them, like in a restaurant". These are two different visions of the needs of the beneficiaries that are embodied differently in space and in the materialities implemented.

Therefore, for the same public square, these different material entanglements create different atmospheres (Borch, 2009; de Vaujany et al. 2018). I advance that they produce therefore organizational spaces, ie the spaces in which the organization develops and produces

a “work setting” (Raulet-Croset, 2013), where they set a number of rules specific to their organization. For example, one of the NPOs I observed decided to distribute meals only after the break of fasting during the Ramadan period. These different rules specific to the organization regulate the spaces it creates; they thus produce organizational spaces.

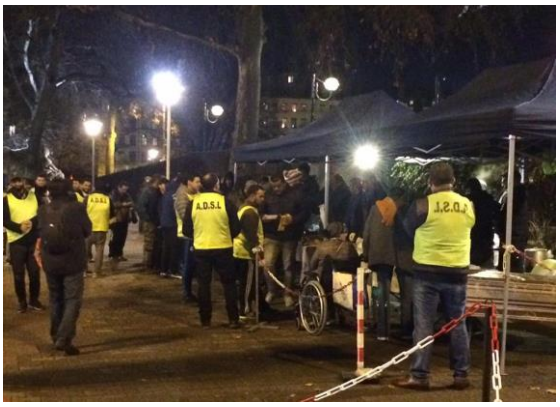
In addition, free distributions take place in public places and are open to all; thus, many beneficiaries are attracted and there is sometimes violence and overflow. This leads NPOs to seek to contain the crowd and exercise spatial control (Dale, 2005), which results in spaces delimited by barriers and volunteers dedicated to security. Volunteers are posted to different positions to perform different functions in this space: some are assigned behind the tables to distribute meals and drinks, while others are deployed to direct the flow of beneficiaries, similarly as security employees at an airport (Knox et al., 2008). The bodies of these volunteers, enabling to contain the excesses and violence that can occur at any time, reproduce organizational boundaries through border gestures (Grandazzi, 2018). They therefore create boundaries that delimit the space in which they operate. However, in the meanwhile, these materialities also create symbolic boundaries: the tables behind which only volunteers have access mark the position of donor and recipient:

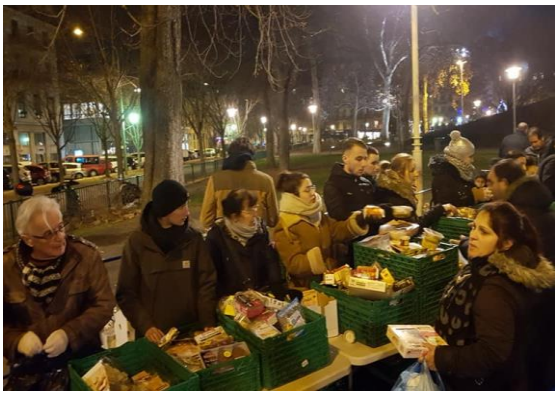
> *“The buffet tables symbolized this frontier between us and them: we volunteers and employees, French, behind these tables and in a "donor" position. Behind, them, in the position of receivers. None of us, including myself, had the initiative to go to the other side and join them at the table.”(Field notes - Gymnasium requisitioned during the cold plan, observation, 26.02.2018)*

They are therefore arrangements that materialize the symbolic barrier and make an action of solidarity, based on the encounter, difficult. It is then the volunteers' movements that renegotiate these borders by moving beyond the position behind the table, by sitting next to the beneficiaries, which allows them through their practice, to recreate other spaces of solidarity. The places of distribution where volunteers go beyond the borders materialized by the tables are therefore places of spontaneous exchange, more favorable to an immaterial action of solidarity.

TABLE 1: The production of socio-material and bodily practices on mobility and boundary work and the creation on new spaces

	PRACTICES	BOUNDARIES	MOBILITY	SPACES CREATED
Distributions	Socio-material	Physical and symbolic boundaries created by tables, barriers, benches, etc..	The arrangement of artefacts enables to guide the mobility of beneficiaries	Organizational space with atmosphere created in the public space (ephemeral restaurant, etc...)
	Bodily	Volunteers are behind the tables and are in a donor position	Bodies of volunteers who set up the equipment and direct the flow of people (Knox et al. 2011)	Volunteers who direct the flow; if volunteers move: allows other spaces to be created
Vehicular outreach	Socio-material	Physical: The truck protects volunteers in case of danger (inside) Symbolic: Implicit boundary also when it is open: beneficiaries do not get on the truck	The truck allows volunteers to be transported	Exchange space created by the truck when it is open and the beneficiaries and volunteers are behind the truck
	Bodily	Volunteers are allowed to go in the truck	Mobility outside the truck of volunteers: go to the homeless, bring to the truck Mobility in the truck: make a meal basket...	The truck can be used as a shield for volunteers or a space for intimacy with difficult beneficiaries
Walking outreach	Socio-material	Physical with trolleys and bags		Micro-spaces created in the street around private spaces of the homeless (sleeping places)
	Bodily	Boundary gestures (Grandazzi, 2018), and respectful distance to enable the connection	The group of volunteers walks; collective mobility as a meshwork (Ingold, 2011), spatial tactics (de Certeau, 1984)	Volunteers sit next to the homeless to recreate a space of connection





Different materialities, different atmospheres in the same public square – on the left, ADSL, on the right, les fourmis lyonnaises (photos by the organizations)

Vehicular outreach work

As explained in the previous paragraph, mobile outreach is more favorable to exchange, with a more precarious and isolated public. The fact of "going towards" to the homeless and not "bringing in" them makes it possible to create different spaces and different solidarity practices than during distributions. There are only four of them (see table), the two main one travel by truck and are partners of 115, the social emergency number in France. People in need call 115, who then send the associations to meet them, to offer them water or a hot drink, blankets in case of cold, and very rarely, a place to spend the night in emergency accommodation. These NPOs therefore navigate the city from 8pm to 2am to provide emergency assistance to people who are homeless and in extreme precariousness.

In this section, I develop the socio-material and mobile practices of volunteers that are made possible by the truck. In reality, the truck is much more than a means of transport: it allows volunteers to create different spaces for solidarity action. First of all, the truck is the vehicle for solidarity action. On the one hand, it symbolizes the identity of the NPO: "we are the organization with the blue truck", says Elise, when she presents the NPO to a homeless person in the street. On the other hand, the truck is the material medium that renders this solidarity action possible for the NPO and makes its action so special. It allows volunteers to meet many people, at great distances, answer 115 calls and go to unexpected places, carry a large quantity of food and hygiene kits. These combined actions would not have been possible without the truck.

The van, through its mobility and the boundaries it creates, allows volunteers to generate different spaces. On the one hand, the back of the truck is used to store basic necessities.

Volunteers who go inside can collect these items and give them to the beneficiaries. On the other hand, the truck produces in the street the space of a meeting place when it is open, at a standstill. It is common for volunteers to bring homeless people to the truck. It creates a possible exchange space in the public space; with its large open doors, the truck protects from traffic and allows an exchange around the products donated. "What should I put on you? Shower gel? Canned food? Socks?" Volunteers and homeless people can start a discussion in the back of the truck, while one of the volunteers in the truck makes them a lunch basket.

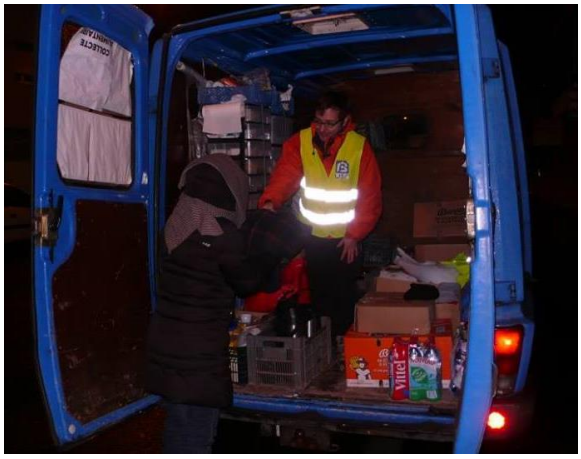
In addition, volunteers can also use the truck to create a more intimate space in case of difficulties:

> *"Since he (the beneficiary) didn't want anything, although it was 115 that called us and sent us there, we wanted to understand what was wrong. Philippe therefore suggested to the beneficiary to come in the truck, where they were both, with the door half-open, which allowed Philippe to create a more intimate space, where the person could feel at ease. The result was that the person prayed. And could confide a little: he was obviously confused and didn't want any help. " (Field notes - the red cross, 25.06.2018)*

Finally, the truck also protects volunteers; it then becomes a strong physical organizational boundary.

> *"We went to a squat where there were many people. It was potentially dangerous for our safety: there were only four of us and about thirty people outside. We hesitated to get out of the truck, and I remember Claude explaining to me later in the debriefing that when we didn't feel it, we could go back. All we had to do was stay in the truck, which protected us. " (Field notes - the red cross, 25.06.2018)*

Thus, I argue in this part that the truck, as a strong sociomateriality, allows volunteers different mobile practices (inside and outside the truck) and boundary practices (by closing, opening or interopening its doors); and thus, to create different spaces of solidarity: intimate spaces, spaces of exchange, and a safe space for volunteers.



Different practices involved with the truck - USR organization (photo by the organization)

Walking outreach work

Outreach work is done in small groups of people: from two volunteers for security reasons, up to four or five to avoid intimidating people on the street. Here, compared to distributions where the focus is on the materialistic part of the solidarity action, it is the connection with the homeless person that is privileged. The coffee or sandwich distributed is often a pretext to produce the relationship and engage in conversation. Some NPOs even favor social ties so much that they avoid giving material to avoid unbalancing the relationship with the homeless.

In contrast to distributions open to all, outreach work is done on the initiative of volunteers who choose their itinerary and meet beneficiaries they often know. It is a way to reach a more isolated audience, and to maintain a social bond. Since distributions are open to everyone without conditions, organizations are therefore open to abuse by people who are not really in need, and who may even feed into a network by selling donations on the black market:

> *"Because we know we're feeding, we're not going to lie, a traffic, a traffic in reselling clothes, that's a whole world that's hard to perceive... We're going to know that what's-his-name... It's also sometimes denunciations between beneficiaries, so it's a little complicated..." (Interview of Bastien, Vestibus, 03/07/2018)*

In addition to the possible excesses caused by the crowd during distributions, the volunteers told me that in general it was difficult to establish a real social link with the beneficiaries, and that the organization had chosen therefore mobile outreach to distributions in fixed places:

> *"It changes the relationship with the beneficiaries or the relationships, which used to be a little seductive, "it's a friend, he's going to give me, I've known him for a long time", and conversely because we decided not to give because we felt that the person didn't need, it created conflicts, it was very complicated to manage that" (Interview of Bastien, Vestibus, 03/07/2018)*

Thus, I suggest that choosing mobile outreach is a way for NPOs to select the beneficiaries they want to help, and thus, to avoid situations of violence that they could not control. Mobility in this way allows them to create other spaces of solidarity, where they will be able to create micro spaces to meet homeless people in the public space.

I therefore argue in this section that volunteers particularly use their bodies to recreate organizational spaces in the public space.

First, their bodies obviously allow them to move around the city. Walking outreach work

involves a collective itinerancy throughout the city's territory, where the volunteers have a path to meet several homeless in their sleeping places. In order to meet the homeless, outreach volunteers have to take detours and little frequented paths; they produce "spacial tactics" (de Certeau, 1984), which are the forms of appropriation of the urban infrastructures (e.g. roads) by pedestrians. De Certeau perfectly describes this action of walking which is comparable to language:

"Walkers...whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban "text' they write without being able to read it... The networks of these moving, intersecting writings compose a manifold story" (De Certeau, 1984, p. 93). It is these collectively traced paths that give substance to the city and "build the city" (de Certeau, 1984, p. 97).

In addition, outreach work involves practicing the space in the city in an empathic way: in order to find homeless in the city, volunteers have to think like a homeless and to ask themselves "Where would I hide? Where would I spend the night if I was alone in the street?"

Second, it is through their different bodily positions that volunteers are able to recreate micro encounter spaces with the homeless. Volunteers usually meet the homeless in their sleeping places, which are "private spaces in the public space" or similar to their homes. Homeless homes can be either very ephemeral (usually when it is a mattress laid on the floor) or either an appropriated space (when it is a squat in this case, involving furniture, tents, etc..). When volunteers meet a homeless person, they must "renegotiate" boundaries and adapt to the private spaces of the homeless. Outreach volunteers generally have a different reaction depending on the balance of power established: in the case of an ephemeral space, they will mark a distance of at least one meter to respect the private space of the homeless and therefore recreate an invisible boundary. In the meanwhile, volunteers will try to erase the symbolic boundary to allow the most equal possible interaction with the homeless. I noticed that the connection was easier when this symbolic boundary disappeared, which will be facilitated by the volunteers' body posture – like sitting next to the homeless - their clothing, if they had tattoos (enabling mimicry with the homeless) and the fact of sharing the same action such as smoking.

In the case of an appropriated space by the homeless, which involves furniture and tent, the homeless will be more in a position of power. Sometimes outreach volunteers are afraid of the potential dangerous situation: like in a squat, in a dead end or under a tunnel. Therefore, the

possibility to regain control is to dominate the space by establishing boundary-gestures (Grandazzi, 2018) and directing flows (Knox et al., 2011):

> *"At the time of the debriefing of the outreach work, I recount what had happened in Perrache, in the tunnel, with the Albanian camp and which had oppressed me a lot. I was in charge of the shoes, and a horde of people had thrown themselves at me by helping themselves directly into my bag. I was surrounded. The beneficiaries touched me, called me ma'am, they all wanted a pair of baskets in 42 when they all already had shoes...It was unbearable. Explaining this to another volunteer, she told me that when she was going there, they had organized themselves in a military way. "With the volunteers, we would go by line, with our bags behind us, so that no one would steal anything, and we would pass the beneficiaries one by one in a queue.... It's a kind of distribution in fact... As for a distribution, they pass in front of us and every time we ask them what they want: a coffee? Yes, no? Pass. Then the beneficiary passes on to the volunteer who takes care of the clothes. What size shoe? Yes, no, pass" (Field notes, juste un geste, 12.02.2019)*

In this particular situation, outreach volunteers are forced to regain control by dominating the space through bodily practices such as boundary gestures and flow practices similar to practices involved during distribution.

The socio-materialities used by volunteers are shopping carts and bags that allow them to carry the sandwiches or drinks they want to distribute. In the end, it can be said that they serve them little compared to other solidarity actions: they do not protect them, nor do they allow them to direct the flow of people. On the other hand, shopping carts and thermos are very quickly identifiable by the homeless and allow volunteers to be recognized in the public space as doing a solidarity action.

4. DISCUSSION: THE ROLE OF BOUNDARY WORK AND MOBILITY IN ORGANIZING IN PUBLIC SPACE

This paper started with asking how do these organizations manage to instrument the space of the city in which they must organize themselves but over which they have very little influence. How can solidarity be organized in public space, which is an open and uncontrollable space? To initiate a discussion on my results, I would like to illuminate how organizing in the public space involves several mechanisms. According to the three strategies of producing solidarity actions - distributions, walking outreach and vehicular outreach - volunteers use different socio-material and physical practices, specific to each strategy, which produce different spaces of solidarity.

My paper therefore seeks to highlight different elements. On the one hand, in the absence of a private space over which they can exercise control, organizations will use different

practices to create different spaces in the public space. These are socio-material and bodily practices that allow them to recreate the boundaries necessary for organizing action. It is through the practices of boundary creation and mobility that the organization will create different safe spaces in the public space. Different solidarity spaces will be therefore created. It is thus a first point that contributes to the literature on space and organizations and demonstrates that practices create organizational spaces in the public space.

Second, this paper is intended to engage in a dialogue around the notion of organizational boundaries. The concept of boundaries is all the more significant today, at a time of new ways of working, teleworking and hot-desking, where everything suggests that organizational boundaries are becoming increasingly "liquid" (Bauman, 2013). However, the case study of this paper seeks to demonstrate how, in the absence of a strong physical organizational boundary - which marks a clear privatization of organizational space - the organization is constantly creating and renegotiating its boundaries. The article demonstrates how members of the organization, through socio-material and physical practices, are rebuilding tangible and symbolic boundaries that are fundamental to the organization of volunteers.

These boundaries are materialized during the distribution by tables, benches, chair that structure and recreate an organizational space in the public space in compliance with the rules of the organization (gendered division of space, etc....). They mark the external boundaries that make the NPO's action visible while structuring the movement of the crowd and directing flows. For vehicular outreach, the boundaries are materialized by the truck, which marks new spaces when it has open doors or allows a closed space when the safety of volunteers is at stake.

Boundaries are also exercised in the practices and bodies of volunteers when their safety is at stake. However, and this is the paradox revealed by this very specific case, in the case of solidarity actions present in the public space, volunteers must overcome the social divide, which is present between homeless people and people with housing in society, in order to allow a real exchange. It is an extremely strong boundary, very difficult to erase, but volunteers will try to symbolically reduce it, thanks to the position of their bodies, their speech and the possible interaction.

The barriers in the distributions will create these imbalances in the relationship of solidarity, which will be possible to avoid when the volunteer changes position in space: by moving for example from behind the table or the barrier, to go close to the beneficiaries, to play

and talk with them. In this case, the exchange and the meeting between volunteers and beneficiaries is made possible in new spaces of solidarity.

To allow solidarity in the public space, volunteers therefore do boundary work (Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010): they produce the physical boundaries necessary for organizing, while reducing the symbolic boundaries necessary for the encounter. It is a permanent work of negotiation, possible in movement, bodies and socio-materialities. It should be noted that these boundary practices are totally "taken for granted": volunteers do not notice them, and the practices concern "micro-practices", micro spaces in the public space but all felt.

4.1. MOVING AROUND THE CITY: DRAWING LINES TO WEAVE A SOLIDARITY MESHWORK

Finally, this case highlights the link between movement and boundaries. Movement makes it possible to recreate other spaces of solidarity and is therefore, creating boundaries. To produce solidarity in public space, organizations produce a collectively embodied mobility, through their movements in this city' space difficult to control. To describe their solidarity movement, I draw therefore on the notion of meshwork developed by Ingold (2011). The group of outreach volunteers is similar to what Ingold calls the "wayfarer", which he compares to the Inuit tribes, who are constantly in motion and whose action consists in "tracing paths" on the snow that covers the landscape (Aporta, 2004). Ingold cites Rudy Weibe, in Playing dead (1989) who describes the activity of the Inuit, in the Artic: *"For the Inuit, as soon as a person moves he becomes a line. (...) Inuit lay lines looking for other tracks of lines across the expanse, producing an entire mesh of lines rather than a continuous surface".* Thus, for Ingold, the wayfarer is constantly in motion. He is movement more precisely. Similarly, to the Inuit, outreach volunteers must trace lines in the city: trajectories not shortest that make them take detours and pass through unfrequented places. They thus trace lines in this open and uncontrollable urban space to see homeless people sometimes withdrawn, hidden. This set of traced lines produces what Tim Ingold calls a "meshwork". The lines and movement of the inhabitants are, says Ingold, "not a network of point-to-point connections but a tangled mesh of interwoven and complexly knotted strands (...) Every strand is a way of life, and every knot a place" (p.37). The lines will cross around nodes: the spaces of the homeless. The meshwork knots thus produce the places, where outreach volunteers come to meet a homeless person, for the time of an exchange, to pour coffee and to give a meal and clothes. These nodes are ephemeral places. But they are ritualized: the outreach volunteers commit to return the

following week, the same evening at the same time. Other organizations will come by, maybe another evening. These various lines contribute to the construction of this great web, a meshwork that constitutes the solidarity action of the organizations. It is thus in the weaving of this great web of relationships that the sense of organizations takes shape: connecting the isolated homeless with each other.

CONCLUSION

This paper intended to present the organization out of its spatial boundaries, in the urban space of the city where anything can happen and where the organization is much more vulnerable than in a private space. The main focus of the paper was the different spatial strategies produced by the organizations in contact with the homeless. I advanced here that the production of space by organizations is a dynamic process, produced by the organization and in response to its environment, through the phenomenon of spatial abstraction, and made possible by the materialities of organizations, bodies of volunteers and sense given to the actions. Finally, for mobile organizations, navigating in the open, uncontrollable and sometimes dangerous space of the city consists in "drawing lines" and thus operating a large meshwork, of which the central node is the homeless. Practicing the space of the city means adapting skillfully to the spaces reclaimed or diverted by the homeless; this involves spatial tactics, boundary production and even attempts to dominate space. This total movement of lines, tactics and boundary negotiations constitutes the network that connects isolated homeless people. These organizations have precisely chosen to reach out to the homeless, unlike those that have chosen to make distributions. It is this choice of itinerant circuits that perform their solidarity action: more than an ephemeral exchange, they create a link, an urban rosary connecting each homeless person and their space between them.

Thus, this paper intends to contribute to the literature on space and organizations, by highlighting the specific organizing in the public space. It tries to illuminate how control over the public space involves several mechanisms. It involves for the organization to appropriate and controlling public space through the mapping of the territory, the creation of boundaries and the enactment of mobility. Finally, it seeks to illuminate how public space can be a source of tensions between organizations and inhabitants, each claiming its own territory.

Future research on other organizations present in the public space such as the police, fire brigade, postmen, garbage trucks, social movements, couriers, could be carried out in order to present their practices to control public space.

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APPENDIX

Table 2: overview of the organizations studied

	Name	Structure	Space	Strategy	Data collected
1	Lazare	Organization	Private space: social housing		One-year ethnography, interviews
2	FNDSA	Organization	Private space: social housing		3 observations
3	Habitat & Humanisme	Organization	Private space: social housing		3 or 4 observations
4	115	Institution	Private space		1 observation, 1 interview
5	ADSL	Organization	Public space	Fixed	2 observations, 1 interview
6	Alpil	Organization	Private space : move in squats		1 interview
7	Alynéa / SAMU	Institution	Car mobile	Car mobile	1 interview
8	Anciela	Organization	Private space		1 interview
9	Fourmis lyonnaises	Organization	Public space	Fixed	1 observation, 1 interview
10	Le carillon	Organization	Citizen private space		1 interview
11	USR	Organization	Public space	Car mobile	1 interview, 1 observation
12	Juste un geste	Organization	Public space	Feet mobile	2 observations, 1 interview
13	Ensemble pour un repas	Organization	Public space	Fixed	1 observation
14	Les camions du cœur	Organization	Public space	Fixed	1 observation
15	Médecins du monde	International organization	Public space et squats	Fixed + Feet mobile	1 interview
16	Vestibus	Organization	Public space	Car Mobile	1 observation, 1 interview
17	Raconte nous la rue	Organization	Public space	Feet Mobile	2 observation, 1 interview
18	MRIE	Institution	Private space		2 observations, 1 interview
19	La main tendue	Organization	Public space	Feet Mobile	2 observations, 1 interview
20	Si moi j'ai froid	Organization	Public space	Fixed	1 observation, 1 interview
21	Secours catholique	International organization	Public space / private	Feet Mobile	1 interview
22	Le pelican solidaire	Organization	Public space	Feet Mobile	2 observations
23	Entourage	Organization	Public and private spaces		1 observation, 1 interview
24	La croix-rouge	International organization	Public space	Car mobile	1 observation