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Étienne Fouquet, Myriam Michaud, Luc K. Audebrand and Claude-André Guillotte.

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Co-operative Conversion in the Newspaper Industry: Navigating Between the Reefs Toward Success

Étienne Fouquet, Myriam Michaud, Luc K. Audebrand, and Claude-André Guilloffe

The rise of digital media and platforms is driving significant change in the newspaper industry. These changes are forcing local media to alter their offerings and, for many, to change their ownership structure. In this context, cases of transformation into a co-operative form are particularly interesting. This article presents the case of CN2i, a grouping of regional media in the province of Québec (Canada), that has adopted a co-operative form following the bankruptcy of the former private press group. This case is particularly interesting, because each local media is constituted as a multi-stakeholder co-operative, and they are all integrated into a second-level co-operative. We rely on publicly available information and interviews with key actors to explore the success and challenges of the new co-operatives. Such a radical and fast transformation is accompanied by tensions that we highlight in this article. Drawing from a paradox perspective, we deepen the analysis of tensions arising from this transformation. We use Smith & Lewis's (2011) framework to describe paradoxes as they correspond to belonging, organising, performing, or learning categories.

Introduction

It is well known that the press and news media represent the “4th estate” whereby a free and strong press is considered as one of the foundations of modern democracy (Anderson, 2006; Brunetti & Weder, 2003). However, the rise of digital media and platforms is leading to significant changes in the print media sector (Balle, 2020; Bernier, 2016). This is changing citizens' information access practices, in addition to capturing an increasing share of advertising revenues previously destined for local media, which are, in turn, increasingly struggling to survive (Fontanel & Sushcheva, 2019). The web giants, nicknamed GAFAM (Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, and Microsoft), are generally considered the main cause of these revenue drops (see for example, Association des médias écrits communautaires du Québec [AMECQ], 2019). Yet, such business models are not designed to meet local and regional information needs. This situation is even more worrisome given the decline of local and regional media in Québec and elsewhere (Brunelle & Brin, 2019), as well as the impoverishment of information with civic value (Public Policy Forum, 2018).

In this article, we draw on a case study to show that the co-operative model can be an avenue for addressing these issues and highlight some inherent tensions that must be managed in order to do so (Audebrand, 2017). Although co-operative entrepreneurship in the media sector has gained some recognition in Europe, it remains somewhat marginal in North America. For example, in Québec, there are eight enterprises dedicated to journalism using the co-operative model, most of which focus on local news. That said, little is written about co-operatives in the North American journalism community, and even less literature examines the shift from private to collective ownership in the print media sector.

To deepen our understanding of the solutions to the challenges faced by the print media and of transitions from private to collective ownership, this article outlines a recent case of a “co-operative takeover” of a large press group in Québec (Canada), made up of six local press organs, namely the Coopérative nationale de l'information indépendante (National Co-operative of Independent Information: CN2i). CN2i is a producers' co-operative that brings together six local newspapers, which are themselves incorporated as multistakeholder co-operatives — whose members are workers, readers, and advertisers — and whose mission is to offer local

information. Founded in 2019, after the bankruptcy of Groupe Capitales Médias (GCM) the then owner of the six local newspapers, the CN2i produces and distributes national and regional information online, and in print on Saturdays. CN2i's story is especially interesting due to the importance of this media group in Québec's press ecosystem, the rapidity of the organisational change involved by this conversion, and the central role played by institutional actors to ensure its survival.

Due to the social and economic context in which local news media evolve, the co-operative model has quickly emerged as one of the only viable avenues in the eyes of Québec institutional actors. A starting point for this article is the idea that collective ownership by members as well as the social mission of co-operatives (McMurtry & Brouard, 2015; Tortia et al., 2020) can be considered as important assets to build a free and independent press. Co-operatives do not have to answer solely to the financial interests of their owners and can therefore more easily put forward their social mission of providing rich, accurate, and relevant information to the public. In addition, co-operatives are recognised for their territorial anchoring and proximity to local communities (Draperi & Le Corroller, 2015), which fits the needs of local press organs. In short, a free press must be free from financial pressure, and a local press should be rooted in local communities; two elements that are congruent with the co-operative model.

Nevertheless, the implementation of such a model involves several challenges and generates tensions, which we explore in this article through the case of CN2i. To do so, we adopt the paradox theory perspective, which invites examination of tensions, oppositions, and dualities as inherent to the organisation's life — especially in the context of change (Jay, 2013; Smith & Lewis, 2011). The data used for this study comes from both the extensive public information surrounding the creation of CN2i in the popular media and from interviews with key actors in the conversion, including some employees, board members, and institutional partners.

The article proceeds as follows. First, we present the process of converting GCM into a producers' co-operative, highlighting the contextual and institutional elements that fostered this transformation. Then, the tensions arising from this conversion are detailed and linked to the four main categories of paradoxes highlighted by the literature, namely, paradoxes of belonging, organising, learning, and performing (Smith & Lewis, 2011). We conclude with lessons and warnings identified for the CN2i management and broader co-operative management.

The Fascinating Story of CN2i

Setting the stage: the pre-conversion

GCM was born in 2015, when a single shareholder acquired several regional newspapers in Québec. Only two years after this acquisition, in 2017, the company encountered significant financial difficulties. Recognising the urgency of the digital shift, GCM obtained assistance from the provincial government through a \$10 million loan (all amounts are in Canadian currency). This loan was part of the launch of a government programme to help the print media, dedicating over half of a \$36.4 million budget envelope to digital transformation. At the same time, Investissement Québec (<https://www.investquebec.com/quebec/en/>), the government's economic development and business support arm, provided an additional \$10 million loan to GCM to foster its digital transition. For the Québec government, there was no doubt that quality regional information provided by the six daily newspapers, employing about 300 employees, was essential to democracy.

Despite this financial support, GCM announced on 19 August 2019, that it would file a notice of intention under the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act to seek protection from its creditors. The trustee in charge of administering the newspapers following the filing for bankruptcy was very sensitive to the peculiarities of the situation; as a national company, many jobs were at stake. Moreover, the local newspapers it encompassed were pillars of regional and local information in

Québec. In short, this bankruptcy jeopardised not only an important enterprise, but put at stake a large part of the free and professional press.

On the same day, the Government of Québec announced emergency aid of \$5 million to protect GCM from its creditors — which means that in total, GCM received \$25 million in its short life from various governmental bodies. Québec's Minister of the Economy justified this action by the need to keep the press group in business while a buyer was found. The Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN — <https://www.csn.qc.ca>) — a Québec-based central labour body that federates independent local unions, quickly announced joint support with the government and expressed interest in participating financially to ensure the revival of the group's operations. While the file was in the hands of the bankruptcy trustee, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, other private groups expressed interest in the relaunch, but none followed through. Therefore, the co-operative model came out as a solution to allow a rebirth of the local press group.

Local media working together to find a solution

Representatives of the employees from each of the newspapers affected were involved in a provisional committee, namely *Le Droit* in Gatineau, *Le Soleil* in Québec City, *Le Nouvelliste* in Trois-Rivières, *Le Quotidien* in Saguenay, *La Tribune* in Sherbrooke and *La Voix de l'Est* in Granby — six cities that qualify as regional capitals. Together, they created a buyout plan that was presented to the trustee. This plan emphasised the co-operative option and relied on two major strategies to ensure short- and long-term survival. First, to build a pool of financial resources sufficient to get through the next three years; second, to diversify the funding sources to achieve an acceptable level of risk for potential financial partners and members of the newspapers.

On 23 December 2019, GCM announced the sale of its six regional newspapers to a new entity: the Coopérative nationale de l'information indépendante (CN2i), a producers' co-operative, for the symbolic amount of one dollar. The CN2i thus took over the nearly 300 employees and obtained financial support from: Investissement Québec (<https://www.investquebec.com/quebec/en/>); Fondation (CSN — <https://www.fondation.com/>); Fonds de solidarité des travailleurs (FTQ — <https://www.fondsftq.com/>); Caisse d'économie solidaire Desjardins and Desjardins Capital (<https://www.desjardins.com/>); the Chantier de l'économie sociale (<https://chantier.qc.ca/?lang=en>); and the Réseau d'investissement social du Québec (<https://fonds-risq.qc.ca/en/>).

The employees of the six local newspapers then launched a co-ordinated campaign to raise funds in the form of donations or preferred shares (non-voting shares that bear interest) from the community entitled "*Je coopère pour mon journal*" (I co-operate for my newspaper). The campaign aimed to support the start-up of multistakeholder/solidarity co-operatives for each newspaper. The response was positive, with \$2.7 million raised just two months after the trustee decision to authorise the relaunch through the co-operative model, reassuring the funders and demonstrating public support for their local media.

In addition to the fundraising campaign, other measures were put in place to help the co-operatives get off the ground. Workers gave up their pension funds and agreed to a two-year wage freeze. In addition, a contribution of 5% of employees' salaries was made in the form of preferred shares.

Thanks to the mobilisation of employees and communities, CN2i was able to conclude the joint financing of \$13 million from the partners mentioned above. This financing was accompanied by a joint guarantee, by the seven co-operatives (i.e., CN2i and its six constituents) of future debts incurred by one of the local co-operatives in the group. In March 2020, the general manager of *Le Soleil* — the largest and oldest of the six local co-operatives — made the following observation in an open letter to readers:

The support of our partners is not just a profession of faith. It acknowledges the strong support of the communities (your donations, which total \$2.7 million). Above all, it is the result of a detailed analysis

of our business model and our development plan. And our ability to transform ourselves. Because it is clear that no partner would have come on board if our only ambition was to continue our operations on the same model. Doing the same thing, but better? It's a start, but it's not enough anymore (Carignan, 2020, para 13-14).

Strategic support from MCE Conseils

To enable such an organisational transformation, the assistance of a strategic advisor, specialised in both organisational development and collective ownership, was crucial. At the request of institutional investors, MCE Conseils was hired to accompany the conversion of GCM into CN2i, and the passage from private to collective ownership. MCE Conseils (<https://www.mceconseils.com/>) is a strategic consulting firm founded in 1987 that offers diversified management support and has a long experience with social economy organisations. Given its long experience in the co-operative sector, particularly with Québec paramedics' co-operatives, MCE Conseils was chosen to support the development of the co-operative solution and the strategic coaching of C2Ni's members.

Its mandate was validated after the co-operative avenue was presented to the workers of each local newspaper, who agreed to explore the co-operative path. More precisely, the workers of each regional media outlet were asked to vote on a theoretical project to relaunch the newspapers of the Capitales Médias Group Inc. in a co-operative form. The message transmitted to the workers was that the evolution of the group would be continuous and that the core challenge was to find the best way to co-ordinate the activities and to distribute them among the co-operatives.

MCE Conseils was involved in setting up the co-operatives and in negotiating with the bankruptcy trustee and was also responsible for developing a training programme for the workers. The training programme was primarily designed to allow members to quickly take ownership of the co-operative model, knowing that the design of the organisational structure would be defined as it went along. Members were also surveyed for training needs. Training began at a critical time in the development of the co-operatives. Indeed, understanding the co-operative model and the new role of owners devolved to the workers was an important antecedent to the negotiations concerning the pension fund, which the workers would give up, to ensure the development of a sustainable financing structure.

At the same time, MCE Conseils helped to organise fundraising and developed a comprehensive plan for the six newspapers, emphasising the importance of co-ordinated action and the need for a national strategy. It is also worth noting that most of these changes took place in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which hastened the digital shift. The training programme is still on-going and needs to be continued in order to keep the strategic plan and the co-operative potential on track, as well as keeping members active and engaged in its development.

Role of the Unions

Prior to the conversion, each newspaper managed its union allegiance independently and chose to affiliate with a particular centralised organisation. These union ties were maintained after the conversion, creating a situation where workers at CN2i newspapers are certified under two centralised unions, the Fédération des travailleurs du Québec (FTQ) and the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN), both of which represent a wide variety of work groups in Québec and often compete for local union representation. Moreover, these two unions currently act both as financial partners — through their respective investment funds (Fondation and Fonds de solidarité des travailleurs) — and as protectors of workers' rights, thus playing two different and somewhat conflicting roles. As financial partners, the unions have an interest in reducing operational costs — including wages — but as protectors of workers' rights, they must fight for better working conditions.

A complex structure for a complex project

At the time of writing, in the fall of 2021, CN2i pursues its mission, which is to pool and share information and resources needed so that its member co-operatives can offer an information service to the population of their region, while preserving editorial independence. CN2i supports its members — the local newspapers — in their efforts to ensure the professionalism, quality, and diversity of information in the regions of Québec.

To do so, CN2i's co-operative model operates on two levels. First, each local newspaper constitutes a multistakeholder co-operative, i.e., a co-operative that includes more than one category of members such as workers, consumers, and supporting members (Michaud & Audebrand, 2019). First-tier co-operatives (local newspapers) include workers as members (i.e., journalists and other employees related to the production of the regional news) and each of them may choose to also include either consumer members (which may include readers and advertisers) or supporting members (who support the mission of the media outlet), or both. Each newspaper is managed by an editor-in-chief and each of the six co-operatives adopts its own budget and produces its annual income statement as an independent entity. Second, all six co-operatives are producer members of the CN2i co-operative. This second-tier co-operative, while not a federation, provides common services to each co-operative, including financial planning for the entire group, co-ordination of the digital shift, and human resource management.

In addition, as a member of CN2i, each first-tier co-operative provides a service to the entire group. For example, classified ads are managed by one of the co-operatives, while obituaries by another, and customer service for the digital transition by a third. In this way, each local co-operative assumes responsibility for ensuring the success of the shared activity and is seen as producing content for the producers' co-operative.

It should be noted that two of the six local media, namely *Le Soleil* in Québec City and *Le Droit* in the Outaouais region, benefit from the presence of government legislative bodies in their region — the National Assembly located in Québec City and the Canadian Parliament, in Ottawa. Indeed, government business generates news of national not just regional, interest, which places greater demands on these two co-operatives, but also offers them greater opportunities. The co-operation agreement between CN2i's member co-operatives provides a revenue model that includes a content-sharing agreement between the co-operatives that takes this reality into account.

In terms of governance, CN2i's Board of Directors is composed of six directors, appointed by each of the local co-operatives. A seventh is delegated by the funders. A representative of MCE Conseils (see below) is present as an observer for strategic monitoring. The board of directors meets once a month with the executive directors of the co-operatives, who do not have voting rights. These meetings provide an overview of the organisation's activities. Each meeting is preceded by a meeting of the non-executive directors, who prepare formal resolutions presented to the board.

The strategy for the whole group is first developed by CN2i. Each co-operative is then asked to complete its own strategic plan in line with the group's objectives. The strategic plans of each co-operative are then integrated into an overall plan by CN2i. If a co-operative does not meet its objectives and performance indicators, it must submit a recovery plan to the other co-operatives. This structure is very different from the group's past experience, where a central authority controlled strategy and operations. Since the conversion, each co-operative is autonomous and has its own strategic plan but has a duty to coordinate it with the group's strategic objectives. In sum, while the seven entities work together toward the same objective, they all face various challenges and their complex structure brings tensions, that are explored in the next section.

Discussion: Unveiling the Conversion's Paradoxes

The previous case description highlights several success factors that prevented the bankruptcy of the six regional newspapers and favoured the creation of CN2i. Central to the success factors is the involvement of a diversity of actors from the co-operative ecosystem and beyond. Such a change could not have occurred without the involvement of actors from civil society, finance, and politics spheres. It is quite rare to see so many actors, with diverse interests, come together to carry out a project of this magnitude in such a short time. Despite the success of this conversion, the creation of CN2i does not solve all the problems faced by the organisation. Moreover, new challenges are emerging as a result of its constitution. There are therefore several risk factors to consider. In other words, CN2i must navigate between several tensions to ensure its sustainability.

It seems appropriate to analyse the CN2i situation using the paradox perspective. Paradox scholars explore the variety of paradoxes embedded in the life of an organisation. According to this perspective, a paradox corresponds to the juxtaposition of two elements that are both opposites and complementary, thus creating tensions. From this perspective, an organisation's success lies in its ability to create a dynamic balance between these tensions (Smith & Lewis, 2011), allowing individuals, teams, and organisations to learn and develop creativity; build flexibility and resilience; and unleash the potential of individuals in the organisation.

This theoretical approach aligns well with the co-operative duality, that is, a dual structure of an association of persons and an enterprise, which pursue both social and economic goals. Paradox literature highlights the tensions arising from the complexity of the co-operative model, the diversity of goals pursued as well as their potential for conflict (Puusa et al., 2013; Torgerson et al., 1998).

According to the work of Smith and Lewis (2011), paradoxes can be grouped into four categories. *Belonging* paradoxes arise from identity issues within organisations. *Organising* paradoxes are related to structural, organisational, and power issues. *Learning* paradoxes come with organisational renewal and the challenges it poses. *Performing* paradoxes correspond to the oft-conflicting performance criteria of organisations. Table 1 summarises the characteristics of the four types of paradoxes as defined by Smith and Lewis (2011, p. 383) and indicates how they translate in the case of CN2i.

Table 1: Types of paradoxes at CN2i

Type of paradox	Description (Smith & Lewis, 2011)	Paradox at CN2i
Belonging	Includes tensions between the individual and the collective, between competing values, roles, and memberships.	Mutualisation vs. Individualisation
Organising	Includes tensions between collaboration and competition, empowerment and direction, and control and flexibility.	Centralisation vs. Decentralisation
Learning	Includes tensions related to change and transformation, between building upon and destroying the past to create the future.	Stability vs. Change
Performing	Includes tensions between multiple and competing goal as stakeholders seek divergent organisational success.	Economic profitability vs. Social profitability

Belonging paradoxes at CN2i surface notably in the opposition between values and strategies of mutualisation and individualisation. On the one hand, co-operatives must mutualise certain services to ensure the survival of all its constituent parts; on the other hand, each co-operative strives to ensure the survival of its own business. There is thus a built-in and ongoing tension between the willingness to belong to a larger, more encompassing entity (CN2i) and a more immediate belonging to the specific identity of the local co-operative. In other words, each

local co-operative must agree to mutualise services (and sacrifice the resulting revenues) for the benefit of all co-operatives, while maintaining and fostering its own activities, in order to provide work for its member-workers. Obviously, this causes tensions between the different co-operatives, each wanting its fair share of the cake.

The mission of CN2i (and its producer members) is to provide regional and national information. Thus, it is easy to see the constant dilemma in the choice of information of national interest for the benefit of the group, and that of regional interest for the benefit of the regions covered by each newspaper. Moreover, as mentioned above, two of the six newspapers cover, in addition to regional topics, subjects of national interest and thus reach a larger audience. This difference can influence the membership and contribution of each co-operative to the group and foster belonging tensions, even conflicts, among members of the co-operative group.

CN2i is also challenged by several organising paradoxes, particularly between centralising and autonomising tendencies. On the one hand, the local newspapers made a transition to co-operatives to protect their managerial and content-production autonomy. On the other hand, they are part of a producers' co-operative that takes up a lot of space and decisional power. There is therefore a tension between the centralising aims of the producers' co-operative, whose directing manager was originally put in place by Investissement Québec to manage the transition from a private company to the CN2i (Tremblay, 2020), and the autonomous aims of the six local newspapers, which have all formed a multistakeholder co-operative to retain power within their organisation.

It should be remembered that CN2i relies on the interdependence of member co-operatives, while the autonomy of each co-operative is enshrined in the fourth co-operative principle (International Co-operative Alliance [ICA], 2018). This duality is embodied in strategic choices, but also in operational decisions and practices. For example, it is easily conceivable that a first-tier co-operative might find unfairness in the assignment of one of the shared services to another co-operative, making the central-local balance difficult to determine and maintain.

CN2i also faces several learning paradoxes, as encompassed by the tension between stability and change. Each first-tier co-operative is a product of its own history and strong local roots. Each must maintain and strengthen its ties to its readers and build on the history that has made it successful over time (for example, *Le Soleil* was founded in 1896). Additionally, each must adapt to the current reality of the news industry, including to digital transformations and evolution of advertising revenues. While this paradox is obviously not unique to CN2i, it is exacerbated by the press group change of ownership and legal structure. Furthermore, the speed of these fundamental structural and organisational changes must be emphasised. Under the threat of bankruptcy, these changes had to be adopted very quickly, while the timeframe to allow for the much-needed training and education of the new collective owners of the organisation was slow and must be seen as an ongoing process.

This learning paradox thus takes place in several ways, three of which are worth reflecting on. First, the transition from salaried workers to workers who collectively own their enterprise requires education and training, which is aligned with the fifth co-operative principle (ICA, 2018). Individuals must distinguish their different and oft-conflicting roles of worker, member, and patron, which requires a deep understanding of the co-operative model, but can also lead to identity conflict and tensions in the organisation (Mamouni Linnios et al., 2018). Second, the advent of the Internet as well as the dominance of GAFAM have completely changed the way information is produced, consumed, and funded. Traditional media are forced to react to this fundamental change in their environment, and must find, for example, a balance between general and public interest information and the quest for exclusivity in an age of immediacy. Third, the role of the news media in a democratic context must be reassessed, and relearned. In the era of fake news and other political changes, the fourth estate must question the place of the media and make them rethink their mission as pillars of democracy.

Lastly, CN2i must manage several performing paradoxes, notably between the conflicting aims of social and economic success that must be simultaneously pursued. On the one hand, first-tier co-operatives belong to their members, including worker-members whose individual objective is to maintain their jobs and working conditions — this corresponds to (one of) the social poles of the paradox. On the other hand, as a producer co-operative, CN2i and its members all strive to ensure their profitability — the economic pole of the paradox. This tension is embedded in all levels of the organisation. For example, at the individual level, worker-members must reconcile their need to secure their job and their will to fulfil the organisation’s mission regarding information, while at the same time taking into account the multiple costs associated with the management of their enterprise. At the network level, CN2i must support the development and sustainability of all its members while remaining profitable itself. Thus, the multiple objectives in place, namely the profitability of each co-operative, that of the group, the sustainability of local and national information procurement, and the preservation of quality jobs, overlap and compete with one another.

Moreover, the various partners (e.g., citizens, unions, government, financial institutions) have different expectations, which might be mainly economic (e.g., return on their investment) or social (e.g., maintaining local information and jobs). Hence, partner expectations can take many different and even conflicting forms. In this regard, the dual role of the trade unions/labour fund is of particular interest. As financial partners, they seek to make their investment profitable to ensure asset growth. However, this involves pressure on employees to modify, or even reduce, their working conditions and access to pension funds — modifications that are usually opposed by unions. The CN2i case thus demonstrates a possibility to reconcile various and conflicting objectives when actors pursue broader and longer-term purposes; in this case, the survival of media dedicated to local and regional information.

For other investors such as Desjardins Capital, La Fiducie du Chantier de l’économie sociale, and the Réseau d’investissement social du Québec, supporting CN2i represents an opportunity to exercise their role as partners in Québec’s economic and social development. While the project involves obvious risks, mainly related to the fast-changing context of information in a digitised world, it is considered as acceptable thanks to the number, variety, and high-level of commitment of the actors involved. However, investors obviously face a tension between their search for financial performance and their willingness to share risk-taking for a business whose social role is widely recognised.

Conclusion

The paradox perspective provides a way of understanding the complexity of managing organisations, particularly co-operatives (Audebrand, 2017). The case of CN2i offers a rich illustration of the tensions embedded in an organisation whose mission is the production and dissemination of local information. CN2i is a young organisation squeezed between several seemingly conflicting interests as well as amid uncertainty related to the news media environment. Despite those tensions, the CN2i co-operatives “are like a survivor recovering after almost dying. Their good health is reassuring and pleasing” (Roy, 2021, para 4).

It is important to note that the paradoxical tensions presented above are not independent from one another; each interact and exacerbate each other (Sundaramurthy & Lewis, 2003). For example, the organising paradox between centralising and autonomising tendencies spills over into the learning and performance paradoxes. Indeed, the tension between the need to establish a group-wide strategy and the desire to respect the autonomy of member co-operatives exacerbates the tension arising from the rapid changes to which co-operatives and their members must adapt. This same tension between centralisation and autonomy is also fuelled by the potential conflicts between first-tier co-operatives, each of which seeks to maximise its performance to ensure its survival while accepting sacrifices for the benefit of the group. In this sense, the CN2i situation is a good example of an organisation facing a nexus of knotted, intricate paradoxes (Sheep et al., 2017).

However, the paradoxical tensions described in the previous section should not be seen as necessarily leading to the downfall of the new entity. To ensure the sustainability of CN2i, some ways of reacting to paradoxes are more mature than others and must be put forward by the actors. The first and most important step for management teams and co-operative members, is to acknowledge and admit the presence of paradoxes. These paradoxes are not dilemmas or problems that can be solved once and for all, but ongoing challenges with which organisations and individuals must learn to live — and even to love. The second realisation is to accept that the two poles of a tension are neither good nor bad, and that they both have value when considered independently as much as there is value in their interdependency. In doing so, maintaining the tension, and respecting the interdependency of the two poles must become the mandate of all members of the organisation.

The Authors

Étienne Fouquet is a DBA candidate in organisational behaviour and a researcher at University of Sherbrooke's Research and Education Institute for Co-operatives and Mutuals (IRECUS). Myriam Michaud is a PhD candidate in co-operative governance at FSA ULaval (Laval University, Quebec City). Luc K. Audebrand is Full Professor of social and solidarity economy at FSA ULaval (Laval University, Quebec City). Claude-André Guillotte is Associate Professor in entrepreneurship at University of Sherbrooke and director of IRECUS.

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