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If These Walls Could Talk: The Mutual Construction of Organizational Space and Legitimacy

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Organizational spaces project claims of organizational legitimacy while also constituting physical environments where work happens. This research questions how organizational space and legitimacy are mutually constituted over time as organizations experience shifts in work and institutional demands.

Building on a qualitative case study of Paris Dauphine University, a French university founded in the late 1960s that has, since its inception, occupied the former North Atlantic Treaty Organization headquarters, we theorize the dynamic intersection of organizational space and legitimacy over time. The case study demonstrates how spatial practices of appropriation, reappropriation, and disappropriation intersect with and inform what we call "spatial legacies" that function to establish or repair an alignment between organizational space and legitimacy. Spatial practices of appropriation and reappropriation build and manipulate spatial legacies, whereas spatial practices of disappropriation attempt to break away from such legacies. Appropriation and reappropriation involve managing spatial legacies to maintain the alignment between organizational space and legitimacy claims. Disappropriation involves trying to erase or alter these legacies to realign the space to changing legitimacy claims. This research adds to the literature on sociomateriality by adopting a longitudinal perspective that highlights legacies as nondeterministic outcomes of past imbrications of the social and the material, to research on legitimacy by conceptualizing it as a sociomaterial construction, and to research on organizational spaces by revealing the institutional underpinnings of spatial transformations. This research also holds practical implications by highlighting the relationships between space as it is designed and used and an organization's legitimacy claims and by showing how claiming the immutability or flexibility of a space can be legitimizing for an organization.

Keywords: legitimacy; longitudinal case study; spatial practices; sociomateriality; imbrication; organizational identity; spatial legacies
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Introduction

Organizational spaces—the actual places organizations occupy, such as buildings, office spaces, and factory floors—represent and embody organizations in the eyes of their stakeholders, be they external (e.g., shareholders or customers) or internal (e.g., employees) (Dale and Burrell 2008, Wasserman 2011). The unveiling of new and expensive headquarters, for instance, is often a publicity-laden occasion that manifests an organization's achievements and strategic orientation in material form (Van Marrewijk 2009). Organizational spaces therefore project claims of organizational legitimacy (Proffitt and Zahn 2006).

Yet organizational spaces are also physical environments where work happens (Elsbach and Pratt 2007); they concretely "make" the organization (Clegg and Kornberger 2006; Gieryn 2000, 2002; Kornberger and Clegg 2004; Taylor and Spicer 2007). Spaces are essential for organizational members to accomplish work (Brown et al. 2005, Elsbach and Pratt 2007, Van Marrewijk and Yanow 2010). Organizational spaces provide contexts that enable and constrain what people do, thereby mediating or mitigating interaction, creativity, and innovation (see Allen 1977; Allen and Cohen 1969; Fayard and Weeks 2007, 2011; Garfinkel 1991).

Although the aforementioned literature has examined the relationships between organizational space and legitimacy to some extent, little is known about how space and legitimacy are mutually constituted over time. This temporal dimension is important because there may be tensions between the space(s) an organization occupies and its legitimacy claims, and these tensions may shift as legitimacy and work demands fluctuate over time. This situation is likely to be especially palpable, for instance, when organizations move into spaces occupied previously by other organizations (e.g., Gastelaars 2010), when a space becomes perceived as too "shabby" for an organization seeking to enhance its prestige (e.g., O'Doherty 2000), or when an organization uses a space in ways that are at odds with its original design (Gastelaars 2010, Lefebvre 1991, Wasserman and Frenkel 2011).

This paper addresses how dynamic spatial practices of appropriation, reappropriation, and disappropriation

(Chombart de Lauwe and Fichey-Poitret 1959, Lefebvre 1991) function to realign or align an organization's space with its claims to legitimacy while also enabling organizational members to do their work in the space. This issue is theoretically complex and intriguing insofar as it points to key aspects of the relationships between the material and the social that are of great interest to organizational scholars of sociomateriality (Leonardi 2011, Orlikowski 2007, Zammuto et al. 2007).

This paper explores these tensions and dynamic relationships between organizational space and legitimacy by way of a case study of Paris Dauphine University, a relatively new economics and management university, and of the building it occupies, the original headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The paper proposes a conceptualization of the dynamic and mutually constitutive relationships between organizational space and legitimacy. It builds on theoretical foundations associated with organizational legitimacy and space, the imbrication of the social and the material in space, and spatial practices. The in-depth, longitudinal case study elaborates on these foundations to further conceptualize the relationships between organizational space, spatial practices, and legitimacy over time. Findings from the case study help develop a theory of how organizational space and legitimacy gradually build on each other through various spatial practices that deal with what we call "spatial legacies" (i.e., material and symbolic traces of a past organizational space). The paper then examines implications for literature on sociomateriality by adopting a longitudinal perspective that highlights legacies as nondeterministic outcomes of past imbrications of the social and the material, for research on legitimacy by conceptualizing it as a sociomaterial construction, and for research on organizational spaces by revealing the institutional underpinnings of their transformation over time. This paper concludes with considerations for practice.

Theoretical Foundations

Organizational Legitimacy and Space

Building and maintaining legitimacy is essential to organizations (King and Whetten 2008, Oliver 1991, Philippe and Durand 2011). Legitimacy corresponds to "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions" (Suchman 1995, p. 574). For any organization, legitimacy enables resource acquisition, sustainability, growth, and strategic transformation (Stinchcombe 1965, Zimmerman and Zeitz 2002). Yet the extent to which organizational legitimacy can be established is, in part, a function of the institutional environment (Dowling and Pfeffer 1975, Suchman 1995). For instance, what legitimates a multinational corporation (Kostova and Zaheer 1999), a firm in an emerging industry (Clegg et al. 2007, Navis and Glynn 2011), a higher education institution (Gioia et al. 2010), or a hospital (Ruef 1998) will depend on the characteristics of each institutional field at the time. The complex and fluctuating character of the institutional context of an organization thus creates opportunities for organizations and their decision makers to "maneuver strategically" (Suchman 1995, p. 585) while seeking legitimacy in relation to multiple stakeholders and institutional dynamics (Oliver 1991, Suchman 1995).

Attaining and managing organizational legitimacy involves producing legitimacy claims through communicative actions aimed at the organization's stakeholders (Suchman 1995, p. 586). In addition to verbal accounts (Elsbach and Sutton 1992) and corporate mission statements (Mazza 1999), communicative actions for the purpose of legitimizing an organization can also include the space(s) an organization occupies insofar as space symbolically represents an organization (Van Marrewijk 2009, Van Marrewijk and Yanow 2010, Yanow 2010). For instance, spatial markers (e.g., doors, windows, signs, walls) have a meaning and value beyond their practical use (Bachelard 1957, Girin 1987, Hatch 1990). More generally, an organizational space and its material characteristics hold a significance that transcends their functions (Bachelard 1957, Gagliardi 1990, Girin 1987) and may "tell stories" about the organization and the space itself (Berg and Kreiner 1990, Panayiotou and Kafiris 2011, Rippin 2011, Yanow 1998).

Proffitt and Zahn (2006, p. 208) contended that organizational spaces constitute "nonverbal [organizational] communication" that can support or refute claims of organizational legitimacy. Thus, Proffitt and Zahn (2006) argued, there is potential for alignment or misalignment between space as it is designed and its claims to legitimacy. To futher complicate matters, internal or external stakeholders may perceive the degree of alignment differently. Proffitt and Zahn (2006), however, focused on the design of organizational spaces rather than on "spaces in use" (Gastelaar 2011). Therefore, they did not explicitly consider the ongoing construction and transformation of organizational legitimacy and space. We believe that a dynamic perspective that considers the mutual shaping of organizational legitimacy and space is important because the legitimacy and work demands that an organization face change over time.

Regarding legitimacy, a new organization must build its legitimacy (Gioia et al. 2010, Navis and Glynn 2010), whereas an established organization facing controversy must maintain or repair it (Elsbach and Sutton 1992). To account for these changing demands, Suchman (1995, p. 586) conceptualized organizational legitimacy as a "social construction" shaped in part by fluctuating institutional conditions. What makes an organization legitimate at a certain point in time may not sustain its

legitimacy when institutional conditions change (Navis and Glynn 2011, Scott 2004, Scott et al. 2000); thus, organizations will typically adjust their legitimacy claims and efforts (Oliver 1991). Building and managing organizational legitimacy are ongoing efforts.

Work demands also fluctuate in ways that affect the organizational space. For instance, a start-up company does not face the same spatial needs for its employees to be able to accomplish their work as a large, established corporation. Recent calls for a "spatial turn" in organizational research and theory (Kornberger and Clegg 2006, Taylor and Spicer 2007) have pondered the stability and flexibility of organizational spaces (Van Marrewijk 2009). Even though organizational spaces are durable, they are also mutable (Gastelaars 2010, Gieryn 2002). Walls move, offices get renovated, and new spaces get added or shared (e.g., Deroy and Clegg 2012). These alterations transform not only the work environment and what people do in space (Gastelaars 2010) but also the space's symbolic meaning and its relationship with various claims of organizational legitimacy.

Sociomateriality and the Imbrication of Space and Legitimacy Through Spatial Practices

The sociomaterial perspective on organizations (Leonardi and Barley 2010, Orlikowski 2007, Orlikowski and Scott 2008), building on broader social science theories (see Barad 2003, 2007; Callon 1991; Latour and Woolgar 1986; Pickering 1995), offers a useful analytical lens to understand the dynamic and mutually constitutive relationship between space and organizational legitimacy. From a sociomaterial perspective, the material (e.g., walls, windows, corridors, furniture) and the social and symbolic (e.g., the organization's legitimacy) are "entangled" (Orlikowski and Scott 2008) or "imbricated" (Leonardi 2011) through practices.

In this paper, we propose that an organization's claims to legitimacy and the spaces it occupies are imbricated. Building on seminal works (Ciborra 2006, Sassen 2006, Taylor 2001), Leonardi (2011) developed the metaphor of imbrication to explain how the social and the material are distinct yet interdependent. This metaphor is especially useful because it acknowledges differences in agencies (i.e., organizational spaces do not have "intention" per se, but their designers and users do and might project ideas and stories onto spaces) while considering how the material and social are in "synergistic interaction" (Leonardi 2011, p. 151).

To conceptualize further how the imbrication of organizational space and legitimacy unfolds over time, we mobilize the concept of "spatial practices" (Clegg and Kornberger 2006, Lefebvre 1991). More specifically, we argue that spatial practices bring about the imbrication of organizational space and legitimacy in an ongoing manner. Spatial practices enable the "production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristics of each social formation" (Lefebvre 1991, p. 33) and, as such, shape organizational spaces over time. The existing literature has distinguished three key spatial practices—appropriation, reappropriation, and disappropriation—through which people are continuously and distinctly involved in the production of a space (Chombart de Lauwe and Fichey-Poitret 1959, Lefebvre 1991). Echoing Marx, Lefebvre defined appropriation as the adaptation of a space to satisfy and expand human needs (Serfaty-Garzon 2003). The appropriation of a space corresponds to the practice of making a space one's own—making it one's territory with all its symbolic and affective dimensions—as well as the practice of transforming a space for a specific purpose or purposes (Barbey 1982).

Over time, a space may be appropriated and reappropriated. Lefebvre (1991, p. 164) noted that "an existing space may outlive its original purpose and the raison d'être which determines its forms, functions, and structures; it may thus in a sense become vacant, and susceptible to being diverted, reappropriated and put to a use quite different from its initial one." Lefebvre (1991) originally distinguished only between the spatial practices of appropriation and reappropriation, but Chombart de Lauwe and Fichey-Poitret (1959) extended Lefebvre's conceptualization by adding the spatial practice of disappropriation. Chombart de Lauwe and Fichey-Poitret defined disappropriation as the practice that strips a space from its previous uses. For instance, an organization moving in or out of a space is likely to engage in a thorough cleaning, an overall redesign, or perhaps a more drastic structural remodeling. With disappropriation, a space is transformed to meet the needs of a new organization or the changing needs of the current organization. In addition, new organizational occupants can then reappropriate their space. As suggested in the previous example, the three spatial practices of appropriation, reappropriation, and disappropriation are interconnected. In this research, we examine how these three types of spatial practices condition the imbrication of organizational space and legitimacy.

So far, the theoretical foundations of this research, building on research on organizational legitimacy, space, sociomateriality, and spatial practices, have offered useful conceptual tools to understand how the tensions between organizational legitimacy and space may arise and be resolved through spatial practices. However, an important gap remains: little is still known about how spatial practices, over time, deal with the changing demands of legitimacy and work for an organization. This is an important issue given that what makes an organization legitimate (or not) and how people may (or may not) do their work is likely to fluctuate and shift because of changing institutional and organizational circumstances. Therefore, the alignment between what a space "says" and "does" for an organization can only be

provisional, and the imbrication of space and legitimacy needs to be revisited in an ongoing manner. Our work addresses this gap by developing theory on the dynamics of imbrication of space and legitimacy through spatial practices over time. To advance on this issue, we now turn to our case study.

Methods

Case Setting

Along with seminal organizational research on space and organizational dynamics (Clegg and Kornberger 2006, Gagliardi 1990, Wasserman and Frenkel 2011, Yanow 1995), we adopted the single-case study methodology, as we had access to an auspicious and history-rich organizational space.

Paris Dauphine University was founded in 1968 and is located in western Paris. Since the university's creation, it has occupied the building NATO used as its headquarters from 1959 to 1966. Originally called the *Palais de l'OTAN* ("NATO palace"), the building was constructed at the height of the Cold War (Raflik 2007). The decision to erect a dedicated building for NATO to use as its headquarters dated from the early 1950s. The lead architect and interior designer, Prix de Rome laureate and Academié des Beaux-Arts member Jacques Carlu (1890–1976), had already designed high-profile buildings in France and abroad (Langlois 1978, Gourmay 1991).[1] The NATO Council approved Carlu's initial design for the building in February 1955.

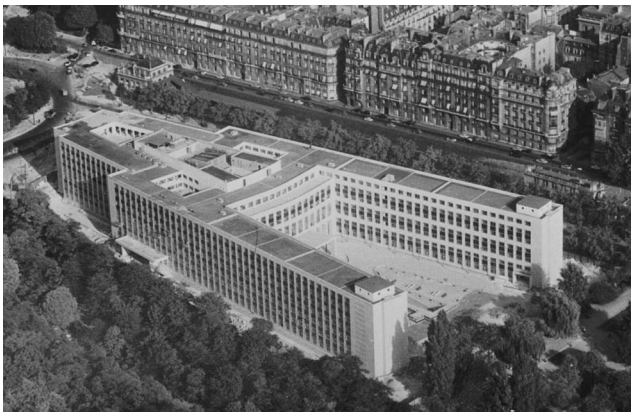
After five years of construction, the building was inaugurated on December 15, 1959. People have widely associated the shape of the building with an A (for "Alliance" or "Atlantic") or a V (for "Victory"), though the architect never stated that this was his intention. The building occupied a 16,000 m^2 (172,000 sq. feet) plot (see Figure 1). Each of its two original wings had long hallways that ran for hundreds of "units" (offices). The building measured 185 meters (600 feet) long by 21 meters (69 feet) wide. The width of the two wings at the widest point was 70 meters (230 feet). For the most part, offices were identical and aligned in a rectilinear fashion.

Key components of the building included seven aboveground and two underground floors, as well as 1,160 windows. There were 1,100 offices, including 350 for 15 national delegations and 750 for central services. Moreover, there were 13 conference rooms, including the assembly room, which spanned three floors and held 550 seats. The building also had a pressroom; three radio transmission stations and three television stations; 16 interpreters' booths; two video projection amphitheaters; a library, post office, and bank; a small projection room; a restaurant that held approximately 700 seats; and a cafeteria. The communication facilities were cutting-edge for the late 1950s and early 1960s, with a strong telephone infrastructure at its core (Otto 1960).

Meeting spaces were limited, and the few conference rooms that did exist were absorbed into the linear architecture of each wing, thus reducing the likelihood of chance encounters and discussions among various national delegates. Among the rare collective spaces, the building included two large spaces for deliberation. The heart of the building was the large assembly room and the command center, which the building's architect and commissioning body believed would help administrate NATO while providing resources to encourage collegial decision making.

By design, most of the building's spaces were private offices for specific delegations or central services. There were a few semipublic spaces as well, such as conference rooms, the main exterior courtyard, the great hall, and the "lost steps" room (see Figure 2). This last room featured a Latin maxim chosen by then-Secretary General Paul-Henri Spaak and Belgian Ambassador André de Staercke, dean of the council: *Animus in consulendo liber* ("In counsel an independent spirit"). Administrative and deliberative tasks dominated the use of the space.

Figure 1 Aerial View of NATO's Headquarters in 1959



Source. NATO.

Figure 2 Lost Steps Room with Latin Maxim Over the Doorway

Source. NATO.

The building's commissioners had intended it to be a genuine "fortress" during a tense period of the Cold War and a symbol of French ambivalence toward NATO and the United States. Access from the outside was limited to three entry points—one in the central courtyard and symmetrical ones off each of the two wings. Glass-paneled outposts made it possible to monitor the distant arrival of visitors coming in from open, large streets. Beyond the rather harsh appearance of curtain-like façades, the building possessed a steel structure identical to what is customarily used in skyscrapers. Consequently, the building relied on very few load-bearing walls and was amenable to reconfiguration.

For several reasons, this case setting offers a unique opportunity to examine from a *longue durée* perspective (Braudel 1958, de Vaujany 2010) the dynamics of organizational space, legitimacy, and spatial practices. First, founded in the late 1960s, Paris Dauphine University had to establish its legitimacy in the competitive landscape of Parisian higher education. This was relevant to us because establishing legitimacy is especially important for universities and educational institutions (Bercovitz and Feldman 2008, Gioia et al. 2010, Labianca et al. 2001, Sauer et al. 2010) and can be particularly challenging for new organizations (Zimmerman and Zeitz 2002). Second, until 2009, when it developed a small second campus at La Défense, a business district west of Paris, Dauphine had occupied one main building; thus, the spatial practices that unfolded over time were easier to delineate. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, from the very beginning Dauphine has occupied a building with a short, yet rich and unique, past. For these reasons, Dauphine provided an excellent opportunity to examine the relationships between space, legitimacy claims, and spatial practices. Moreover, it allowed us to investigate how organizational decision makers "use" space and its history to make legitimacy claims that help justify characteristics of their organization. Dauphine constituted an "extreme" (Flyvberg 2006) or "unique" (Yin 2008) case study in which key theoretical concepts and relations of interest were visible (Eisenhardt 1989).

Data Collection

We were granted full and continued access to Paris Dauphine University and its space. We also had full access to its multiple and varied archives of material dating back to the building's design stage in the 1950s. Longitudinal data allowed us to gain a deep understanding of Dauphine from its origins as a nascent university to an established educational institution facing a dynamic environment. We could thus examine the university's changing needs in relation to its legitimacy, use of space over time, and its associated spatial practices. Finally, from a practical standpoint, the university presented itself as an opportunity for research as the field researcher joined the university's faculty. He experienced the space both as a new employee and as a scholar interested in organizational and spatial dynamics. As noted by Van Marrewijk and Yanow (2010, p. 8),

> Being a participant observer ethnographer and an organizational employee at the same time—the quintessential dual role of the participant observer—can enable researchers to draw on their experiences and visceral, emotional, and aesthetic responses as they move their bodies through corporate space in way that might have been shut off to other, non-employee ethnographers.

We started collecting data in early 2010, when the field researcher joined the university and experienced the space as a new employee and as a scholar interested in organizational and spatial dynamics. While taking notes, he worked and interacted with colleagues and students and became increasingly familiar with the building (see Table 1). The two authors exchanged notes on these experiences.

We also collected a variety of data from multiple archival sources to better understand the historical and current context of Paris Dauphine University and the space it has occupied. Our research was not historical per se (in particular, we did not thoroughly examine spatial practices during the NATO period), but we aimed at understanding better and conceptualizing further the mutual construction of an organization and its space through spatial practices. For this purpose we followed an approach similar to Gastelaars (2010), who adopted an in-depth qualitative method to contrast earlier and later uses of a building.

We relied on semistructured interviews with some Paris Dauphine University old-timers who had been working for the organization since the late 1960s or early 1970s. This group of old-timers included three full professors and a senior technical staff member, all retired or about to retire. During interviews we discussed the respondent's career, the university's history, his or her experiences of the building and its transformations over time, as well their general observations of past and current spatial practices. Interviews lasted, on average, 90 minutes and were recorded and transcribed. We also had numerous, less formal discussions with current faculty, students, staff, and administrators. These often spontaneous exchanges took place on the grounds of the investigated space. The field researcher collected "in vivo" reactions to current changes at Dauphine and in the building and at times took advantage of these unplanned interactions to obtain anecdotal reactions to the emerging interpretations of the case.

We also had access to secondary data in the form of interviews about Paris Dauphine University and its building. These interviews had been collected for an edited book published for the university's 40th anniversary (Richard and Waks 2009). These interviews gathered testimonies from 21 emeritus faculty and deans who had long been involved with the university and were

Table 1 Summary of Collected Data

Data and sources	Collected data	Period covered/evidence of concepts
Participant observation		
Three years of participant observation	Extensive written notes, compiled by date	Current period and spatial practices; current issues associated with Dauphine, its institutional environment, and legitimacy challenges; spatial legacies
Interviews		
Four formal interviews	Formal semistructured interviews recorded and fully transcribed	Current period, current and past spatial practices
Numerous informal exchanges and interviews with current faculty, staff, and students	Extensive notes taken during and after informal exchanges	Interpretation of building, its transformation, and legitimacy challenges of Dauphine
Twenty-one secondary interviews	Written testimonies of former Dauphine senior staff accessed through a book (Richard and Waks 2009)	Past period and spatial practices, background information on historical and institutional context, explicit mentions of legitimacy concerns and of building remodelings
Archival and contemporary pictures		
More than 2,000 pictures taken of the inside and outside of the building	Photos from archives, Web-based databases, and authors	Building at different periods: construction, NATO period, university birth, growth, current period; remodelings of the space and spatial practices; spatial legacies
Historical archives		
From the Centre d'Archives du 20ème siècle (1955–1959), NATO archives (1959–1966), Dauphine archives (1968–2011), Institut National de l'Audiovisuel	Press articles, design maps, plans, notes, general archives, as well as a database classifying documents by nature, source, and date	Historical background on the building and the institutions that have occupied it, background information on institutional context at different periods and legitimacy challenges and claims, spatial legacies
Online discussion groups		
Public online forums about Dauphine used by current and past students	Electronic recording of select informal exchanges among students	Stories about Dauphine and the space from key stakeholders

familiar with its space. These secondary data helped us grasp the university's history and the evolution of its legitimacy claims in a highly competitive and changing institutional landscape.

Visual data were also collected, including photographs, architectural plans, and, occasionally, archival videos. The importance of visual data has long been established in anthropology and ethnology (Bateson and Mead 1942, Malinowski 1922) and has been forcefully advocated for in organizational research (Meyer et al. 2013, Taylor and Hansen 2005). Visual data allowed us to understand the long-term changes in the space to get a sense of the different spatial practices that had developed since the university's early days. In addition to accessing archival photographs and plans, we also took snapshots (approximately 2,000 pictures covering the various academic terms and areas of the building). Sometimes we showed respondents photographs to elicit comments and reveal implicit meaning (Collier and Collier 1986). During the intermediate stages of our research, pictures also allowed us to confront our own emerging interpretations of space and spatial practices through time.

Data Analysis

As is customary with qualitative case study research (see Bailey et al. 2012, Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007, Kaplan and Orlikowski 2013, Miles and Huberman 1994, Yin 2008), the data collection and analysis processes overlapped considerably. In fact, we started to analyze our data while simultaneously collecting more from the field in order to refine our emerging interpretations. The analysis proceeded in several stages.

Our first objective was to determine whether there were trends in spatial and/or organizational change over time. We identified three key periods with particular spatial and organizational dynamics at Paris Dauphine University. The first period corresponded to the university's birth in the wake of the 1968 student protests[2] and subsequent academic reforms (1968–late 1972). The second period, from 1973 to 1994, saw Dauphine's growth and establishment as a prestigious management university in the French public higher education system. The third period corresponded to Dauphine's international expansion and the subsequent redefinition of its mission and search for international accreditations. Each of these periods included consistent observations regarding the institutional context, uses, and changes in the building, as well as coherent dynamics associated with the organization that used the building and the legitimacy demands it faced.

As we reordered our data by period, we developed chronologies and narratives that reflected the myriad events affecting the building and the university. Our initial research interest had been relatively broad, dealing

with how the building had affected the practices of people working at the university. We realized then that our data revealed interesting dynamics with respect to what people did with the space in which they worked, rather than merely with how people worked. We therefore went back to the literature and identified Lefebvre's (1991) concepts of "lived" versus "conceived" space as well as his understanding of spatial practices. Having narrowed our focus, we returned to our data and coded them for both period and spatial practices (i.e., appropriation, reappropriation, disappropriation).

As we coded our data, we realized the case had unearthed intriguing dynamics associated with the mutual constitution of the space (the building) and the organization (Paris Dauphine University). To deepen this understanding, we iterated with the literature on sociomateriality and engaged the concept of imbrication. We then went back to our data to identify potential instances of imbrication in relation to the building and the university. In doing so, we recognized that certain spatial practices (e.g., reappropriation and disappropriation, in particular) were a function of specific institutional pressures and the organization's subsequent legitimacy claims.

The next iteration with the literature involved delving into organizational legitimacy and the claims and strategies organizations put forward at different stages of their existence and in relation to diverse institutional environments (Oliver 1991, Suchman 1995). Returning to our data, we sought to better understand instances where spatial practices were associated with various strategies and claims meant to legitimate the university in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. We were then able to make sense of the mutual constitution of the building and the university over the long term. Furthermore, we also noticed that previous periods left material and symbolic traces in the building and that many spatial practices sought to manage these traces for the purpose of establishing organizational legitimacy. We detected, for instance, traces of the NATO period that were manipulated to legitimate the university well into the 2000s. We searched the literatures on space, spatial practices, and sociomateriality for a concept that would encapsulate this inductive discovery. We also extended our quest to connected but more peripheral literatures and to evolutionary theory, in particular, to see whether the notion of "path dependence" would shed light on our findings, but we found that the fit was limited. We therefore decided to call these material and symbolic traces *spatial legacies*. This emerging concept helped us further our conceptualization by connecting, through time, the different concepts of this research.

Case Study

This section analyzes the interconnected transformations of Paris Dauphine University, the building it has occupied, spatial practices, and legitimacy claims for each period of the university's history. Table 2 presents an analytical summary of the case.

Launching an Experimental University (1969–1972)

President Charles de Gaulle's decision to quit NATO's unified command in March 1966 led its council to transfer the NATO headquarters to Brussels in December of that year (Schütze 1966). After almost two years of vacancy, several higher education institutions moved into the building. In particular, a new university was to be created in response to the recent student protests and resulting education reforms (Feenberg and Freedman 2001, Musselin 2004). An emeritus professor who had witnessed the birth of the university explained, "The [Dauphine] project clearly was a post-May 1968 project, with a clear willingness to renovate the university system." The Ministry of Education set up a committee to create a new university dedicated to teaching economics and management while developing experimental teaching methods; the goal was to use parts of the recently vacated NATO building. A decree officially launched the new university (at first named "Dauphine experimental University Center") on October 24, 1968. Minister of National Education Edgar Faure decided to locate the new university in the former NATO headquarters. From the government's point of view, the building held the key advantages of being large, vacant, and located in a peaceful part of Paris that was relatively far from the traditional students' quarters, which had just been the place of unrest (Richard and Waks 2009).

During this period of birth, Paris Dauphine University had to ensure its legitimacy in this institutional environment characterized by a rejection of established pedagogical methods in higher education. The building the university came to occupy reflected this troubled institutional context. The university was situated away from the epicenter of the 1968 protests, even though Dauphine owed its very existence to them. This tension was also evident in the first claims to legitimacy: the university was to become (and be) an experimental university with an innovative teaching philosophy though its operations were to take place in the remote and safe confines of the former NATO building.

From the very beginning, Paris Dauphine University was associated with the building it would use: the committee in charge of creating the university was called the "NATO committee." This committee had nothing to do with NATO as an institution, but its name expressed a clear historical and symbolic link between the nascent university and the space it was slated to inhabit. Two other smaller higher-education institutions started to occupy the building during this period: the National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations (INALCO) and the Institute for Political Studies preparatory course. Access to real estate in the building became grounds for negotiation. In fact, at times

Table 2 Analytical Summary of the Case

Concept	Period 1: Launching an experimental university (1969–1972)	Period 2: Building and consolidating a hybrid institution (1973–1994)	Period 3: Internationalizing the university (1994–Present)
Institutional context	Students' revolts of May 1968, French higher education field in search of new academic and pedagogical models	Professionalization of managerial and administrative sciences, increased competition among French higher education institutions	Increased competition among universities on an international scale, increased pressure of international accreditations and ratings
Dauphine's legitimacy challenges and claims	Establishing legitimacy of the new university as pedagogically innovative	Sustaining legitimacy of a "hybrid" university (publicly funded but prestigious and selective)	Preserving legitimacy of a university confronted with new and broader competition
Relationships between legitimacy claims and space	Alignment: Multiple small rooms support and justify pedagogical innovation of small-group teaching	Alignment: Prestige of NATO past of the building reverberates in Dauphine, fortress appearance of the building resonates with selection process, multiple small rooms support and justify small-group teaching	Tension: Decrepit aspect of the building contradicts image of prestige and modernity of university, multiple small rooms hinder pedagogical innovations (students' teamwork)
Spatial practices of appropriation	Appropriation of the building by nascent university, use of NATO-period artifacts and symbols	Dauphine made available to its faculty and staff multiple semiprivate spaces, owing to the small rooms inherited from the building's original design	Inauguration of a new wing creating space for research activities, most new spaces created for and appropriated by students
Spatial practices of reappropriation	Minor transformations of space to create small classrooms for the nascent university	Renovations involving a combination of original offices to create small classrooms to accommodate the needs of a growing university, classrooms increasingly outfitted with IT equipment	Classrooms retrofitted with newer technological equipment, adjustments made to accommodate population growth in building
Spatial practices of disappropriation	Intense competition among educational institutions for use of the building	N/A	Creation of new public spaces that have replaced semiprivate office spaces, creation of larger classrooms and multiplicity of students' workspaces, redesign of lobby and major rooms, and an overall "makeover" of the building to erase the last material traces from the NATO period
Spatial legacies	Multiple offices, NATO maxim used in university logos, NATO command center repurposed for executive committees, stars on entry grids, reuse of some NATO-era artifacts and furniture, cultivation of spatial legacies	Multiple offices, NATO maxim used in university logos, NATO command center repurposed but modernized over time, stars on entry grids, progressive abandon of most NATO-era artifacts and furniture, cultivation and transformation of spatial legacies	Fewer but larger offices, NATO maxim removed from university logos, NATO command center entirely outfitted, stars on entry grids, total abandon of NATO-era artifacts and furniture, removal of most spatial legacies

there were physical struggles among representatives of the three educational institutions. Intense competition for office space and conference rooms had members of Dauphine, INALCO, and the Institute for Political Studies seizing rooms in a "guerilla-like" manner (Richard and Waks 2009) only to have the space reclaimed shortly after. These incidents revealed spatial practices of disappropriation, as intense competition among the new higher education institutions that had taken residency in the building competed with each other for space. Dauphine ended up keeping most of the building with INALCO occupying a small proportion of the space; the Institute for Political Studies moved out entirely in 1972.

Within Paris Dauphine University, many meetings took place in the largest conference rooms where faculty, students' unions representatives, and administrators intensely debated what the university should be, what it should do, and what it should teach. According to its first dean, at that time the university was

> a vast squat in which the spirit of May 1968 was strongly felt. Dauphine, Sciences Po [Political Studies Institute], INALCO, etc., fought over the floors and the large

> lecture halls. Within Dauphine, even, general assemblies frequently took place. We tirelessly discussed the goals of the Institution [Dauphine] that some wanted towards Management and others towards Economics. Some wanted it pro-market, others Marxist.
> (Richard and Waks 2009, p. 29)

The university was to become a countermodel to the traditionally dominant model of French higher education. For this purpose, small classrooms were created through the combination of several smaller NATO-period offices, indicative of the spatial practice of reappropriation. The university was to be innovative and experimental in its teaching methods (e.g., encouraging in-class participation and limiting final examinations) and was open to discussions and arguments, as illustrated by a comment from an emeritus faculty:

> We worked collectively, without hierarchy. We read everything but the textbooks, because we thought that they stifled original thinking. We dreamt of deconstructing/reconstructing economics on an anthropological foundation. We got passionate for lively debates in social and human sciences of the time . . . . We claimed departures, especially in epistemological terms . . . . Our teaching, in small groups, where smoking was allowed, called for permanent discussion . . . . This was a real intellectual adventure. (Richard and Waks 2009, p. 35)

The appropriation of space by the nascent university was thus also a catalyst for its founding members to elaborate, discuss, and debate its mission and legitimacy claims. The organization gained full university status in 1971. Located near Porte Dauphine, the university had, by calling itself Dauphine, already established a strong association with its location. Moreover, the university's first logo was of a dolphin (an obvious reference to the "Dauphine" name; see Figure 3) and a banner with the NATO maxim *Animus in consulendo liber*.

Figure 3 First Logo in 1971 with the NATO Maxim

Source. Archives of Université Paris-Dauphine.

The university's early promotional leaflets also included pictures of the building's ironwork gates with the NATO stars, even when the NATO stars had little to do with the university. University members also reused artifacts from the NATO period, including calculators and office furniture. Through these objects, the university established a connection with the NATO period of the building. Dauphine University thus relied on the space and some NATO-era symbols and material objects to anchor its nascent legitimacy.

Building and Consolidating a Hybrid Institution (1973–1994)

During the 1970s and 1980s, Paris Dauphine University gradually established a selective admission process that echoed the "fortress" aspect of the building it inhabited. At the time, selectiveness was unprecedented in the French public higher education system and made the university something of a hybrid institution—part public university (open to most or all high school graduates and generally free) and part *grande école*, as described by Bourdieu (1989a) (selective, elitist, and deeply embedded in a social system where it functions to reproduce various forms of capital). The university had thus acquired a unique position in the higher education landscape, and this was reflected in everyday discourse. For example, people said students merely "went" to a sister university (University of Paris VIII that was also created after the May 1968 protests and was formerly known as the 1968 experimental university center in Vincennes ("Centre Universitaire Expérimental de Vincennes")) with the idea that "going" did not suggest much effort. By contrast, the accepted language was that students had to "enter" Dauphine, suggesting a more rigorous admissions process.

Students therefore had to earn their place at Paris Dauphine University, as if they had to find a way to penetrate the seemingly impregnable edifice. During this period of growth, Dauphine established its legitimacy as a hybrid institution that was publicly funded and yet highly selective. These legitimacy claims were reflected in the building the university occupied insofar as its fortress-like appearance was reflected in its highly selective admissions process.

Over the years, remodeling projects in the building proceeded to adjust the material space to better reflect the university's educational missions. Most construction projects involved combining two or three original offices to create small classrooms, though relatively few walls were torn down. From its very beginning, the university championed an innovative pedagogy that was unlike traditional French universities and that attempted to respond in part to the 1968 students' protests. In particular, Dauphine was committed to small-group teaching with sections of 20 to 30 students per classroom

(Richard and Waks 2009). Reappropriation practices therefore took place when several original offices were combined to create small classrooms; the original NATO-period space was transformed, but not radically so, to accommodate the needs of a growing university.

Former students and faculty often associated the building's material constraints with the decision to teach in small groups. In the 1970s, the new university's administrators presented the building as a relatively inflexible architectural structure and justified the innovative pedagogical projects of small-group teaching as its inevitable consequence:

> Lectures in large halls would have anyway been impossible due to the layout of the edifice, [they] disappeared in favor of a small group teaching that put emphasis on presentations, document work, and exchanges.
>
> (Richard and Waks 2009, p. 19)

What was presented as material "constraints" of the space thus served to legitimate an original teaching method. In 1970s France, small-group teaching was a very innovative pedagogical method for higher public education. The spatial practice of disappropriation thus was not present during this period as the university leveraged its connection with the NATO past of the building. Moreover, invoking the NATO maxim also served to legitimate university-wide events such as graduation ceremonies that periodically took place in the building's largest conference room. Material and symbolic traces of the NATO period therefore continued to be cultivated during this period.

Early renovation projects also left untouched many original private spaces from the NATO period that then turned into numerous single offices for faculty and staff. Through these spatial practices of appropriation, Dauphine made available to its faculty and staff multiple semiprivate spaces, owing to the small rooms inherited from the building's original design. University faculty became accustomed to staying in the building beyond their teaching hours. At the time, in other higher education institutions (especially in Paris), because of space limitations it was rare for faculty to have their own offices. As an emeritus professor remarked,

> Dauphine offered a huge material advantage . . . . Its countless offices allowed [for faculty's] presence beyond teaching. Admittedly, these offices are not in star. They do not always facilitate group interactions, but they have the merit of allowing for continuous presence. In the Paris I [Sorbonne University] of the time, academics only made brief stays in the faculty lounge, and then went back home. Their office was in their home.

This comment reveals how university members compared the building with the premises of another, well-established university, the Sorbonne, to define and make claims of quality. The availability of private offices (and space more generally) distinguished the university from other educational institutions. Compared with its "competitors"—i.e., other Parisian social science universities such as the Sorbonne or Assas, with large lecture halls and few individual or even shared faculty offices—Dauphine offered semiprivate spaces for almost all its faculty. This NATO-period spatial residue encouraged faculty to make themselves available to students and colleagues interested in discussing teaching and research. This may explain, at least in part, why Dauphine faculty collaborated on research projects more so than their peers at other French social sciences universities (Pontille 2003). The material characteristics of the slightly remodeled building thus affected faculty behavior in a concrete manner.

Making Over the University and Its Premises in a Changing World (1994–Present)

Since the early 1990s, Paris Dauphine University has grown considerably. During the NATO period, there were approximately 2,000 occupants in the building. As of 2013, however, the university now hosts more than 12,000 students, faculty, and staff. This increased population has gradually led to feelings of confinement and of being in a space that has proven flexible but not infinitely extendable.

Workspaces have become crowded, particularly faculty offices in the two original wings. Full professors have been able to keep their own offices, but assistant professors have to share their space. Graduate students and administrative assistants have worked in larger open-space rooms. Offices have thus started to evoke symbolically the classic organizational hierarchy, with the largest offices given to department chairs. Three to four administrative assistants usually share an office, with many attempting to create semiprivate spaces using plants and folders. In some offices, administrative assistants use their computer monitors to separate themselves from others. In one notable instance, an assistant lowered her chair and placed her massive monitor in such a way as to be nearly invisible to students entering an office she shares with several others.

Paris Dauphine University has had to face another challenge of strategic nature. The French field of higher education has undergone drastic transformations since the mid- to late 1990s. It has become more internationally oriented with the ongoing process of European Union construction in particular (Allegre et al. 1998, Teichler 2004, van der Wende 2000). Additionally, as noted previously, pedagogical innovations in higher education in the 1970s and 1980s involved appeals to small-group teaching (Springer 1999), a technique the university had incorporated into its practices and legitimacy claims. Since then, however, emphasis has been placed on group work, rather than individual assignments, and on fostering active learning processes (Entwistle 2004, Kolb and Kolb 2005, Livingstone 2000).

In this changing environment, maintaining the university's legitimacy as an innovative and elite institution has required steering away from its original pedagogical emphasis and, thus, new construction projects as well.

Major construction and renovation projects have been undertaken since the 1990s and early 2000s and have included the creation of new spaces such as an airy cafeteria, larger classrooms, a research library (Lohisse and Sogno 2008), and a large lecture hall located in what used to be the NATO assembly room. Most notably, a new steel and glass wing closed off the NATO building's original A or V shape in October 1994. This resulted in a major transformation of Paris Dauphine University facilities (see Figure 4).

In addition to these projects that led to the creation and appropriation of new spaces, other projects have involved outfitting classrooms with newer technology and furniture and creating underground classrooms and multiple meeting rooms. These remodeling projects have revealed the presence of the spatial practice reappropriation during this period as well. These (re)construction processes were deemed necessary if the university was to maintain its standing as a cutting-edge higher education institution. New open and hub-like spaces where people could stop and talk were created and have added "public" and "semipublic" spaces relatively absent from the building's original design. Most of these new spaces are intended for students—to facilitate group work for team assignments in particular—rather than for administrative staff or faculty. Navigating from the old wings to the new one has been difficult, however, and going from one floor to another between wings has been even harder. The new wing's staircases are on the outside of the building, and the elevators do not reach the higher floors without occupants having to use a rare key to gain access. The new research library has split the building into two distinct areas accessible only by external stairs. This absence of pathways connecting the new and old wings of the building has symbolized the university's difficulty to engage and assimilate its past.

Figure 4 Building of the New Wing

Front view

Back view

Source. The authors.

Since the early 2000s, the university has invested in dedicated computerized resources in part to manage the lack of available study space. Computerization has decreased the need for paper-based archives, and students have been able to consult databases via remote access, hence reducing their need to be on campus. That most of the university's students come from upper-middle class backgrounds and have homes with offices, laptops, and Internet connections at their disposal has only accelerated the transition. Advanced information technologies (ITs) (e.g., laptops, smartphones, video displays) have also found their place in the building; however, at times the integration of IT with the "old" space (the building's two original wings) has created problems. Video projectors have worked poorly in classrooms lacking appropriate, clean, or distant enough walls to project images. Moreover, in such a complicated space it can be difficult for someone who is outside visiting a firm or at home doing research to contact a colleague who might be somewhere in the building. In the last few years, people have increasingly relied on mobile phones to handle these issues.

The building has started to project an image of obsolescence to external stakeholders. Visitors, including prospective students and corporate representatives, have often commented on graffiti in corridors, distressed teaching rooms, and a lack of cleanliness in the original wings of the building. "I did not expect Dauphine to look like *this*," a scathing comment frequently heard, suggests a discrepancy between the university's reputation as an elite and innovative institution and the decrepit appearance of certain areas. This period therefore saw a growing disconnect between the university's legitimacy claims and the space it occupied. The university has had to come to terms with its dated infrastructure.

The lack of space and the building's outmoded appearance have left people feeling constrained rather than inspired or innovative. A major transformation of the

building has, consequently, been recently undertaken to align the building with the university's latest strategic direction. Dauphine has developed a partnership with other top French universities and *grandes écoles* to increase its international ranking in 2010. Reflecting the importance of these strategic changes, construction projects began in mid-2011. In addition to new suspended corridors, wing by wing and floor by floor, the whole building will be refreshed, with projects lasting until 2017. The main entry hall has been completely restructured to let natural light flow into a more open space (see Figure 5). This new hall, with its visible welcome stand, tangibly indicates that one *enters* the university rather than merely passes by it.

Other parts of the edifice have also been redesigned and entirely reconstructed. The former NATO command room that had, until 2010, remained mostly untouched has been slated for a complete renovation. It has been equipped with new walls for improved acoustics as well as with comfortable designer furniture. A high-tech mobile table has replaced the massive and heavy round table inherited from the NATO era. These drastic changes to the space have been deemed necessary to make the space more suitable to the needs of organizing prestigious conferences and events. In a significant instance of disappropriation, the NATO maxim, a symbol of the post-May 1968 period, has been removed.

Figure 5 Views of the Main Lobby Before and After the 2011–2012 Remodeling

Source. The authors.

Many Paris Dauphine University faculty, students, and visitors have commented on the new, cleaner, and more "corporate" look of the entry hall. Some have expressed regrets and attachment to the building's previous appearance. Some old-timer faculty have even resented the changes that, they believe, have rendered the building less distinct and more anonymous by stripping away the various quirks that reflected its unique history and by erasing what remained of its unique and prestigious history. However, many others have commented that the updated design and ongoing projects have at last brought the building into the 21st century and have supported the image of the university as an internationally competitive, research-oriented institution dedicated to the progress of organization sciences.

Despite these major past, ongoing, and future spatial transformations, the building and its history have remained in its current occupants' imaginations, causing both pride and nostalgia. Some students and employees have spoken of the building's former life, and those aware of the building's history have expressed admiration. The following exchange from a students' online message board illustrates this point. A participant noted,

> I find the subject [of the building's history] absolutely fascinating! It's unusual to have a building with such a past!

To which another student added,

> Yeah, well, it'd be really rude to spit on it.... And to know that NATO meetings have taken place in the space, you can find, maybe, depending on someone's sensibility, a kind of "pride." I'm not promoting elitism, but when I see *X*, or *Y* [other Parisian universities].... Oh la la....

Students have therefore still occasionally referred to the NATO history of the building as something to be proud of, as participating in the image of Paris Dauphine University as an elite institution, different from (and, implicitly, better than) other public universities.

University faculty and administrators have also frequently mentioned the prestigious history of the building to visitors, which has also been chronicled on its website. Faculty and administrators have in particular mentioned the building's history during events organized in the Raymond Aron room, where a sense of prestige reverberates in the events that have taken place in its midst (e.g., meetings with business mentors, workshops organized by departments rather than university-wide). These events have remained in the "older" parts of the building rather than in its newer, technologically equipped, and more comfortable sections. The history of the space has therefore continued to be used to legitimize small events.

Other, more fantastical vestiges have inspired urban legends such as the atomic bomb shelter presumably

located under the parking garage. Such shelters appeared neither in the preproject plans nor in Carlu's final designs. Present-day maps and explorations below the first, second, and third floors have not revealed any such shelter, but only a large storage area, some air ducts, and some water pipes. However, the legend has endured. One of the building's janitors, working on the underground floors, explained that the shelter had probably been sealed off and that he sometimes saw people coming out from underground via the ductwork, possibly "French secret servicemen." Evidently, the building's past—real or imagined—remains present in the thoughts and interactions of its current occupants. The atomic shelter rumor has persisted from one generation to the next even though the geopolitical context is now very different from what it was during the Cold War. The enduring rumor reveals how deeply entrenched the history of the space and its (at times fantastical) symbols continues to be, even though the university and the building itself have drastically changed over the years.

Spatial Legacies

The long-term perspective of the case study helped us conceptualize further how organizational space and legitimacy are imbricated in time through spatial practices. Buildings and office spaces can outlast the organizations for which they were originally built. Spaces display both endurance and visibility (Gastelaars 2010) as they capture and express remnants of the past while providing a setting for spatial practices and legitimacy claims. Spaces can change and be repurposed for different uses as organizations' needs change and as its legitimacy claims change (see Wasserman 2011, Wasserman and Frenkel 2011). Moreover, spaces may support or contradict changing claims of legitimacy, and different spatial practices might help align or realign organizational space and legitimacy claims.

To theorize the accumulation, relative stability, and/or transformation of an organization's space and legitimacy over time, we propose the notion of spatial "legacies" as enduring repositories of an organization's spatial history. This notion encapsulates the idea that, at any point in time, an organizational space displays traces of previous periods' spaces and spatial practices in ways that constrain and enable current spatial practices, the organizational space itself, as well as claims of organizational legitimacy. Spatial legacies have a material form and function. Over time, their material function may become obsolete, but they may keep a symbolic function and become referred to for legitimacy purposes (see Table 2). For instance, in the main hall of the second floor, the plaque with the NATO maxim had long lost its initial function (i.e., to remind NATO officers of the mission and the institution's purpose); nevertheless, despite renovations, it was cultivated to bring prestige to the university and the events it organized.

The notion of spatial legacy is consistent with the metaphor of imbrication that "sensitizes us to the production of durable patterns. It reminds us that all actions between human and material agencies produce an organizational residue . . . . It enables a way to appreciate accumulation over time without resorting to deterministic language" (Leonardi 2011, pp. 151–152).

The notion of spatial legacy encapsulates this idea of nondeterministic accumulation over the *longue durée* (Braudel 1958, Mitev and de Vaujany 2012) and helps conceptualize the dynamic relationships between organizational space and legitimacy.

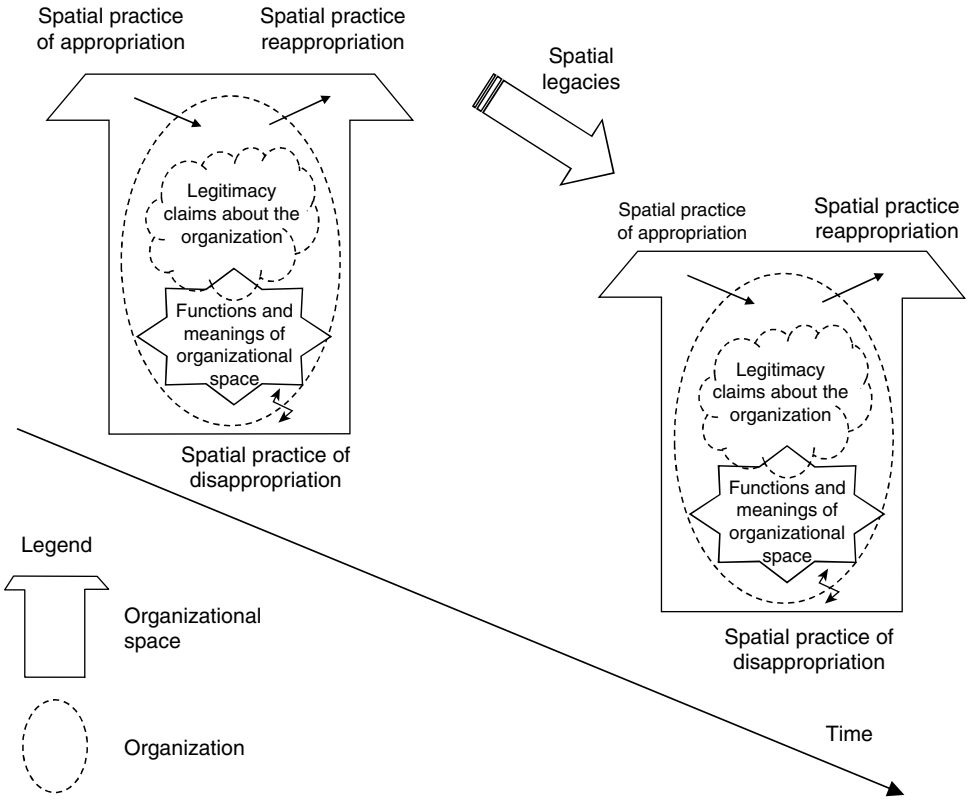
We further theorize that the imbrication of organizational space and legitimacy happens through spatial practices that deal with legacies in distinct ways. Spatial practices of appropriation and reappropriation build and manipulate spatial legacies, whereas spatial practices of disappropriation attempt to break away from such legacies. Appropriation and reappropriation thus involve managing spatial legacies to maintain the alignment between organizational space and legitimacy claims. Disappropriation involves trying to erase or alter these legacies to realign the space to changing legitimacy claims (see Figure 6).

Space offers a setting for the organization and for its members' work. In line with the visual representations of the imbrication of the social and the material (Leonardi 2011), as well as earlier representations of the structuring of technology and organizations (Barley 1986, Orlikowski and Yates 1994), we present space and organization as analytically distinct (represented by straight lines and a doted oval, respectively, in Figure 6) but interdependent. Consistent with the imbrication metaphor, the functions and meaning of the organizational space and the claims of legitimacy that its members make are thus distinct but interdependent. Such interdependencies are symbolized by the partial overlap between their representations.

Spatial practices of appropriation, reappropriation, and disappropriation shape these interdependencies. The spatial practice of appropriation, represented as an arrow from the space to the organization, involves space as taken in by the organization. The spatial practice of reappropriation, represented as an arrow from the organization to the space, involves the organization transforming the space in some fashion. Finally, the spatial practice of disappropriation, represented as a double arrow, involves the reshuffling of both space and organization.

Our theory development addresses the stability and change of organizational space, claims of legitimacy, and spatial practices over time. As spatial legacies emerge and develop, they affect key aspects of the space and claims of organizational legitimacy. Through the spatial practices of appropriation and reappropriation, spatial legacies might accumulate, be transformed, and be nurtured to maintain an alignment between space and

Figure 6 The Imbrication Over Time of Organizational Space and Legitimacy Through Spatial Legacies and Practices



legitimacy claims. In the case of inconsistencies between organizational space and its legitimacy claims, the spatial practice of disappropriation erases some of these spatial legacies to help reestablish alignment between space and legitimacy.

Discussion and Implications

Because we investigated a building with a truly unique past, we did not seek empirical generalizability. Many of our observations are specific to a single-site organization and a building with an idiosyncratic history. Thus, what makes this case study interesting also renders empirical generalization beyond the French context difficult. Furthermore, constrained by the need to establish boundaries for our case study, we have not examined the broader spatiality of the building in its urban context. Although the confines of the building provide a relevant spatial scale, the organization's legitimacy dynamics and spatial practices did not stop at the building's gates. It is, however, our belief that our analyses and interpretations lead to theoretical generalizability (Lee and Baskerville 2003) insofar as we demonstrate how organizational space and legitimacy are mutually constructed over time through spatial practices and generate spatial legacies.

Our case study proved indispensable to uncover these dynamics by providing us with a unique historical and in-depth context in which spatial legacies and the three spatial practices were so clearly at play and related to organizational legitimacy. This theory development has implications for organization researchers interested in sociomateriality, organizational legitimacy, and space.

Implications for Research on Sociomateriality

Much of the fast-growing organization literature interested in unpacking the complex relationships between the social and the material under the "sociomateriality" umbrella has dealt with IT and their affordances in various organizational contexts (Majchrzak and Markus 2013, Orlikowski 2007, Wagner et al. 2010). Yet the relevance of sociomaterial concerns and concepts goes far beyond technology (Leonardi and Barley 2010, Orlikowski and Scott 2008).

This case study adds to sociomaterial research in two ways. First, it deals with the imbrication of an organization's space and its legitimacy claims, and therefore it has a broader focus than IT-related issues. Second, and more importantly, this research complements existing research on sociomateriality by delving into the long-term dynamics of this mutual constitution between space and legitimacy. Sociomaterial research is inherently dynamic (Orlikowski 2007, Orlikowski and Scott 2008). However, in part because IT is a recent and fast-moving phenomenon for organizations, much sociomaterial research, although focusing on the dynamics of

the mutual constitution of the social and material, has had to investigate phenomena whose time range measures in weeks or months (Scott and Orlikowski 2010, Wagner et al. 2010). Our perspective in this paper is on longer-term dynamics, in line with our interest on organizational spaces (that tend to be more durable than new technologies) and legitimacy claims (that rely on institutional conditions that change, but at a slower pace than that of technological innovations). The long-term gaze of this research allows us to put forward the concept of spatial legacies. We believe that this concept of legacies (be they related to an organizational space—spatial legacies—or, more generally, sociomaterial legacies) adds to research interested in the dynamics of the material and the social. It takes into account the long-term accumulation of past imbrications of the material and the social without resorting to determinism. Legacies come from previous periods' imbrications of the material and the social and condition future imbrications, but they are also constantly shaped and reshaped by different practices of appropriation, reappropriation, and disappropriation.

Implications for Research on Organizational Legitimacy

By extending the conceptualization of organizational legitimacy from a "social construction" (Suchman 1995, p. 586) to a sociomaterial construction, our findings help us understand how such an abstract notion finds itself anchored to material objects and settings and how, in turn, materiality imbued with meaning becomes an inherent part of changing legitimacy claims. This research thus reveals the sociomaterial foundation of organizational legitimacy and, in turn, demonstrates how changes in legitimacy demands get engraved in space. Lived space (Lefebvre 1991) is not only constantly designed and shaped by actual work and spatial practices; it is also molded on changing institutional conditions, putting pressure on diverse legitimacy claims. For instance, at the beginning of Dauphine's history, access to the vast NATO space, already divided into myriad small rooms, helped give the university legitimacy as an innovative institution in tune with its students' needs for small classes. Over time, however, the fit between the university's space and its legitimacy began to wane as the university grew and as its institutional context changed drastically. Traces of the NATO materiality and the symbolism associated with it gradually began to mitigate legitimacy claims.

Pushing this point further, this research reveals that if an organization's legitimacy claim relies on established tradition and distinctiveness, then spatial legacies are likely to be nurtured to support such legitimacy claims, and spatial practices of appropriation and reappropriation will likely prevail over spatial practices of disappropriation, as illustrated at the beginning of Paris Dauphine University's history. However, at the same time, such spatial legacies can give credence to the image of an organization as overly rooted in its past. Therefore, if an organization's claim to legitimacy lies in its potential for innovation, then spatial legacies are more likely to hinder legitimacy claims; spatial practices of disappropriation may then become more prevalent than those of appropriation and reappropriation. More generally, then, findings from this research connect with recent research that has emphasized the mutual formation of organizational identity and legitimacy (Gioia et al. 2010; Navis and Glynn 2010, 2011). This research adds "temporality" and "flow" (Langley et al. 2013) to these studies. Such research also reveals how the relationships between organizational identity and legitimacy are not only consequential for what organizations and their members actually do and how they position themselves during the birth and early stages of the organization or its industry but also throughout the organization's history. It also shows that these relationships are translated into and affected by the spatial conditions and practices through which work actually happens.

Paris Dauphine University's more recent construction projects are illustrative of these dynamic relationships. These projects and the mixed reactions they have received from different stakeholders reveal how space and spatial practices may hold unintended consequences that can affect the persuasiveness of an organization's legitimacy claims. For one, features of an organizational space and spatial legacies may contradict dominant legitimacy claims. In our case study, the absence of a physical bridge between the new and the old wings signified a degree of difficulty connecting past prestige and well-established teaching methods to new claims of performance and excellence in the increasingly competitive field of higher education. This research therefore shows that space-related projects (e.g., construction, remodeling) can have wide-ranging implications by affecting the effectiveness of an organization's legitimacy claims and stakeholders' perceptions of these claims. This research talks to recent research that has discovered how the material dimensions of organizations provide resources on which managers may draw to make legitimacy claims (Ravasi and Phillips 2011). It highlights that transforming these resources to adjust to new institutional conditions or work demands may require more than construction projects, given the symbolic dimension of spatial legacies. How organizations deal with spatial legacies can play a role in their ability to adjust, adapt, or even "resurrect" (Howard-Grenville et al. 2013).

Finally, this research adds to legitimacy scholarship by revealing how spatial practices can nurture spatial legacies inherited from other organizations (e.g., when Dauphine reappropriated vestiges of NATO—an intergovernmental alliance—to establish its legitimacy as a new higher education institution). This research therefore

suggests that an organization's legitimacy claims may be supported by spatial legacies from another organization's past. We see promise in future research examining further such temporal connections, through space, of different organizations' legitimation efforts.

Implications for Research on Organizational Spaces

A key contribution of this research to the rich literature on organizational space (Clegg and Kornberger 2006; Elsbach and Pratt 2007; Gieryn 2000, 2002; Kornberger and Clegg 2004; Taylor and Spicer 2007) deals with its emphasis on the institutional foundations of spatial dynamics. Specifically, this research reveals how the design and redesign of space, as well as ongoing spatial practices, respond not only to immediate organizational needs (i.e., for work) but also to changing institutional conditions. This finding is theoretically generalizable: generations of corporate architecture follow patterns that are based not only on individual organizations' needs but also on changes in institutional logics. For instance, recent trends in corporate architecture toward open-floor plans align strongly with legitimacy claims based on institutional pressure toward collaboration and innovation, regardless of their actual impact on work.

Moreover, the Paris Dauphine University case exemplifies how an organizational space such as a building (i.e., a relatively durable edifice) can be discursively presented as a material constraint on the one hand but as a flexible, almost "Lego"-like structure open to multiple remodeling projects on the other. Early in the university's history, for example, presenting the building as a formidable constraint limiting the maximum size of classrooms helped impose and legitimize small-group teaching. By contrast, in more recent years, major construction projects have radically reconstructed the space, as the institutional and work demands placed on the university have changed drastically. It has become legitimizing for the university to claim the flexibility of its premises, whereas, 30 years ago, claiming the immutability of the building was legitimizing.

Therefore, more generally, the rigidity and flexibility of an organizational space are sociomaterial constructions that unfold over time from the ongoing imbrication of the material features of the space and the social and institutional conditions that affect the organization. Our work participates in and adds to a constellation of research that has highlighted how space (and, in particular, geographical proximity) affects working conditions and innovation patterns in organizations or regions (Buhr and Owen-Smith 2010, Liu and Chown 2012, Owen-Smith and Powell 2004, Whittington et al. 2009). This research focuses on intraorganizational dynamics and thus does not talk directly to the relationships between an organizational space and its broader geographical environment (Deroy and Clegg 2012). Yet the temporal perspective it adopted is useful in showing that the spatial characteristics of an organization have a long-lasting influence on work and collaboration practices. This influence may persist even as the material grounding of these spatial characteristics change over time.

Concluding Remarks

This research revealed how walls "talk" by examining what they say about the mutual constitution of organizational space and legitimacy through spatial practices and legacies. We hope that more research will become attuned to listening to what walls have to say about organizational dynamics and conclude with practical implications of our work.

This research invites managers and practitioners to consider the wide-ranging implications of construction and remodeling projects. In particular, although many executives know of the legitimacy building potential of erecting shiny new headquarters, they may not be aware of the possibly unintended consequences of changes in the organizational space. This research revealed how the characteristics and affordances of a space become intricately enmeshed not only with what people can do but also with an organization's legitimacy claims. More specifically, diverse organizational stakeholders may perceive a space differently and associate it with more or less persuasive legitimacy claims. Being mindful of spatial legacies and anticipating the respective consequences of various spatial practices on different stakeholders thus holds practical value. Finally, this research revealed how, depending on changing institutional and work demands, managers may use in turn the immutability and the flexibility of a space to establish and sustain the legitimacy of their organization.

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Endnotes

[1]Most of the information provided in this section is based on our own exploration of the "fonds Jacque Carlu" at the Centre d'Archives du 20ème siècle in Paris.

[2]In May and June of 1968, major social protests took place in France. Initially involving university students, these protests

soon engulfed all workers, who went on strike during the period. It is often considered to be the biggest social movement experienced by France in the 20th century. It targeted the knowledge system of the time (e.g., French universities) as well as key aspects of consumerist society.

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