PARADOX AND COLLABORATION IN COALITION WORK

Sonia Ospina, Ph.D.

Co-Director, Research Center for Leadership in Action

Associate Professor of Public Management and Policy

Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

New York University

Email: sonia.ospina@nyu.edu

&

Angel Saz-Carranza

Research Associate, Research Center for Leadership in Action

Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

New York University

Email: asc312@nyu.edu

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we explore the role of paradox in the effective management of inter-organizational collaboration. We inquire into two identified paradoxes and the factors contributing to produce the type of inter-organizational collaboration that helps members of a coalition, as a type of network organization, attain their common goal. In terms of the inward work of building community among coalition members, we identified the paradox of unity and diversity. The following network management factors help address it successfully: nurturing and facilitating member interaction, openness and participatory processes, and attention to personal relationships. In terms of the outward work to influence a given target, we identified the paradox of confrontation and dialogue, effectively addressed by managing legitimacy and integrity; linking the local and the national; and paying attention to relationships with other environmental actors. Our findings suggest that the artful management of paradox is a key dimension of inter-organizational collaboration among members of the network and between the network itself and important environmental stakeholder groups.

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INTRODUCTION

A paradox is a dynamic tension grounded in the coexistence of opposites. It is a situation characterized by contradictory yet interrelated elements, which may seem logical in isolation, but are contradictory when appearing at the same time (Lewis 2000). In this paper we describe two paradoxes that emerge in the context of inter-organizational collaboration. We argue that the effective management of this type of social interaction may in fact depend on the ability of network members and leaders to capitalize on and use these paradoxes to honor, at the same time and with equal attention, important demands that require directing energy in opposing directions. This contrasts with other approaches to managing paradox, such as ignoring it, confronting it to try to resolve it, suppressing one of the tensions or merely accepting the trade-offs of unequally managing each demand (Lewis 2000).

Inter-organizational collaboration refers to independent organizations explicitly agreeing to interact to pursue common goals that help advance their own specific objectives (Huxham 1996; Kanter 1994; and Agranoff and McGuire 2003). As a particular type of interaction, inter-organizational collaboration takes place within a variety of structural contexts, such as coalitions, alliances, partnerships, and other organizational collaborative arrangements. For the purpose of this paper, our data are predominantly drawn from two cases that offer information about the dynamics of collaboration in the context of effective coalition work in a particular organizational field, immigration. We explored these dynamics in two organizational contexts: the Coalition of

Asian, American, European and Latin Immigrants of Illinois (CAAELII) and the New York

Immigration Coalition (NYIC).[1]

We have identified as a key dimension that makes collaboration possible, at least in the

context of immigration coalitions, the artful management of two paradoxes. One is associated

with the inward work of building community among its members, and the other one refers to the

outward work of achieving the goals of the coalition by influencing a given target. The first

paradox results from having to address simultaneously the demands for unity and diversity in the

coalition, and its artful management consists of finding ways to honor both demands equally.

The second paradox stems from the contradictory demands of challenging institutional targets

while avoiding burning bridges with individuals who are members of those institutions. Its artful

management consists of strategically using both confrontation and dialogue to engage

representatives of the target institutions at different points in time or at different levels

simultaneously.

In this paper we explore management factors associated with the interaction among coalition

members and between the coalition and other stakeholder groups to better understand how these

two paradoxes operate. In terms of inward work, and its associated paradox (unity and diversity),

we discuss the following management factors: nurturing and facilitating member interaction,

openness and participatory processes, and attention to personal relationships. With respect to the

outward work and its associated paradox (confrontation and dialogue), we discuss the following

management factors: cultivating legitimacy and integrity; linking the local and the national; and

paying attention to relationships with other external stakeholder groups.

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[1] This study is part of a broader national, multi-year, multi-method research project about social change leadership in the United States. For a description of this project see http://www.leadershipforchange.org/.

Despite a few exceptions (Huxham and Beech 2003), the various theoretical literatures on collaboration have not paid sufficient attention to paradox as a key factor influencing inter-organizational collaboration. In contrast, scholars studying coalitions and social service partnerships within a social work tradition (Bailey and Koney 1996; and Mizrahi and Rosenthal 1993, 2001), have started to identify the management of dynamic tensions as a key dimension of collaborative work, but the empirical work in this literature is limited. Furthermore, the tensions are viewed as something that must be resolved rather than considering them as a natural feature of collaborative work, one that in fact, may promote collaborative capacity (Bardach 1998). Bridging both literatures, our paper contributes to illuminate what so far has been an obscure, but important dimension of collaborative work.

THE PARADOXICAL NATURE OF INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION

Mizrahi and Rosenthal (1993, 2001) define coalition as "an organization of organizations whose members commit to an agreed-on purpose and shared decision-making to influence an external institution or target (on issues affecting their constituencies), while these member organizations maintain their own autonomy" (p. 64). Coalitions are thus formal inter-organizational networks composed of a set of organizations pursuing at the same time a common objective, and their own independent objectives. They are, by definition, explicitly committed to inter-organizational collaboration among its members. Because the coalition is created to change or influence a target in the larger environment, collaborative efforts may also develop between the coalition as an organizational entity and external organizations or other stakeholder groups that are part of its environment, including the target organization. This article focuses on both types of collaboration, within the coalition, associated with what we call the coalition's inward

work, and between the coalition and external organizations, associated with what we call the coalition's outward work. We thus draw on various theoretical orientations about inter-organizational collaboration in our work (Berry et al. 2004), focusing primarily on the public management network literature (e.g. Agranoff and McGuire 2001) the traditional literature on collaboration (e.g. Gray 1985), and tangentially on literature on public private partnerships (e.g. Lowndes and Skelcher 1998), policy networks (Marsh 1998), inter-organizational networks (Ebers 1997b) and business alliances (Ring and Van de Ven 1992).

Coalitions as formal networks of collaborating organizations

The literature includes at least two different approaches to the study of networks. On the one hand, networks are conceived as an ideal typical mechanism of governance that can be distinguished by its particular features, in contrast to other governance structures such as hierarchies and markets (Williamson 1975).[2] On the other hand, networks are understood as real phenomena organized with a particular purpose in mind. That is, there exist actual sets of organizations that are working in collaboration, with different degrees of formalization and with different types of structural arrangements.[3] Examples of terms used to categorize real networks subject to empirical study include: partnerships (Mohr and Spekman 1996), policy networks (Kickert, Klijn, and Koopenjan 1997a), network structures (Keast et al. 2004) business alliances

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[2] Distinguishing characteristics include relational means of communication, complementarity and mutual adjustment as the normative basis of interaction, high commitment and interdependency among organizations (Powell 1990; Thompson et al. 1991).

[3] A third approach to understanding networks is as a lens to study any social phenomenon, as done by the social network analysis scholars (see Nohria and Eccles 1993)

(Gomes-Casseres 1994), and coalitions (Weiner, Alexander, and Shortell 2002).[4] We use the term coalitions to refer to a real type of formalized network.

The literature does agree on some common features to all types of organizational networks: actors share resources, and at a minimum, information is a critical resource; actors negotiate and mutually adjust to each other based on reputation and social control, but they maintain independent decision making capacity on their own organizations; actors pursue together a goal, whether it be specific or general, and independently of the coordination sequence used; and relationships between organizational members are finite but continuous (Saz-Carranza 2003). These features are present in the coalitions we have studied.

A "blind spot" in network management research

Different theoretical perspectives have been put forward to better understand the factors that affect inter-organizational network management. Nevertheless, at present time, a map of the dimensions highlighted by these academic literatures produces more confusion than clarity, as the various approaches have not yet found a unifying thread to build theory in the emergent field of collaborative management research (Agranoff and McGuire 2003).

For example, public administration and management field offers a framework that highlights managing rules and structure (framing), actors (activation), resources and support (mobilizing) and the interaction between network members (synthesizing) (Agranoff and McGuire 2003). The European policy networks scholars Kickert, Klijn, and Koopenjan (1997a), expand this framework by distinguishing between ideas, actors and institutions on one hand, and game management and network structuring on the other. Agranoff (2003) has further developed a basic

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[4] There are many typologies in the academic literature, but there is so far, no standard terminology and different terms are usually cross-cited and used interchangeably.

task schema for inter-organizational managers equivalent to the intra-organizational POSDCORB. The public private partnerships (Lowndes and Skelcher 1998) and the business alliances literatures (Kanter 1994; Ariño and de la Torre 1998; Doz 1996; and Ring and Van de Ven 1994) have in contrast developed evolutionary life models, both linear sequential as well as cyclic models. These all represent important insights and offer the building blocks for a theory of collaboration in the context of network management. Albeit still dispersed, coherence does implicitly happen between frameworks, and potential for complementarity is high. But much needs to be done to find the possible thread that will bring these ideas into a unifying framework. Furthermore, the literature is full of evidence about the paradoxical nature of network interaction, and the focus on paradox could help integrate an otherwise fragmented discussion of these realities.

Two glaring absences in these literatures are attention to the role of paradox as key dimension of collaborative work (Huxham and Beech 2003), and to the role of leadership in generating and maintaining effective inter-organizational collaboration in general, and more specifically, through the management of such paradoxes (Agranoff and McGuire 2003). The way paradox is experienced and managed by real people within a context characterized by dynamic tensions remains a blind spot in an otherwise rich literature.

At present, more is known regarding the factors influencing the emergence of networks than regarding the factors influencing network relationships (Ebers 1997a; Oliver and Ebers 1998; and Das and Teng 2002). Factors influencing network formation, and reasons why organizations decide to collaborate or enter a coalition, point to the complexity of network management (Agranoff and McGuire 2003) with its resource intensity and the inherent difficulties to manage it (Huxham 2003; and Huxham and Beech 2003). Reviewing the literature, reasons to pursue

inter-organizational collaboration can be divided into three interrelated subgroups (Ebers 1997a).

First, motives at actor level such as increase in effectiveness, in efficiency, in legitimacy,

decrease in uncertainty and risks, and/or because it may be morally required. Second,

institutional contingencies, which may be regional, sectoral, legal, or cultural in nature. And

third, relational contingencies such as social ties, resource interdependency, vulnerability of

strategic position, and complementary diversity (Ebers 1997a; Oliver 1990; Grandori and Soda

1995; Jarrillo 1993; Kanter 1994; Kickert, Klijn, and Koopenjan 1997a; Gray 1996; Park 1996;

Eisenhardt and Schoonhoven 1996; and Kickert and Koppenjan 1997). [5] The variety of factors

together suggest that the resulting networks are the repository of a diverse, and often

contradictory, set of expectations, aspirations and goals (Provan and Milward 2001; and Huxham

2003) . The resulting complexity has also been documented in the particular context of coalition

building (Mizrahi and Rosenthal 2001). This complexity, in and of itself, represents the source

for dynamic tensions and contradictions, which, surprisingly, have not been sufficiently studied.

Sociologists and political scientists have also concentrated in exploring the factors that

influence coalition formation (and the conditions required to create a winning coalition) rather

than focusing on the consequences of the network, or on leadership considerations (Mizrahi and

Rosenthal 2001). The strategic management literature poses stakeholder analysis as a critical

leadership tool to frame winning arguments that will mobilize allies into coalition work (Bryson

2004). But these prescriptions do not extend to providing insights about how to manage the

collaborations, once the right stakeholders and their interests have been identified. Neither do

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[5] These factors have been researched from a wide variety of approaches such as transaction cost theory, industrial economics, organizational economics, neo-institutional economics, negotiation analysis and game theory, evolutionary economics, resource dependence view, social network theory, relational theory and population ecology (Grandori and Soda 1995).

they warn its consumers (managers avid of advice) about the need to be prepared to deal with paradox on a daily basis.

Attention to paradox is starting to slowly appear in some literatures interested in inter-organizational collaboration, but it is still very limited. Within the collaboration literature, Huxham and Beech (2003) focus on the tensions inherent in the advice provided to managers based on research insights. The authors argue that these are directly connected to tensions and contradictions in collaborative settings and in the nature of leadership. While clearly differentiating their definition of tensions from the traditional definition of paradox, Huxham and Beech have identified at the core of both the phenomenon of collaboration, and the advice given to practitioners, the presence of tensions that must be acknowledged and better understood. But they have not explored this line of thinking in their own empirical work on collaboration.

More promising are some studies from the social work literature. Bailey and Koney (1996) propose eight paradoxical realities of community-based collaboratives and argue that these must be recognized and honored by the members, or at a minimum, they must be managed for the sake of the collaboratives' sustainability. These authors, however, do not offer empirical evidence to support their prescriptive claims. Developing a survey a survey to leaders of social change coalitions, Mizrahi and Rosenthal (1993) identify four dynamic tensions to be managed for effective inter-organizational collaboration. They provide prescriptions that help overcome the identified tensions, suggesting the need to find balances and equilibriums, but they do not see the potential of paradox for effective network management.

In sum, the literature that identifies paradox as critical is scant, tends to be prescriptive, and relies on very few empirical studies so far. In contrast, the theoretical literature that offers most contributions to understand network management has been relatively mute with respect to the

role of paradox. There is thus an interesting schism in our present and limited understanding of the role of paradox in inter-organizational collaboration. What is needed is a merging of the insights from both literatures and more empirical studies that explore the implications of doing so.

Sources of tension, conflict and paradox in network management

The social work literature offers limited insights into paradox as a key dimension of inter-organizational collaboration. Bailey and Koney (1996) propose as paradoxical realities: leadership, membership, environmental linkages, strategy, purpose, tasks, structure and systems, but do not explore these empirically. Mizrahi and Rosenthal (1993) identify four dynamic tensions: mixed loyalties; autonomy of coalition versus accountability to members; coalition as means versus as an end; and unity versus diversity. The accumulated insights of the network management tradition can help complement these limited insights and may help to open the path to the empirical study of paradox. A brief review of this literature points to some recurring themes that highlight the potential contradictions network managers face, thus enhancing our awareness of the complexity that produces inherent tensions in inter-organizational collaboration.

Complexity, membership and size. Given that collaborative efforts often arise to solve complex problems in dynamic social environments (Gray 1996; Agranoff and McGuire 2001; Borzel 1998; and Castells 2000), these efforts are usually complex themselves. This affects network features such as membership and size. Membership structure in collaboratives may be ambiguous and dynamic, given the different linkages among actors inside and outside the partnership (Huxham 2003). Membership may not always be clear in all networks, since the same persons may represent different organizations in different arenas, and the role a person may

be representing at a given moment may be unclear (Huxham 2003). Members may not have clarity about who is executing a given activity, the network itself, one of its member or even an individual acting independently from the network (Saz-Carranza, 2004).

Complexity is also evident in the lack of consensus around the effective number of organizations required for successful collaboration in a network (Huxham and Vangen 2000b; Grandori and Soda 1995; Kanter 1994; and Kickert and Koppenjan 1997). For example, Kanter (1994) suggests that as many people as possible should be involved in order to bridge interpersonal and inter-organizational differences in structures, processes and skills. In contrast, Huxham and Vangen (2000b) conclude that complexity must be kept low and hence membership numbers must be limited, and Klijn and Teisman (2000) claim that strong trust relations may only be maintained with a limited number of actors. Effective choices in membership management may thus be ridden with tension.

Aims, goals and success. The multiple factors associated with the probability that network members find common goals creates fertile ground for tension. Factors include a sense of ownership over the goals (by the network, its members and individual representatives), the openness of the aims (implicit, explicit and hidden), and the means of achieving them (through the network, members or individuals) (Huxham 2003). This multiplicity of factors has practical implications that also foster tension. For example, goal clarity may influence the tasks the network manager decides to carry on (McGuire 2002).

Huxham and Beech (2003) offer the most direct reference to the potential tension associated with goals. Discussing collaboration in partnerships, they illustrate how the potential for collaborative advantage depends on each partner bringing different resources. These different resources are, however, the result of differences in organizational purpose, which produces

inherent tensions for collaboration (Eden and Huxham 2001; and Vangen, Huxham, and Eden, 1994).[6]

Finally, the relationship between common goals and the definition of success in a collaboration points to another source of tension. Studies suggest that members of collaborations may hold diverse views about how to measure success (Provan and Milward 2001). In the particular context of coalitions, leaders interviewed in Mizrahi and Rosenthal's (1993) study defined successful coalitions in multiple ways, from achieving the goal, to creating lasting networks and attaining longevity, to gaining or acquiring such resources as recognition from the target, community support, new consciousness of issues or new skills. This divergence in a context that requires convergence generates fertile ground for tension.

Relations and trust. Trust and social control are needed to overcome the uncertainty and adverse selection typical of relationships (Akerlof 1970; Larson 1992; and Ring and Van de Ven 1994), which are the building blocks of networks (Knoke and Kuklinski 1991).

The distinction between fragile and resilient illustrates the complexity of network relations and how they develop over time. Resilient trust is manifested as social-psychological bonds of mutual norms, sentiments and friendship, and confidence in another's goodwill (Ring and Van de Ven 1994; and Ring 1997). Whether and how fragile trust turns into resilient trust is not a simple, nor a guaranteed process. According to Ring and Van de Ven, (1994) fragile turns into resilient trust as the network institutionalizes and socializing processes help internalize its goals, mission and procedures. As this happens, personal relationships supplement role relationships,

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[6] This tension has implications for the contradictory advice practitioners will receive from researchers. Some suggest that the articulation of clear, well defined, agreed aims is an essential first step in collaboration; others suggest that practitioners should get on with joint tasks without agreeing on their joint purpose. In most practical situations, Huxham and Beech argue, the best advice probably lies at some point between the two proposed suggestions. We

psychological contracts substitute formal contracts and formal agreements increasingly mirror informal commitments and understandings. In contrast, Kanter (1994) and Larson (1992) argue that relationships are first personal and informal and later become formal and based on role. It is likely that both directions can be documented empirically given the dual nature of roles as defined by Nadel's paradox (Berry et al. 2004), as both a structural and cultural phenomenon.

The agency-structure duality. Public network scholars have engaged the sociological "problem" of the relation between structure and action and the on-going query of which determines which in the context of network management. Based on Gidden's structuration theory, Klijn and Teisman (1997), from the European policy network school, and Alexander (1998), from an inter-organizational perspective, highlight the duality in the action-structure relation. Klijn and Teisman (1997), for example, differentiate between the strategies network managers use to influence the structure of the network as a whole and to influence the interaction of the different players (games). Acknowledging the duality, they view structure as both the medium for and the outcome of actions. In this view, structure is a platform where games are played and are somewhat determined, but in turn, it is modified and enacted in action. Not framed as a paradox, this duality nevertheless points to the inherent tensions of network management, which may require paradoxical thinking.

In sum, the relevance of tension in recurrent themes in the literature on network management– membership and size, aims and success, relationships and trust, as well as theoretical discussions such as the agency-structure duality –highlight the complexity of inter-organizational collaboration and the potential role of paradox for better understanding and managing it. While not exhaustive, our review is suggestive enough to make the argument that paradox may be an

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would argue that the potential contradictions would be reduced if researchers considered the paradoxical nature of

important dimension that cuts across the different approaches in the field. More importantly, it suggests the relevance of empirical work to explore this role, which turns us to our research project.

The original question guiding the research reported in this article was: What factors contribute to make collaboration possible in the context of social change coalition work? This research question helped us explore the management of the collaborative process, allowing us to focus on favorable conditions as well as possible conflicts regarding aims and power simultaneously co-occurring in collaboration management (Agranoff and McGuire 2001; Huxham 2003; Huxham and Beech 2003; and Provan and Milward 2001). The focus on paradox was not part of the original conceptual framework used for the inquiry, but emerged during the analysis, forcing the authors to open their inquiry and search for additional sources to address this finding. We believe that the introduction of paradox to the collaboration literature represents an important contribution that deserves further attention. Our study intends to provide some steps in that direction.

METHODS

This paper uses data from the Leadership for a Changing World (LCW) research and documentation component. This is part of a broader on-going leadership program recognizing 17-20 individuals and leadership teams per year, from 2001 to 2005.[7] The award is given to individuals who work in social change organizations. Through its research component, a core research team invites the recognized leaders to use their experience to help generate new

network management.

[7] The program was funded by the Ford Foundation, in partnership with the Advocacy Institute in Washington DC and our University. By the end of the program, of 85-100 organizations will have been recognized.

understandings of social change leadership. [8] The type of leadership studied takes place within nonprofit organizations working with particular populations, often disadvantaged, to address an identified systemic inequity. To do so, they combine, in different degrees, at least four types of activities: service delivery, organizing, advocacy and community building.

Sample and organizational context

The organizations considered in our study were the Coalition of Asian, American, European and Latin Immigrants of Illinois (CAAELII) and New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC). We chose these organizations because they defined themselves as coalitions operating within the same policy domain. As coalitions, both were explicitly committed to collaborative work. The visible leaders of these organizations are recognized within their communities and by other institutions as successful in achieving effective change in the immigration policy domain through their organization. Therefore, we can assume that effective collaboration takes place in these organizations and that its visible leaders engage in effective leadership practices that generate collaborative capacity (Bardach 1998), and/or collaborative advantage (Huxham and Macdonald 1992).

CAAELII operates in the city of Chicago, as a network of 20 of Chicago's diverse immigrant groups representing communities such as Centro Sin Fronteras, Chinese American Service League, and Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago. New York Immigration Coalition includes roughly 150 organizations, representing virtually every segment of New York City's immigrant population, from Dominican, Eastern European and Chinese immigrants to

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[8] The broad question of the research component is, "in what ways do communities trying to make social change engage in the work of leadership?" For further details see (Ospina, Godsoe, and Schall, 2002; LCW, 2001).

newcomers from throughout Latin America, Africa, South Asia, the Caribbean and the Middle East.

Table 1 provides an overview of the two organizations, suggesting that they are comparable in several ways. Both coalitions are located in major US cities and deal with immigration issues, working within the same federal context, the US. Their budget and governing bodies are also similar, having a core coordinating unit with an executive director accountable to a board of directors with membership representation. They differ in the number of organizations included in the coalition (20 and 150), the size of the staff working in the coordinating unit (9 and 17) and their "age" (5 and 15 years), thus representing two points in the organizational cycle spectrum, one relatively young and in process of maturing (CAAELII), and the other well established and mature (NYIC). They also differ in terms of the local and state policy contexts within which they operate.

Data collection and analysis

We collected original data from site visits to each organization. Team researchers conducted group and individual interviews with the LCW awarded leaders or leadership teams, with organizational staff and board members, and with representatives of various stakeholder groups such as member organizations, clients, funders, allies, and public officials. Using appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider and Srivasta 1987), individuals and groups were asked to describe situations when they felt things had happened at their best, when they had been able to accomplish what they planned in order to attain their goals. In this context, stories about success provided detailed descriptions of the way the work was done, while conversations also offered instances where conflict, obstacles, and sometimes failures emerged.

Interviews were transcribed and two researchers carefully read them to develop an "analytical memo" describing the organization, its policy context, and highlighting stories about the work associated with leadership dynamics. Our paper draws both from the analytical memos and from about 12 hours worth of material from the original transcripts.

Data analysis for the collaboration study

Our analytical strategy combined both inductive and deductive development of codes to analyze the existing data set. Table 2 in the Appendix documents our original coding scheme. We created codes to identify general issues regarding the coalition and their work from which we could infer something about collaborative work. For example, drawing from the literature on collaboration, inter-organizational relations and networks, we analyzed stories that provided information about relations, successes, the scope of work and motivations. These codes were selected because the data seemed to speak a lot about them, in contrast to other collaboration themes, which were virtually absent.[9] We call these codes "descriptive" because they describe an aspect of the work in general which we believe relates conceptually to issues of collaboration.

Other sets of codes relating to the nature of collaboration emerged from the data, in the style of grounded theory. We drew these "grounded" codes from reading the text and addressing stories directly associated to the dynamics of collaboration. For example, the open and participatory spirit of the coalitions emerged as an important code, as well as the need for unity and the value given to diversity. Once the data were coded, we searched for patterns, developing tables of co-occurrences, and engaging in more conceptual interpretation of the results.

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[9] Because of the nature of the data (collected to capture general dynamics of leadership rather than to capture specific dynamics of collaboration), it was not possible to make any inference about the nature of collaboration from the absence of key dimensions in the literature.

A limitation of this work is that the questions used in the original interviews did not focus explicitly on collaboration as the focus of the study. This means that the data do not provide sufficient detail to explore deductively some of the larger topics that the literature suggests are critical to understand collaborations. At the same time, one of the criteria for selection of these leaders was their documented capacity to engage in effective collaboration, and our criteria to select the two organizations was their collaborative nature as coalitions.

Our coding strategy helped address this limitation, as described. The logical next step, in the following iteration of the research, will be to construct a new questionnaire that addresses more specifically the dynamics of collaboration, using as the base the findings from this exploratory exercise.

FINDINGS

The report of our findings starts with a discussion of the work and policy context within which the coalitions operate, and of their origins and achievements. We then discuss the paradoxes and the management factors we believe help the coalition leaders manage them artfully as they pursue the coalitions' work.

Inter-organizational collaboration in the immigration policy field

The work of both the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) and the Coalition of Asian, American, European and Latin Immigrants of Illinois (CAAELII) support members of the immigrant communities in their cities, New York City and Chicago respectively. The mission of NYIC is "to provide a forum for the immigrant community to discuss urgent issues and provide a vehicle for collective action in addressing these issues". CAAELII's mission is "to improve the quality of life for immigrants and refugees and to ensure dignity and respect by organizing and

uniting communities through education, leadership development and direct services and by promoting the voice of community in public policy" (CAAELII 2004a). One of the primary institutional targets of both coalitions are the public agencies addressing immigration policy at the local, state and federal level, but because both focus on issues of quality of life, they also aspire to influence other public institutions associated with education, health and welfare.

Table 3 offers a brief description of the main programs in each organization. The work of both NYIC and CAAELII include civic, community and technical education, advocacy and policy analysis. Even though NYIC and CAAELII have comparable annual budgets ($1.3 million and $1 million, respectively), their funding sources differ slightly.[10] NYIC depends almost entirely on philanthropic institutions and foundations for funding, while CAAELII draws from foundations, Government and corporations (45%, 34% and 10% of the total budget, respectively). They also differ with respect to the size and complexity of their coordinating unit and their membership structure.[11]

Immigration policy and the emergence of NYIC and CAAELII. Public opinion and public policy have been inconsistent in the United States. Immigration quota laws, originally enacted in the 1920s, have been alternately eased and restricted according to the political climate. The current climate presses for restrictive laws, exemplified by California's Proposition 187 that denies public social services, publicly-funded health care, and public education to people who are suspected of being illegal immigrants (Alonso 1996). Similarly, the Patriot Act of 2002, the most restrictive policy so far, focuses on foreign terrorism within the US boarders and opens the

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[10] The fact that the budgets are the same given the differences in age and size is an interesting anomaly that has several possible explanations, among others, the decision of the NYIC to not accept governmental money, in contrast to the openness of CAAELLI to do so. This points to important ideological differences among the leadership of both organizations.

door for harassment and discrimination of illegal immigrants not linked to terrorism (Doyle 2002).

A century ago, urban political machines provided institutional support to new immigrants, although often in unsavory ways such as offering jobs for votes. Religious institutions have always offered assistance, as well as some of the nation's most respected nonprofit organizations, for example, through settlement houses. However, these efforts were limited given the sheer numbers and the charity orientation. Recent immigrant service and advocacy organizations focused on specific immigrant groups, on specific services (e.g. legal assistance involving citizenship and work permits) and worked independently of each other. This was true for many urban areas around the country, and for both New York City and Chicago, until the NYIC and CAAELII emerged in 1987 and 1998, respectively.

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), which made eligible 3 million undocumented workers and aliens and their families for legal status, broadened the services for immigrants and sparked collaboration among organizations. This act altered the demographic landscape of New York City, Chicago and the rest of the US, and changed the legal status of many immigrants.[12] Heavily oriented toward refugees and their issues prior to the IRCA, most advocates quickly changed the focus to the new immigrant-citizens. These were quite different from previous immigrant groups and required more assistance in language skills, workforce integration, training, and other social services.

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[11] NYIC's members fall into three different categories: organizational, governmental and individual members. Only organizational members have full voting rights. CAAELII only allows organizational members to join, and all those who do join the Board of Directors.

[12] To illustrate, the foreign-born population in the United States grew by nearly 58 percent in the 1990s and by 38% in New York. In 2000, 31.1 million immigrants and refugees lived in the United States and 4 million in New York (Moran and Petsod 2003; and Federation for American Immigration Reform 2003). Percentages are rounded to the nearest percent.

In New York, these broad changes fueled discussions among a small group of immigration reform advocates, who began working to create a locally-based advocacy organization. They also wanted to respond to the downside of IRCA, which was passed to control and deter illegal immigration to the United States (VisaPro 2002). In 1987, this group helped create the New York Immigration Coalition.

A similar development occurred ten years later in Chicago, propelled by the anti-immigrant tone of the 1996 federal welfare reform initiative. A handful of immigrant groups began to meet informally to discuss ways to work together to enhance their voice in immigrant policy and politics, and coalesced around the problem of poor and slow service of the local Chicago Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)[13] office. A grant issued to the group to study the problem in 1998 motivated Chicago immigrant activists to cease the moment, and CAAELII became a formal and proactive organization.

Major accomplishments of coalition work. That these coalitions have been formed within the dispersed, atomized and isolated immigration environments in two of the largest urban centers of the US is an achievement in itself. As one of the founders of the NYIC says: "It is quite astonishing that there existed no immigration coalition in New York prior to 1987. Moreover, the City of New York had no organizational reflection of immigration and immigrant issues until [around 1990]." Similarly, a staff member of a CAAELII co-founder recalls a comparable environment in Chicago prior to CAAELII's existence. "For 14 years we didn't meet with anybody," he said, and added that until then there was no connection with other immigrant groups in the city.

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[13] At present, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services has substituted the former INS. For the purpose of this work, we will use the term INS to refer to this agency, since the interviews were done prior to the agency's restructuring.

Another accomplishment is the sustainability and effectiveness of both coalitions, and the stability of their employed full-time staff, of their boards, and of their current annual budgets. Their reputations and credibility are also strong. For example, their executive directors received the Leadership for a Changing World award in 2001, after a rigorous selection process among 1500 nominations, which national and regional selection committees whittled down to 20 final awardees. Selection criteria include: leaders tackling critical social problems with effective, systemic solutions; enacting leadership that is strategic; bringing different groups of people together; and sustaining results beyond any individual effort. Given the 50:1 nominee to awardee ratio, the rigor of the selection process, and the selection criteria, these organizations can be considered highly credible exemplars of success.

In addition, each coalition can document mission specific achievements. For example, CAAELII organized a petition campaign, with more than 19,000 signatures, for the INS reform, which resulted in the creation of an Independent Monitoring Board of 44 organizations that acts as a watchdog group and pushes immigration reform. So far, the board has sent approximately 800 documented cases to INS and to members of Congress, detailing the experiences of immigrants and refugees "caught in a seemingly endless INS backlog". Since 1996, CAAELII has also facilitated the partnering of immigrant and refugee groups to jointly develop educational curricula, participate in teacher exchanges and work together on common problems that affect immigrants and refugees.

Likewise, NYIC enrolled over 60,000 members of immigrant families in an immigrant voter education and mobilization campaign for the 2000 elections, which resulted in the registration of more than 200,000 new citizens. NYIC advocacy campaigns have won millions of city and state dollars in recent years to expand legal services and English classes for New York's immigrants.

Finally, the coalition played a critical role in the 1997 and 1998 national campaigns to restore Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits to elderly and disabled immigrants and food stamps denied to immigrants by the 1996 federal welfare law.

The role of collaboration for coalition work. Coalition managers, like other types of network managers face two different tasks to attain success (Shortell et al. 2002). Inward work includes the explicit work to build, nurture and maintain the coalition and to coordinate coalition members. Outward focused work includes task-oriented behaviors to achieve the coalition's goals independently or through its members. Both types of work are critical to coalition survival and are directly associated with collaboration as a key form of network engagement.

We suggest that effective collaboration in the context of immigration coalitions requires the artful management of at least two paradoxes: one associated with inward and the other with the outward work. The first paradox is responding to both unity and diversity. The second paradox is using both confrontation and dialogue to relate to the same external target. Our analysis helps us understand the way these two paradoxes are managed to help facilitate collaboration.

Exploring inward work: factors facilitating intra-coalition collaboration

Developing its own common aims and vision, setting up the structure, and attracting, recruiting and keeping its members are tasks typical of all networks (Agranoff and McGuire 2001; Vangen and Huxham 2004; Kickert, Klijn, and Koopenjan 1997b; and Shortell et al. 2002). Each organization in the coalition has its own identity. The coalition needs a larger identity as a community in its own. For example, the executive director of NYIC reported spending considerable energy ensuring that the smaller and more grass-roots organizations were given equal voice than the larger and more established organizations in the decision-making process, thus making the latter feel welcome and valued. "Building community" is an important

inward task for coalition success. This task requires addressing at the same time two opposing needs: unity and diversity.

Honoring the competing demands for unity and diversity. As Mizrahi and Rosenthal (1993), we also identified this tension in our data, in an inductive way, while exploring the factors affecting successful collaboration among members of the network, as they discussed the inward work we associate with building community. Unity and diversity push in opposite directions. Too much unity among coalition members weakens the essence of the coalition to create synergy from the organizations' diversity. Too much diversity slows down progress towards goals since building trust, familiarity and common vision take time.

Mizrahi and Rosenthal (1993) consider the following potential sources of diversity among coalition members: differences in goals, in ideology, in expected outcomes, in power, in levels of commitment, in demographic composition or social identity (class, gender, sex, race). Present in both NYIC and CAAELII, these are exacerbated by their focus on immigration. Both coalitions include organizations from multiple ethnicities, with extremely diverse religious, cultural and linguistic characteristics. For example, CAAELII members are located in different geographic areas of Chicago, they work with 13 different communities, and among its 20 members, programs are executed in 11 different languages. Similarly, NYIC members cover many ethnic communities in all New York City boroughs.

Membership and size are other important sources of diversity. NYIC includes both organizations providing services and others doing organizing or advocacy work. CAAELII is made up of all service-providing organizations, with the coalition providing the advocacy and organizing function, but each member focuses on very different policy areas. In both cases, some members have very broad missions while others are very narrowly focused. Indeed, coalition

members also vary in the scope and type of issues addressed, from health and aging, to problems for specific immigrant communities, or very particular problems such as HIV.

In terms of member size, CAAELII members include organizations serving from a couple of thousand clients a year up to twenty thousand. In NYIC the range is even larger. For example, at one end of the spectrum, the Hispanic Federation, a membership organization itself of 81 Latino health and human services agencies in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, serves more than 800,000 vulnerable Latinos every year. At the other end, the Latin American Integration Center is a single agency serving 1500 individual immigrant members a year.

As has been argued extensively in the literature, this diversity within a network accounts for its strength. Awareness of its relevance seems key to moving from tolerating to valuing the diversity each organization brings. Members in both coalitions studied praised organizational diversity and highlighted its importance to their work. CAAELII's executive director said, in the context of a conversation among various members, "Because it's what you and you [pointing] bring to the table… is what makes us strong. So I always have, at least I try to foster that. And so far it has worked. [laughs] So I think that if we have to take a magic formula, I think that's it" (13:32). At NYIC, one of the cofounders argues that internal diversity has "been one of the main reasons why the Coalition has been so effective; and has been increasingly more and more effective is because, whatever the process has been, we've been able, for the most part, to bring so many different groups to the table that don't normally advocate together" (29:27).

This diversity plays a strategic role in helping the coalition gain the leverage to become an interlocutor. That such diverse organizations agree on a particular issue at stake makes the claim more credible vis a vis the target. NYIC's executive director argues: "The fact that we have all of these different groups coming, you know, with the shared message on these issues, and then

they [actors of the target agency] all scratched their heads saying: "So, Central American Refugee Center is like, in on this with UJA and with…?", you know, and that's when they realize that they have to pay closer attention" (29:26).

Diversity is the starting point of coalition work. It has to be managed, and it has to be maintained, because it is of service to the network. But it also gets in the way to find the unity required for all the organizations to agree on issues so that they can appear as a solid force. The diversity in characteristics, strengths, goals and hence interests, also generates tensions and difficulties when trying to reach common issues and when collaborating. At CAAELII, the person in charge of the training activities argued: "there's a lot of politics among the [CBOs] and to get everybody to agree was not easy, right?" (12:26). This points to the need to build a sense of community within the coalition.

The identity of the "immigrant", and the common experience it affords to all, irrespective of their national origin, provides a starting point to weave a common social fabric in the case of immigrant coalitions. At CAAELII, the unity crystallized precisely around the immigrant identity "I realized that there are many immigrants … many kinds of immigrants […a]nd in this moment I was [an] immigrant." (12:6). At NYIC, given differences in focus on service delivery versus advocacy, positioning with respect to a set of issues was also needed to unite the coalition members together. The Advocacy Director at NYIC said, referring to the differences between big and small organizations: "all of them don't really get along […but] they're all together because there is a strong consensus, you know, on the agenda, as it really brings people together." (28:5). This of course, is easier said than done, as illustrated in the following comment from NYIC's executive director:

> "we sometimes agree not to take positions on certain things, like I know school vouchers came up as part of our education work, and we had to devote, you know, the

better part of a Board meeting to it. And different Board members made presentations, one in favor of us taking a pro-voucher position, another one in favor of us taking an anti-voucher position, and one in favor of us taking no position. And we wound up taking no position, because several of our groups would have walked. It would have really been a 'make or break' issue for them, and we just decided that vouchers wasn't an important enough issue on our agenda for us to lose major players of the Coalition over it" (28:82).

This is a story about the artful management of the unity and diversity paradox: work around school reform pointed to the need to take a position around a contested issue such as school vouchers. But membership diversity around ideology pointed to the problems that this would have generated for the unity of the coalition as a whole. After discussing all possible alternatives, the coalition came to the common agreement to take no position, thus upholding the ideological diversity while finding unity in the way the decision was made.

This points to the importance of managing well the tensions that emerge from the paradox of unity and diversity, especially to ensure that collaboration will be possible among members, when needed. Identifying some specific practices that help generate the needed unity without threatening the needed diversity provides some light into how the paradox is embraced in the specific contexts of the two coalitions studied. We discuss three management factors below: nurturing and facilitating interaction, cultivating personal relationships and promoting openness and participation.

Nurturing and facilitating interaction. Members of both coalitions highlighted the importance of the facilitating role of coalition managers in managing the "game" (Klijn and Teisman 1997) or synthesizing (Agranoff and McGuire 2001). Setting up a press-conference, identifying and proposing immigration related issues as the source for common work, setting the structure and processes for interaction, are examples of practices that help promote successful collaboration while honoring the unity-diversity paradox rather than trying to suppress it. These reminded coalition members that the coalition is the platform, which actually embodies unity, or

united action, but at the same time, the coalition managers do not over-shadow the organizational

members, and therefore, do not threaten them and guarantee the needed internal diversity.

In CAEELII's case, the coalition itself provided a unifying vision to the work of the different

organizations and its manager represented the constant and persuasive reminder for the need for

inter-organizational collaboration. One coalition member said: [CAAELII] helps us remember

that we need to work together (13:14)". The coalition manager also provided structure and took

the lead in helping identify and frame the issues. In reference to structure, a member said: "[the

coalition manager] has helped us to not only come together and do things that will seem very

difficult … but with a group as a coalition I think it's very easy […b]ecause of the structure"

(13:35). About helping frame the issues, another member stated: "I don't think he tries to

convince us; I think he tries to facilitate" (13:33).

In NYIC's case, the coalition manager insisted in the importance of helping to get things

going and in framing the issues appropriately, but letting the members make the case. As a

member of NYIC stated regarding the coalition executive director (i.e. the coalition manager):

> "she never does a press conference by herself. She's always looking for community
> voices, local community leaders to speak on it and she'll be just doing the emceeing …
> introducing people and just setting up the issues, but you know still setting up the kind of
> political framework that we want people have." 28:92, 28:39

In line with Huxham (2003), we found that nurturing the process was critical to the

facilitating role and helped bridge diversity without reducing it. At CAAELII, members were

strongly aware of the need to have someone constantly following up, setting up the stage, and

looking at the small details. But more importantly, through these activities, they received the

clear message that they were indispensable:

> "it isn't that you were just invited, but I think [the coalition executive director] really
> nurtured that well, if you're not here, this is going to be something missing. And it started
> a trend of feeling like you all needed to contribute in order to make something as
> successful as that turned out to be." (13:17)

In the same conversation, several members further described the connection between the facilitating and the nurturing roles:

> "it's more than just listening … he's able to get all those little bits and pieces of information [from the different organizations] and bring them together, and to get people together on the same page." (13:59)

Similarly, at NYIC, participants appreciated the executive director's constant nurturing of the process, and of the organization's leaders. A staff person said: It "is less about [the executive director] being a leader than nurturing other leaders and setting, you know, really setting up the processes to nurture that" (28:64).

Cultivating personal relationships. Trust in networks is the analogous cohesive factor of legal-rational authority in burocracies (Agranoff and McGuire 2003; and Mattessich, Murray-Close, and Monsey 2001). As role relationships gradually become personal, fragile trust (based on formal rules) becomes resilient trust (Ring 1997, and Ring and Van de Ven 1994) and formally mandated collaboration approximates genuine collaboration (Ospina and Yaroni 2003). In both coalitions personal relationships were strong, they were valued, and appeared as a key factor for successful network management. The personal nature of relationships among organizational members is exemplified by one of CAAELII members:

> The wonderful part of CAAELII is that I feel so comfortable calling any of the partner directors and saying, you know, what do you do? How can you help me in this situation I'm struggling in, you know, and also, what can I do for you? And I think that's very special. (13:15)

These relationships allow members to see beyond their differences, find the unifying dimensions of their diverse realities and support each other in the process. Other examples of the way relationships were very personal at CAAELII include the fact that colleagues would lend each other money at given times, ("He lent me twenty bucks last week" 12:47), tease each other

in a friendly manner ("I'm teasing her" 29:78), and jointly celebrate significant achievements ("They gave me a great surprise party" 13:1).

These relationships require nurturing and represent plenty of energy and work. Here, again, the coalition manager played a relevant role. As one staff member said to the executive director of CAAELII: "And when you get a group that's diverse as we are, staying […] fairly friendly and really not having a tremendous difference of opinion about who did this and who didn't do that, that's pretty good testimony to your ability to keep us all on track" (0901-CI). Similarly, a member said regarding the executive director: "I don't know how you could manage it, but he comes to almost everybody's celebrations for almost everybody." (13:27) Addressing the difficulty of maintaining such personal relationships, a member said: "[W]e're growing. And so I think it's a challenge to see whether any one human being can continue to connect with that many people at once. So it's like, you know, being the father of quintuplets over and over again." (13:78). That this is possible despite the size becomes apparent in the case of NYIC, where even managing more than 100 organizational members, the executive director still pays personal attention to each, and, as a coalition staff indicated: "she puts the time into building relationships with local leaders" (28:61).

Personalized interaction could create problems because of the emotional investment associated with it. This has been avoided at NYIC, by assuming that differences emerge regarding strategies while members share the same values, as described by the executive director:

> … I think people show a level of respect acknowledging that we very rarely disagree on policies and positions, but we disagree on our strategies. And so you're able to diffuse the conversation and not have to get very … [pause] it's not as loaded a conversation then, because nobody is attacking somebody else for being a sellout, or for not being politically, you know, committed, which is where all the emotional stuff comes in. And it's much more of a sort of clear-eye, hard-edge conversation about strategy. (29:93)

This type of personal relationships simultaneously respects the need to value differences and the need to cultivate unity.

Promoting openness and participation. During NYIC's board discussion about school vouchers described before, recall how the coalition arrived at making the decision to take no position on this sensitive issue. The three positions were thoroughly discussed in the board and only after doing so, was the decision made not to use it as a way to mobilize their members. This and other stories in both coalitions suggest that serious efforts were devoted to promoting participation and respect, highlighting the importance for members to feel valued, and to experience a relatively balanced power distribution. This participatory approach and the open nature of the coalition seemed to reflect the value of diversity in the coalition. At the same time, it created ownership and a feeling of adherence among coalition members and so it also promoted unity.

CAAELII's director was always "very careful about making sure that every single one of the agencies did take part and felt valued at the time" (13:78), trying to ensure that they would feel comfortable (13:79). In a similar fashion, at NYIC, a staff member said: "it's been really essential for us to show that we care just as much about the Russian, Korean, Chinese, Haitian and South Asian votes as we do about the Latino vote" (29:32), and as a consequence, "we've been able to maintain the sense of really, you know, multi-ethnic participation, and that our agenda has always been inclusive" (29:38).

As expected (Agranoff 2003), decision making in both coalitions mostly occurred through a participatory process, in particular when tough decisions had to be made.

At NYIC, processes were developed "for months and months" to find sufficient ways to engage people, to ensure that they would "be involved in meetings, be involved in the

preparation of the agendas and the positions" (28:81). At CAAELII, a member claimed: "[T]he way we work together is [we] build consensus among us. And sometimes that takes longer." (13:30). Indeed, this participatory form of group decision is based on lengthy processes of deliberation. The NYIC's executive director was very concerned about ensuring this process. This participatory process creates ownership, she argues:

> the great thing is, internally, you know, we've got at least 20 or 25 grassroots groups that have a tremendous sense of ownership on this. […] [we] have helped however many tens of thousands of people through the citizenship process, so they know that this belongs to them. So they're, you know, that's where […] the work draws its energy from (29:65)

This open way of operating is also linked to power distribution. Power differences are not eradicated in networks but must be accounted for (Huxham 2003; Agranoff and McGuire 2003; Klijn and Teisman 1997). Both coalitions revealed an explicit effort to create a power leveled playing field. As a member of one of them recognized, "There doesn't feel like a dominance of power in CAAELII [so] that one group has more say than the other group" (13:29). In the case of NYIC, the enormous differences among organizational members created an imbalanced power arena, which had to be managed to bring about some unity in the face of incredible diversity.

The NYIC coalition manager has managed the inevitable inequalities regarding centrality and power between principal and subsidiary participants (Vangen and Huxham 2004) without generating a zero sum game. She explains: "instead of trying to take away power or suppress those that are powerful, you just elevate the emerging groups so that they're more on equal grounds. So you don't alienate, you know, some of the more established groups." (28:36). This represents an interesting way to turn a difference that can produce conflict into a source of strength for the coalition, thus embracing the unity-diversity paradox rather than trying to fight it or ignore it. In sum, the open and participatory process keeps these heterogeneous organizations

together, allowing them to maintain their diversity, and the added-value it brings, while generating a sense of unity, ownership and belonging.

Openness and participation is closely related to the previously mentioned factors associated with the unity and diversity paradox (facilitation, nurturing and building internal personal relationships) and they interact to produce the synergy required to create a sense of community, which is at the core of potential collaboration. A participatory process needs facilitation and nurturing. Similarly, personal relationships are an outcome of, as well as an input to, participatory processes. All these together help create the fertile soil for collaboration, despite the tremendous differences among the coalition members.

Exploring outward work: factors facilitating external collaboration

In contrast to building community, tasks associated with outward work focus on what needs to be done to make things happen to influence an external target. Considering work with external actors, collaboration represents one of several possible strategies coalitions may use to engage its external environment, given that as such, this type of network represents a conflict management mechanism (Mizrahi and Rosenthal 1993, 2001). Choosing collaboration over other strategies is contingent to contextual factors, including the nature of the coalition's previous relationships with the actors and its assessment of the targets' power and capacity to be influenced (Hardy and Phillips 1998).

Outward oriented work includes at least three very different tasks. First, it includes work with the coalition members so that they can engage outside targets and allies. For example, both NYIC and CAAELII spend considerable time organizing training of the coalition members on the specific policy issues required to mobilize the members vis a vis external actors such as public agencies and politicians. Second, some of the outward work is oriented toward

developing alliances and partnerships with individuals, organizations and coalitions who will

enhance the coalition's ability to leverage power. Finally, coalition members spend considerable

energy engaging members of the institutional target that the coalition intends to influence. In the

next sections we focus on the two latter tasks.

We first provide some evidence of collaboration between the coalitions and potential allies,

and we then explore the way the coalitions engaged in collaboration with their primary target, the

INS. This relationship not only emerged as the primary target of a good portion of the external

work, but the way it was engaged surfaced an interesting paradox that provided new insight into

the dynamics of inter-organizational collaboration.[14]

Collaborating with external allies. The coalitions studied maintained relations with many

actors, other nonprofits, politicians, with the INS, and even with different individuals within the

INS. The type of relations varied and where both formal and informal, role based and personal

(Ring and Van de Ven 1994). Relations with other nonprofits were useful to gain information

and to mobilize pressure toward the target agency. The coordinator of the Immigration

Monitoring Board, and CAAELII member, described the relevance of relations as follows:

> "How should we deal and how should we go for what we are advocating and
> networking [?] So we say, ' well, I have addresses of network members, you can use this
> and try to get connected to these people…and you can write and call them. See how you
> can talk to them to get their feedback, how they do advocacy work, how we can go along.
> And [we can] write to them and see what their response is." (12:10)

These relations also allowed the coalition members to learn from the experience of others. In

NYIC's case, previous partnerships and existing relations motivated the coalition to broaden the

scope of its work and to reframe problems and solutions (Foldy, Goldman, and Ospina 2004).

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[14] In part the choice was forced by the absence of systematic discussion of the way the coalitions collaborated with other allies, something that is a function of the nature of the data base, and thus a limitation of our research

For example, its executive director acknowledged that the idea to focus on education from an immigration perspective "came from … several years of partnering with a lot of groups" (28:24).

Informal contacts also had the purpose of maintaining other nonprofits informed of the coalitions' movements to avoid offending any potential ally, letting them know about the coalitions' plans, and showing respect for others' role in the field. NYIC's executive director describes their decision to start doing education work as follows:

> "we made a big point of consulting with [other people] on our education work, you know, making sure that we were not going to, you know, alienate people that had a lot of power and stature in the field that we were going into, and stuff like that." (29:37)

The open nature of the coalition's inward work seemed also present in its outward work. CAAELII included non-member nonprofits when it created and lead the INS watch-dog Immigration Monitoring Board (IMB). As El Centro's representative at CAAELII's Board of Directors argued, this allowed the IMB to gain more power, because the board "isn't dependent completely upon CAAELII. And it wouldn't be as powerful if it were only CAAELII. It had to open up." (13:65).

Similarly, NYIC has also continually created strong links with groups outside the immigration world, for example, in the education movement. According to one of NYIC's founders and former board chair, this has been very helpful to enhance its credibility: "the Coalition keeps branching out, and every time that happens, the Coalition and the Coalition's issues get taken more seriously by legislators and by policymakers." (29:17) In her view, the "forming of stronger ties with groups outside the immigration world was a big milestone … in the maturing process of the Coalition. And that's proven to be very useful on lots of other issues over time" (29:15).

NYIC's executive director further states that the coalition is explicitly committed to having "as many circles overlap as much as possible" (28:20), which generates collaborative capacity

for the future. These relationships are sometimes formalized for specific projects. The executive

director described one such project, which drew together several nonprofits:

> "So those five immigrant community-based organizations are partnered with the New
> York Immigration Coalition and the Legal Aid Society to do work to improve access to
> healthcare for immigrant communities. And so I think in the past our model might have
> been, try and get, you know, help the local organizations get the information that's out
> there about CHIP or about Family Health Plus or something like that. Instead, there are
> several different layers to the relationships" (28:22)

She described how there layers helped to close the

> "disconnect between who actually was in touch with the population and knew the
> stories and knew the needs, and who was in touch with the information and had the ear of
> policy-makers" (28:94)

The coalitions also established relationships with politicians. These were valuable because

public officials are in a position to influence the INS via legislative power. Indeed, both

coalitions drew from their relations with state congressmen. According to the coordinator of the

IMB, the Illinois congressman delegation helped CAAELII put a bill in the house recommending

the creation of an Ombudsman for the INS (12.22). Similarly, NYIC's executive director

described using a press conference to get a delegation of congressmen to visit the INS district

office and confirm its backlog and lack of resources:

> "since we had a bunch of congress members coming to speak…at our press
> conference, we said: "take [the congress members] on a tour and show them, you know,
> like, what's going on internally", and so they did. They had a bunch of congress members
> in the very day that we did this protest, that had all this stuff in the media, you know, they
> actually had... the same people then go inside, so they could show them what was going
> on." 29:52

This story suggests that the coalition influenced their targets not only via confrontation, but

sometimes they chose other forms of engagement to do so.

Collaborating with the target agency: the use of dialogue and confrontation. The goal of

improving immigrants' quality of life in their states demanded that both coalitions challenge and

influence a public agency over which they had no direct power, the INS. The INS' power was far superior to that of either coalition, given its legal mandate and role in implementing immigration policy, the favorable political climate towards increased control and the irregular legal status of some of the coalition's constituents. To successfully influence the behavior of this powerful target, the coalitions could not just engage in frontal attack or direct resistance. Instead, they engaged representatives of the target agency in collaboration, showing the advantages of interdependence, while still confronting individual representatives or the agency's policies when needed. Hence the paradoxical engagement strategy of confrontation and dialogue.

The Advocacy Director at NYIC illustrated the way this manifested as follows: "just balancing … the power that you have and using that to push … [i]n a combination of friendly meetings but also public dissing." The strategy combines two contradictory engagement forms in the same relationship. NYIC's executive director magnificently justified the simultaneous use of confrontation and dialogue as follows:

> "you're no good to anybody if you're someone's friend all the time. But you're also no good if you're the enemy all the time … how do you intelligently and ethically strike the balance between, you know, maintaining relationships being important to people, and at the same time being able to be critical of them, and getting them to do what you want them to do" (29:41)

In practice, confrontation implied questioning the target agency publicly regarding unacceptable behavior, inhumane policies or defective outputs of immigration processing tasks. CAAELII would publicly challenge agency representatives by asking them "tough questions" and bringing them cases " (13:54); they would also carry out protests and organize public marches. But they would not exclude collaboration efforts with neither the INS nor other administrative and political bodies.

The coordinator of the CAAELII-led Independent Monitoring Board defined itself as "not really anti-INS, … trying … to help them improve their situation" (12:23), wanting them to

"help themselves to be efficient." CAAELII constant contact enabled them to build and sustain

an informal collaborative relation with the INS. As the representing person of CAAELII-member

El Centro de Educacion y Cultura described the growing interdependence: "[now] District

Director wants to come to our meetings, I think is a sign that, you know, we must be doing

something right [so] that he feels it's important to be at these meetings." (13:69). NYIC's

executive director describes the paradoxical engagement with INS as follows: "a bit of a

love/hate relationship with the INS […] NYIC has also honored…some of the INS work [and

makes] the effort to keep the relationship as positive as possible (29:41).

We identified three management factors that helped these coalitions embrace the

confrontation-dialogue paradox so as to facilitate collaboration with influential targets. These

factors are: maintaining the credibility of the coalition, continuously acting at different levels,

such as the local and national levels; and promoting a multiplicity of both personal relationships

as well as institutional relationships.

Maintaining the coalition's credibility. Credibility played an important role in using

confrontation and dialogue successfully, in two different ways. First, general credibility made the

coalitions more reliable in the eyes of the target organization. The coalitions' threats were more

powerful during confrontation, and their offers for collaboration more convincing during

dialogue. NYIC's credibility as politically non-partisan, and ultimately interested in defending its

constituents, rather than pursuing an electoral agenda was essential when interacting with

members of administrative and political institutions. The executive director recognized the

importance of clarifying their work with respect to electoral politics as follows:

> we are really not about trying to … support particular candidates. [M]any other groups
> have gotten into this work saying they're doing it to be non-partisan but then they start to
> get into it and hitch their star to certain candidates, and I think we really found that just
> saying [to politicians], "No, sorry. You have to really go out and deal with immigrant

communities. You have to figure out what it is they want. You know we're not going to broker this. You know you really need to be there and be relevant to them." … made much more of the difference in the work. (28:34)

Second, as the direct voice of immigrants, the credibility of the information regarding the coalitions' constituents enhanced their trustworthiness. A CAAELII founder, currently the director of one of its member organizations described the potential for dialogue as follows: "we've [the Independent Monitoring Board] demonstrated that we have the credibility... In fact, the INS regional local office director… has continuously sought out this body to communicate with … because he realizes that we're representing the voices of his customers" (13:101). Credibility represented a form of political capital that allowed coalitions to engage in dialogue and confrontation with the same agency as need.

Acting at all levels. Working at local, state and national levels via campaigns, lobbying and partnering with other nonprofits seemed to give both coalitions more leverage when entering relations with other major players, specially government. As a CAAELII staff working in the community-building project acknowledged:

> These organizations, with our help, can put pressure in all the government levels. Cook county levels, state levels, local levels. […] So we can do a really good job over there. (12:42)

By acting at these levels, the coalitions were able to gain a multi-perspective of their problems, and they gained much more information about the issues as these manifested in the local, state and federal policy arenas. Moreover, acting at different levels allowed the coalitions to keep up with the INS own multi-level presence and operating arenas. The strategic importance of information, highlighted in the collaboration and network literatures (Agranoff and McGuire 2003; and Ebers 1997b), is multiplied when the sources are broadened, as illustrated in the comment of the director of training and legal service at NYIC: "[w]e were the only group that knew what was going on because of our relationship with people in D.C." (29:7).

Using this information, as well as acting on and linking different levels of action allowed

these coalitions to combine simultaneously, although at different levels, the engagement

strategies of confrontation and dialogue within the same agency. For example, at one point the

NYIC collaborated with the New York District INS to advocate for them vis a vis the federal

office. In this case, there was a large backlog of immigration cases affecting New York City

immigrants. The district office could not resolve the problem without involving the federal level,

but they had not been able to leverage that help. The NYIC decided to take up the issue

themselves, moving the action to the federal level, in Washington DC:

> …we could have done the easy thing of protesting down here […but] we wound up
> being an advocate for the New York District [INS office] right up to the level of the INS
> Commissioner (29:49).

The idea was to stage a protest to put pressure nationally but as if they were complaining

about the New York District INS office. Yet this would be done without burning bridges, while

maintaining the relationship with the district:

> …we had already done all of our work with the district office to say, you know, "this
> is not about you, listen carefully to what we say in the media. We're not going to say that
> you guys are incompetent, we're not going to say that you're lazy and you don't know
> what you're doing. This is about the national issue with the backlog (29:53).

Confronting federal officials while maintaining dialogue with the district office at the same

time represents an excellent illustration of how NYIC engaged at the same time in confrontation

and dialogue with the same agency, hence embracing the paradox. In doing so, they were able to

build collaborative capacity vis a vis INS district representatives. At the same time, they were

able to influence INS behavior.

Cultivating multiple relationships. Having relationships at different layers of an agency and

with multiple actors in the environment prevented "burning bridges" (using NYIC's executive

director's words). Personal relationships with individuals within the target organization and in

other stakeholder groups were vital to manage the confrontation and dialogue paradox, as stated

by a NYIC staff:

> "We always make sure we have good relationships in a few areas [of INS] so that we can talk to senior people and we can say some good things about them. And at the same time we're often put in a position of really criticizing them and talking about their deficiencies." (29:41).

Relationships also guaranteed a minimum of space where dialogue can be introduced before

or after confrontation. Moreover, relationships helped NYIC stay connected given the internal

mobility in public agencies caused by the political environment. Describing the uncertainty

associated with the change of Commissioner due to changes in leadership positions in the INS,

the executive director said:

> …there we would draw on our relationships with other groups around the country, the other immigration coalitions, and our partners nationally. Veronica goes to regular meetings down in DC that a lot of the groups have with the INS. (29:56)

In sum, building credibility, acting at all jurisdictional levels and cultivating multiple

relationships were factors associated with the ability of coalition managers to use strategically

the confrontation and dialogue paradox to cultivate collaborative capacity vis a vis its target.

The use of this paradox points to the dual nature of leadership (Huxham and Vangen 2000a)

document when they describe the simultaneous use of the spirit of collaboration and

collaboration thuggery in partnerships. In their case, this happens in a formal network, or what

we have in this paper identified as intra-coalition collaboration. While we did not find this

duality among coalition members, it seems to be present in the discontinuous relationship

between the coalition as a whole, and its powerful, and often antagonist, target agency.

The paradox also points to the usefulness of distinguishing among different strategies of

engagement – collaboration, compliance, contention and contestation – as Hardy and Phillips

(1998) suggest. However, our findings suggest that what may be interpreted as cooptation in

their framework, could be viewed as a more sophisticated strategy of engagement using paradox. In this case, less powerful actors are able to capitalize from the inherent tensions to open a space for engaging in collaboration with more powerful and unlikely allies. The confrontation and dialogue strategy is not just a case of cooptation due to power imbalances. Coalition members are willing to collaborate with the powers that be, but they are not "afraid of dissing powerful people" (28:49) when appropriate, and instead, they use this as a way to exert influence. If at all, the artful management of the confrontation and dialogue paradox represents a very sophisticated form of resistance, one that is done in such an intelligent way, that in the long run, it generates collaborative capacity (Bardach 1998).

DISCUSSION

We have identified two paradoxes that actors of two immigrant coalitions encountered as they tried to do their work. We have also identified some of the management factors that helped them embrace both paradoxes, thus facilitating collaboration. Our findings complement existing frameworks that have not incorporated the concept of paradox yet. For example, in the context of the existing literature on public management network, the management factors we have identified are both activities (nurturing and facilitation regarding unity-diversity; acting at different levels regarding dialogue-confrontation) and capacities (open and participatory structure and process, and good internal personal relationships regarding unity-diversity; a web of relations, and credibility regarding dialogue-confrontation) (Bardach 1998).

We are not certain that the factors we identified are the only ones associated with the artful managing of paradox to facilitate collaboration. However, at least in the context of these immigration coalitions, they seem to help coalition members engage in effective collaboration. Furthermore the confrontation and dialogue paradox might be very specific to either: a) the work

carried out by coalitions associated with immigration; or b) to the actor to whom they relate, the INS, with its contextual specificity characterized by tension and contradiction in immigration policy. Additional research, using data explicitly collected to explore paradox, in various policy contexts can further confirm or challenge these preliminary insights. For now, we offer them as a way to motivate interest in a research agenda that focuses on the role of paradox in understanding effective collaborative work.

The two identified paradoxes are quite different, as they emerged in two very different organizational contexts, one of inward work to maintain intra-coalition collaboration and the other of outward work to pursue the coalition goals vis a vis the target. But they are not completely independent from each other. Moving forward the coalition's agenda highly depends on the resources coalition members either pool together or provide separately. It also depends on the members' willingness and capacity to engage in the actual outward oriented work. Outward work effectiveness will depend on the quality of the internal coordination of the coalition and on the amount of trust developed via inward work with coalition members. In the same way, the complexity of the work that will help the coalition attain the external common goals, will bare effects on the complexity of the work the coalition must develop to sustain itself as a network of collaborating agencies.

If this is the case, we might also speculate that there is a synergistic relationship between the two very different paradoxes we identified. For example, a possible proposition for future study is that the more successful is the internal managing of the unity and diversity paradox, the better prepared are the coalition actors –its members, as well as the coordinating unit staff – to deal with the target organization in a flexible and open way thus being ready to engage in both confrontation and dialogue. What members learn as they embrace the tensions associated with

holding both unity and diversity inside the coalition may be an asset transportable to managing the external relationship in which the diversity is most obvious, and where potential for conflict is greatest: in the relationship with the target. This represents another interesting area for future research.

By highlighting the potential of paradox to understand network management and collaboration, we offer a small contribution to address an existing blind spot in the literature on collaborative network management. It is true that interest in paradox is not completely absent in the literature, but it is also true that discussions about it have not produced a robust body of empirical research on the topic. Berry et al. (2004) call for embracing Nadel´s paradox in public network management research, which highlights the dual nature of roles, as both relational and context-specific. While roles represent a generic category independent of who enacts them, at the same time, "each particular role is defined by local expectations and understandings that make it fundamentally incomparable to others" (Berry et al. 2004: 540). DiMaggio (1992) discusses the implications of Nadel's paradox for network research as follows: "A satisfactory approach to social structure requires simultaneous attention to both cultural and relational aspects of role-related behavior. Yet cultural aspects are qualitative and particular, pushing researchers toward taxonomic specificity, whereas concrete and social relations lend themselves to analysis by formal and highly abstract methods" (p. 119). Paradox is thus inherent both in the constitutive elements of network collaboration and in the implications of this for research. But this idea has not been sufficiently explored empirically. We believe that attention to paradox, as a concept and as a reality, can provide a unifying thread to the research tradition on network management and collaboration.

Our findings also seem to support some of the limited insights about the role of paradox offered from the social work literature on inter-organizational collaboration. Mizrahi and Rosenthal (1993) argue that conflict is inevitable in a coalition because it takes place at three different levels: between the coalition and the social change target; among coalition members; and between the coalition and its members. Hence, they argue coalition work should be approached as a conflict resolution model, which requires managing effectively four tensions. One of which is precisely the conflicting demands of unity versus diversity. Our insights contribute to offer more details on the way this tension is addressed successfully in real life.

Bailey and Koney (1996) also draw attention to several paradoxical realities in the management of collaboratives. Among those, leadership illustrates the pervasiveness of paradox as a key dimension in the management of collaborative work. In the context of community-based collaboratives, leaders must recognize conflict as an inherent and positive aspect of collaboration. Pointing to the paradoxical nature of leadership, they argue that leaders must be at the same time assertive and responsive. Good leadership is good followership, as leaders must follow the lead of the other stakeholder groups. They must however, also find new paths to manage a complex system. This is consistent in our assertion that at least in the context of coalition work, leaders artfully manage paradox to facilitate collaboration. That paradoxical leadership and collaborative leadership are closely intertwined represents a potentially fruitful area for future research.

Finally a word of caution is needed. This article reports the preliminary findings from an ongoing research project and therefore our insights should be understood only as suggestive. Because our findings emerged in a grounded fashion from a data set that was not explicitly created to explore the dynamics of collaboration, we understand that our argument requires

further exploration. Moreover, both coalitions studied come from the same policy sector, immigration, which increases the comparability of the study, but decreases the generalizability of the findings to collaborative work in other policy areas.

Future research will thus include two stages. First, using the same data set, we will broaden the scope of the sample to include coalitions in other policy areas. If the findings remain strong, we will develop an in-depth questionnaire to explore the proposition that effective collaboration involves the management of paradox in the context of coalition work, designing a new sampling frame that considers different types of coalitions in various policy areas, with an increased number of cases.

CONCLUSION

The literature on networks and collaboration is full of insights that point to the tension-ridden, paradoxical nature of this phenomenon. It is surprising, then, that researchers have been reluctant, or at least relatively indifferent, to empirically exploring this idea. Our tentative findings open this as a potentially rich area for empirical inquiry.

In this paper we identified two paradoxes that emerge in the context of the collaborative work undertaken by members of two successful coalitions supporting immigrant rights. We have argued that inter-organizational collaboration is facilitated through the artful management of these paradoxes. We have also identified some key management factors that helped managers of these coalitions address the paradoxes so as to facilitate the collaboration required for the coalitions to be successful.

Although preliminary, our findings suggest that in their efforts to pursue their missions, coalition managers encountered the paradoxes of unity and diversity (as they engaged in the inward work of building community) and confrontation and dialogue (as they engaged the

outward work of trying to influence a key target). These are paradoxes because they pose equally important contradictory demands on these leaders' attention, time and energy (to promote unity and to value diversity; to engage in both dialogue and confrontation with the same agency). Coalition leaders approach these paradoxes by *transcending* them rather than confronting or ignoring them (Lewis 2000). That is, in Lewis's language, they constructed more accommodating perceptions of these opposite demands and acted on them, what Lewis defines as the capacity to think paradoxically. We pose that developing and acting on this capacity seems to facilitate another important organizational capacity for successful coalition work. It facilitates the collaborative capacity (Bardach 1998) required for an organization of organizations (i,e, the coalition as a network) to accomplish its goals while supporting those of its members.

These findings support the few insights about the role of paradox offered by the social work literature on inter-organizational collaboration. They also speak to the existing blind spot in the literature on collaborative network management. By linking these two literatures, we offer the first steps toward an agenda to develop empirical work to pursue this line of inquiry. Potential areas for exploration include, for example, inquiring into the role of paradox for developing collaborative capacity, and exploring the relationship between paradoxical and collaborative leadership, among others.

The current trend in organization and management studies that considers the paradoxical nature of social life (Lewis 2000; Knights 1997; Ofori-Dankwa and Julian 2004; and Smith and Berg 1987) has yet to influence the empirical work of collaboration scholars. In particular, we believe that the literature focusing on inter-organizational collaboration can benefit from bringing paradox to the center of the agenda to build a more coherent theory of this type of social interaction. We hope our work contributes to motive a discussion in that direction.

APPENDIXES

Table 1: Comparative Overview of NYIC and CAAELLII

Coalition	NYIC	CAAELII
Areas of work	Policy Analysis and Advocacy Civic Participation & Voter Educ. Immigrant Concerns Training Inst. Community Education	Independent Monitoring Board English Literacy & Civics Citizenship and Voter Training School Community Organizing Computer Technology Project
Year founded	1987	1996 (formally in 1998)
Mission	To provide a forum for the immigrant community to discuss urgent issues and provide a vehicle for collective action in addressing these issues	To improve the quality of life for immigrants and refugees and to ensure dignity and respect by organizing and uniting communities through education, leadership development and direct services and by promoting the voice of community in public policy.
Budget	$2.2 million (2001: $1.317.900)	$1 million (2001: $936.000)
Funding (2001)	Philanthropic institutions (98.5%) & Membership dues (1.5%)	Philanthropic institutions (45%), State Government (34%), Corporate (10%), Individual donors (1%) & In-Kind support (10%)
Full-time staff	17	9
Board members	22	20
Member organizations	150 (+ individual members)	20
Governing body	Board of directors (elected via voting by all organizational members)	Board of directors (the director of each member organizations)
Formality and legality	Legally registered.	CAAELII is not a registered nonprofit – Lead agency and "fiscal agent" of CAAELII is CMAA.

Table 2: Documentation of the Codes used for the Analysis

Descriptive codes:
D – motivation to join: Why the coalition was formed, and what is the "net" gain to the members?

D – relationships: Nature of relationships, whether within coordination unit, among member orgs, between member orgs (and/or network) and external non-members, and whether interpersonal or inter-organizational and positive or negative, as well as varying in intensity.

D – scope of work: Nature of objectives, activities and areas of work of the network.

D – success: Successes expressed by interviewed.

Grounded codes:
G - "link" local and national: Capacity to link "their" broader issues to specific experience of other groups and persons (and by so doing attracting their support to "their" issues), and link national policy issues to local people's and groups interests

G - member "training" and "education": Member / constituent training

G - "integrity": "Integrity, internal justice, coherent, proper agenda, trust in internal process."

G - "nurturing": constant and stern following of internal members as well as following up and not giving up on objectives and issues.

G - open & inclusive: Participatory and inclusiveness in coalition. Board membership diversity. Transparency and approachability. Information sharing and egalitarianism. Seems to create ownership feelings.

G - confrontation and dialogue: Strategic use of confrontation and dialogue w/ external stakeholders.

G - collaboration thuggery: Playing the politics (Huxham): using contacts, threats and indirect means to achieve purpose. Both internally and externally.

G – unity and/or diversity: Need for unity (in terms of issues and positionings) but also tolerance to divergence

Table 3: Description of the immigrant coalitions' work[15]

CAAELII's main programs:
- English Literacy and Civics - provides integrated English literacy and civics education to immigrant and other limited English proficient population so they may learn how to become active community members
- Community Organizing – develops community groups to work towards social justice for Chicago's immigrant and refugee communities
- The Independent Monitoring Board – founding and participation in an independent, non-governmental watchdog to ensure that the [INS] is accountable to the public
- The Computer Technology Project – bridges the Digital Divide for its partner agencies
- The Citizenship and Voter Training School – serves as a "gathering place" where community leaders can join together with others who share their concerns.

NYIC main programs:
- Policy Analysis and Advocacy – focuses on practices, policies and laws that affect the quality of life of immigrants and their communities
- Civic Participation and Voter Education – a large-scale voter registration project, with more than 100 voter education events each year, and the recruitment of bilingual poll workers
- Immigrant Concerns Training Institute – offers workshops and seminars on issues that are important to immigrant communities
- Community Education – develops educational materials in as many as twelve languages on issues such as immigration law, the citizenship process, school registration, health care access, and voting rights.

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[15] Sources: (CAAELII 2004b; NYIC 2004)

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