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Culture, Structure, and Process.

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Book review

Patricia H. THORNTON, William OCASIO & Michael LOUNSBURY (2012)

The Institutional Logics Perspective: A new approach to Culture, Structure, and Process.
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Roger FRIEDLAND

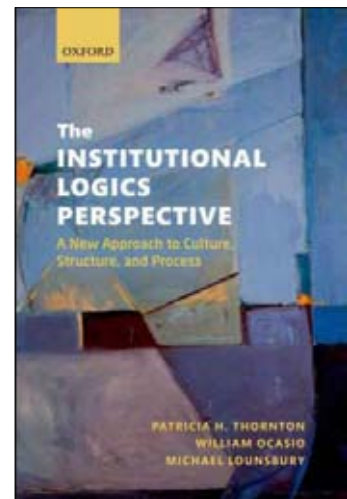
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The Institutional Logics Perspective systematically lays out and articulates the mechanisms of institutional logics. Twenty years ago, I wrote an essay with Robert Alford, a screed against individualist rationalisms and cultureless power politics, against interest and power as the only rubrics by which to parse the social. We sought to return to the meaningful practice of institutional spheres as a way to “bring society back in” (Friedland and Alford, 1991). Quite unexpectedly it found a receptive audience among organizational theorists in the world of management schools. Patricia Thornton, William Ocasio and Michael Lounsbury – three business school professors – have taken this project to places I never imagined one might even go.

Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury (hereafter TOL) have built an intricate, multi-level analytic world that lays out a more ample inter-institutional system and specifies the organizational processes through which institutional logics are enacted, recomposed and even created anew, as well as positing individual-level processes by which agents both reproduce and transform that system. It is an impressive feat of analytic thinking, a genealogy, an architecture, a charted conceptual map with complexly layered and interlocked flowcharts that sometimes seem they can fly. It is a big work with many functions and viewpoints, operating at multiple scales. The contingent connections at and between different levels are each elaborated in their own chapter, and I can only begin to suggest the possibilities and problems I see in their construction.

The Value of Institutional Logics

Institutional logics operate at a supra-organizational level, as material-symbolic languages (“vocabularies of practice” (94)), a practical metaphysics. While institutional fields can be “logically” plural (136), unlike orders of worth which Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) resist locating socially, they do describe regions of social activity. Institutional logics cannot be adequately explained, nor derived from interactional regularities of individuals or organizations, neither from iterative individual rationalities nor competitive or coercive organizational interactions. Neither a religion nor an economy can be reduced to its organizational forms. Institutional logics, the authors point out, do not reduce analytically to individual transactions or the “structuration” of organizational



fields (24-25). But, at the same time, neither can an institutional logic be separated from them: One would not be able to specify what Christianity or capitalism is without reference to concrete individuals who pray and profit, from the Latin Church or Chase-Manhattan. Institutional logics are enacted and can only be observed at individual and organizational levels. Modal types of symbolically meaningful, material practice, institutional logics are sustained and transformed through the multiplicity of their tokens (Boltanski, 2011: 69). Located at the supra-organizational level, institutional theory effaced the individual – her subjectivity, her reasoning, her interests, the bases of her actions. While DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) theorized alternative forms of isomorphism – normative, coercive and mimetic – respectively located in the professions, state and market, the authors point out that the “meaning of rationality” remained invariant across sectors such that isomorphism is obtained through “relatively mindless behavior in response to structural rationalization” (27). Neo-institutionalism lacked a theory of actor interest and hence had neither a basis for individual agency nor consequently for theorization of institutional change, an “astonishing deficit” (29).

The subject's neglect derives, as they both underscore and exhibit in their own approach, from a desire to avoid the consensualism characterizing Parsonian approaches that depend on internalization of values (32, 40, 42, 44, 52) and consequently to develop an approach that sustained the exterior, constraining effects of the social world. Neo-institutionalism turned to a cultural cognitivism which constituted the social world through category, schema and script, which do not depend on internalized normative commitments, relegating the normative to a particular sphere, that of the professions (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991: 26). By contrast, Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury see in institutional logics not only a way to pluralize institutional rationalities beyond state, market and professions, but to posit an exterior culture manifest in material practices and cultural “vocabularies of practice” whose coherence across time does not depend on internalized values and thus provides a basis for “mindful” and “strategic” agency and transformation through the multiplicity of logics on the one hand and their “nearly decomposable capacity” on the other (42-44, 59-60).¹ “Variation is enabled,” they write, “because culture is not internalized as in the Parsonian (1951) view; instead it is externalized in institutional practices and vocabularies that shape not only habitual action, but also strategic decisions” (44, 106). Externalization enables agency in their view.

Drawing on Thornton's earlier mapping (2004), the authors lay out a more complete inter-institutional system, adding profession, corporation and community, but dropping democracy as an “ideology” and lopping off the state's bureaucratic qualifier (67). They also seek to specify each institutional logic's mechanisms including sources of legitimacy, authority and identity, as well as bases of norms, attention and strategy (56). They understand these “building blocks” as specifying the “organizing principles that shape individual and organizational preferences and interests and the repertoire of behaviors by which interests and preferences are attained within the sphere of influence of a specific order” (54).

This kind of thinking, that is, conceptualizing the components of institutional logics, is necessary if we are to develop the kind of comparative institutionalism able to establish the specificity of institutional logics, to locate them within existent sociological theory, to show how and under what conditions logics

1. Just for the record, they have done a creative reading of what they call Robert Alford's and my “interinstitutional system,” in which I sometimes do not recognize my own understanding of these logics.

shape intra-organizational, organizational and inter-organizational structures and processes, as well as to understand how these structures and processes condition stability and change in the inter-institutional system. As they point out, we know very little about the actual patterns and degree of constraint and affordance – on the kinds and degree of practical variation for instance – associated with different institutional logics (58).

Such conceptualization is necessary to be able to identify an institutional logic in the first place. Only once their necessary components are determined, their empirical coherence and effects established, will it be possible to identify what does and what does not qualify as one. The theory is still but a sketch so there are now a bewildering array of stable or emergent social forms being labeled as instances of distinct institutional logics. The periodic table is getting increasingly crowded and there is a danger of relabeling organizational regularities identified long ago by scholars who pointed, for example, to intra-organizational culture conflicts (Burns and Stalker, 1961). Comparative institutionalism is a daunting task and I would counsel us to seek parsimony. With six institutional orders on the X-axis and nine categories on the Y-axis, it must have been a heroic work for Thonton, Ocasio and Lounsbury to fill out all the cells in the inter-institutional matrix. They tend to economize the logics, couching the “root metaphor” of the family, for instance, as a “firm,” or that of religion as “Temple as a bank.” Because they draw on “established social-science concepts” (59), the analytic attributes characterizing each institutional logic are not themselves the bases of the Y-axis (171). Modal material practices are not specified; neither are institutional objects.

The most critical omission – value – in their specification of the components of institutional logics likely derives from the authors’ desire to avoid the normative legacy of the “old” institutionalism.² Institutional logics undo the conceptual heterogeneities separating the rational and the non-rational, the technical and the cultural, the material and the ideal. The authors thus question the autonomy of Scott’s institutional pillars – the regulative, normative and cognitive (36-39, 51). I agree: Institutional logics do not parse into this trioka. I read Scott’s three pillars as rules establishing the right, a value establishing the good and an ontology constituting the real (36-39). In my understanding each institutional logic is ordered around regimes of practice, constituted by specific constellations of rule, role and category. Rules enforced by different forms of coercion, roles grounded in the production of particular values, and categories delineating the real are co-implicated in each logic.

Institutional logics, I would argue, return us to that element from which the new institutionalism fled: value. Although I have re-termed value as substance, an Aristotelian category, in order to capture its constitutive role (Friedland, 2012), value is central to an institutional logic: a presumed product of its prescribed practices, the foundation stone of its ontology, the source of legitimacy of its rules, a basis of individual identification, a ground for agency, and the foundation upon which its powers are constituted. The closest the Thorntonian rubric comes to value is “sources of legitimacy” (56), which entail “unconditional loyalty” in the family, “sacredness in society” in religion, “democratic participation” in the state, “share price” in the market, “personal expertise” in professions, and “market position of firm” in the corporation. Further thinking is required to get this right, but I would have tentatively written these respectively as love or kinship, god, sovereignty (assuming a nation-

2. The authors do occasionally use the category of value: “By definition organizational fields are made up of a variety of organizations that have their values anchored in different societal-level institutional orders” (44-45).

state), private property, knowledge and capital.

Institutional logics co-implicate social physics and metaphysics. An unobservable, ontologically subjective institutional value is the metaphysical aspect of a logic. “[A]ctors’ interests,” they write, cannot be “understood independently of actors’ understandings” (41). An institutional logic presumes that institutional meanings, on the one hand, and individual or organizational interests and powers on the other, are interdependent. It is not just that institutional logics posit “different interpretation[s] of how to use power” (64-65) or that power is exercised in particular ways in response to conditions of “cultural heterogeneity,” but that institutional logics differently constitute what power is. Power is rarely, if ever, free from culture, and thus power’s effects in a situation carry the force of an institutional logic.

An institutional value founds the ontology of the central object or state of being, around which normatively enforced practices are organized through constellations of roles and hence constitute the resources through which powers are afforded. The value of knowledge, for instance, grounds facts or results produced by practices of scientific representation by scientists whose access to the production of those facts is a source of power. The value of god grounds salvation produced by practices of piety by believers whose access to that salvation is a source of power. The value of freedom grounds popular sovereignty produced by practices of electoral representation by voters and parties whose access to the production of that representation is a source of power. The value of property grounds priced commodities produced by practices of production and market exchange by their owners, whose relative power derives from their access to the monetary flows that follow from their exchange. The value of love grounds marriage by couples whose practices of sexual fidelity, cohabitation and sexual reproduction generate family solidarities to which both gendered and generational powers attach. Culture and structure are not independent explanations, the one grounded in subjective meanings, the other in objective materialities. When the authors claim that they are developing the “tools that enable researchers to partition symbolic from structural effects” (11), it is unclear to me what that might mean.

Nor do I agree that internalization of values undercuts agency and hence organizational variation (106). I think it may be just the opposite. TOL themselves recognize the ways in which institutional logics shape subjecthood, “their sense of self and identity: that is, who they are, their logics of action, how they act, their vocabularies of motive...” (54). Institutional subjectivity depends on identification and internalization, which is both a critical anchor and source of agency, the latter because of the former. Just as institutional logics operate as an oscillating movement between transcendence and immanence, they also operate through a movement between internal identification and external objectification, the former increasing in importance when the latter fails or is uncertain. Institutional logics are sustained not just by modal material practices, but by personal identifications with an institutional value, commitments that enable individuals and organizations to explore and then legitimate new practices as tokens of a type. Unless values are just legitimations, empirical findings that cognition is loosely coupled to value, thereby enabling practice and scope variation, would be adaptive to this process (123). Intention and passion become important when practices have not, or cannot, become materially objectified. Indeed, I suspect such identifications are also what

enable institutional logics to be sustained in the face of inevitable exceptions, that keep heterodoxy from being coded as heresy, experiment as charlatanism, administrative discretion as law-breaking, violent personal argument as an absence of love. Identification, like an apology, is a tool for exculpation and social repair (Arendt, 1958). It is also a critical instrument for institutional change.

Decomposition and Heterogeneity

Institutional logics provide, indeed require, more space for agency and hence politics, and consequently allow for more institutional heterogeneity and transformation than does neo-institutionalism (Greenwood et. al, 2011). Contradictions and complementarities between institutional logics potentially provide divergent bases of valuation and critique, categorization of the real, and alternative modalities of action (44-45). The inherent gap between institutional logic and institutional field enables individuals and organizations to make claims for new practices and new objects as legitimate enactments of that logic, which TOL term “elaboration” or “expansion” (77, 167).

Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury give primacy to the modular quality of institutional logics as a condition enabling agency. In their framing, available and accessible logics can be decomposed into “fragments or categorical elements” that “entrepreneurs” can deploy to transform the institutional order, or individuals and organizations can “apply in novel social situations in order to fit practical needs in specific local settings” based on “situational cues” (9-10). The “modularity” of an institutional logic’s components – its cognitive frames, its identities, its values, its practices – allows them to be segregated, transposed and combined by “institutional entrepreneurs” (60-62). They thereby seek to marry Swidler’s tool-kit approach to culture with institutional logics (126, 135) (Swidler, 1986).

In a fascinating triptych of case studies, they show how individuals’ institutional locations -- both the mobility between or the structural overlap of those locations -- enable them to become “cultural entrepreneurs,” to transpose or blend practices from those locations to new objects in new locations and thereby create new organizational forms (107-118). The founder of J.C. Penney, for example, the son of a Baptist preacher, brought his understanding of Christian community, not only its ethical teachings of the Golden Rule, the original name of the cash-and-carry stores, but likely also its anti-hermeneutic, unitary and universal truth, to the development of mass retailing where there would be one-price for all, no credit, prices determined by a fair, not a maximum, return, and customers were understood as congregant-neighbors of the community to be supported by the firm and its employees. The revealed word, a universal truth, served as a template for the unitary pricing of mass-retailed goods, a conjunction of Christian love and capitalist price. James Cash Penney, who declared that he “would rather be known as a Christian than a merchant,” understood himself as Christianizing the corporation.³ The authors show a similar trajectory with the formation of Phoenix University, its founder a labor organizer who sought to serve working class students with a work-based education through the creation of a corporate, profit-making enterprise. Prentice-Hall was founded by two finance teachers who made a publishing enterprise into an expansive, decentralized structure that functioned as an internal capital market in which key employees were tied to its financial performance through stock options

3. <http://www.theeffectivetruth.info/testjcp.html>

and profit sharing. Institutional logics offer practices and categories that can be redeployed. The referential scope of an institutional logic can expand and contract; elements can be transposed, combined and segregated.

But just how decomposable is an institutional logic? TOL posit the modularity of institutional logics as a requisite of their portability which is a basis for logical plurality in a field or organization. Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury's position of "near-decomposability" suggests that the elements of institutional logics can be mixed and matched in limitless permutations, more like the way Boltanski and Thévenot speak of conventions of worth (178-179). TOL themselves wonder about these "limits": "[W]e suggest it is not infinite because, historically, even with revolutionary change in institutions there remain some elemental parts" (60).

Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury center their approach to institutional logics around practices and identities. "We conceptualize organizational identity and practices as the key conceptual linkages between institutional logics and intra-organizational processes" (135). But it is really practices that TOL place at the analytic center of institutional logics, accounting for endogenous changes in an institutional field, providing bases of identity and collective mobilization (135, 142). If, as TOL suggest, practices and their associated identities are at the core of an institutional logic and if practice variations account for institutional transformation, then the institutional specificity of practice becomes a critical conceptual problem. What are the practical entailments of an institutional logic? Institutional logics presumably have some measure of practical specificity. If the specificity is too low, then it is impossible to specify an institutional logic. But if that specificity is too great, there may be serious limits to their transposability. TOL sense the tension when they write:

The opportunity for future research is to analyze the various dimensions and pathways by which institutional logics, collective identities and practices emerge and shift over time. To do so, we must conceptualize and study collective identities and practice as constructs that are fundamentally interrelated to, yet somewhat independent of institutional logics – that is, loosely coupled (144).

There is a conundrum: Institutional logics are specific constellations of practices, identities and objects. The more decomposable they are, the less they can be argued to exist.

Identifying the decomposable, and hence mobile, elements of an institutional logic is related to explaining their configurational plasticity, that is, understanding the limited variety of institutional formations that obtain, what logics co-exist, complement or contradict, hybridize or displace in which fields of activity. I have always, perhaps wrongly, thought of institutional logics as having a limited modularity, where material practices are not, as they put it, "symbol-barren" (124), that is, where identities of subjects, material practices, and valued objects are co-implicated, lashed together and difficult to decompose, as in the linkage of owners, market exchange and property; representatives, border defense and sovereignty; congregants, prayer and divinity; or scientists, replicable representation and knowledge. That they are joined together in the social imagination is what makes them real, available, good to think and act with. They are world-making production functions; their cognitive, normative or coercive components do not travel separately. Correlatively I understand a new institutional logic to exist where new co-implicated constellations of

subjects, practices and objects emerge. The less decomposable institutional logics, the greater constraints there would seem to be in building different kinds of formations, the more transpositions would involve “assimilation,” “replacement,” and “segregation,” rather than “blending” (164-166). Such constraints on decomposability and hence mobility would provide another mechanism of isomorphism, explaining why organizational forms vary within such a limited range.

Missing Institutional Objects

The institutional logics perspective accounts for the dynamics of both the material and the symbolic. This is perhaps the key distinction between the institutional logics perspective and early neoinstitutional theory. . . . We are not, however, advocating a research language of mutual constitution that melds cultural symbols and material structures together and rules out distinguishing the two on metatheoretical grounds (11).

Just as the state’s relative autonomy drifted into state-driven accounts in political sociology, so here meaning becomes a primary driver of institutional change. The “modularity” of the inter-institutional system, TOL argue, enables change through “the migration of the elemental categories across institutional orders” (60). In statements such as these, they seem to suggest it is the ideal, not the material, aspect of an institutional logic that affords its transposability, and thus accounts for agency conditioned, but not determined, by structure (11, 60, 126-127). While they recognize that the “symbolic and the material are intertwined and constitutive of one another” (10, see also the flow chart on 151), it is meaning’s autonomy from materiality that has prominence (11). Institutional logics move through language -- through theory and scheme, frame and narrative -- which “mutually constitutes” the “symbolic representations” of institutional logics and their “material practices” (149-150). Narratives, in particular, are central, for they are “explicit accounts of concrete practice and events shaped in interaction provid[ing] a crucial link between material practices and symbolic constructions (156, 155). Schemes become frames that are combined into narratives that “generate specific linkages between the symbolic and material elements of institutional logics” (152, 155, 159). Theories, frames and narratives, “embedded in vocabularies of practice,” are media of institutional movement. Indeed, they argue that narratives “lead to the formation of vocabularies of practice” and can, by linking categories to practices, cause new institutional logics to emerge (159-160). At times, it appears as though institutional logics are located at the level of language, as though symbol and category float free from materiality. The material and the structural slide one into the other. The ideal elements, on the other hand, appear to constitute the institutional logic. Theories, frames and narratives, not material practices, they write, are “symbolic representations” (149). There is a problem here: Not just structure, but practice, too, is material. It is only when theories, frames and narratives are “embodied in practices” that ideas become logics (162). Material practices are integral to institutional symbolization, to what they refer to as “symbolic grammars” (135). They are bases of identity (130, 135-139). They constitute powers and resources. Material practices operate through and on objects. A large and growing body of research shows how new institutional logics involve the transformation of

practices through which objects are handled as they are reformed and/or get taken up by one logic or another, as, for example, in the case of higher education textbooks as they move from professional editorial to corporate profitability (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999); art as it moves from aesthetic works appreciated by curators and collectors in community museums to scholarly objects knowable by museum professionals (DiMaggio, 1991); recycled goods as they move from activists who speak in the name of the community and nature to commercially employed professional technocrats who constitute them as commodities in their work for profit-making firms (Lounsbury, Ventresca & Hirsch, 2003); software as it is located in corporate and open source community (O'Mahony & Ferraro, 2007); knowledge as it moves from the results of academic science to patented commercial property (Colyvas and Powell, 2006); or a restaurant meal as it moves from the ambit of the restaurant proprietor to a nouvelle cuisine chef (Rao, Monin & Durand, 2003).

But in TOL's text, practices have primacy; objects – although sometimes mentioned (159) – are analytically inert and invisible. Drawing on Lounsbury's analysis of the changing logic of the American mutual fund industry from passive investment trusteeship to speculative portfolio growth based on the professionally-credentialed theory of risk-management (Lounsbury, 2007; Lounsbury and Crumley, 2007), they argue that practice variation is particularly important in accounting for intra-organizational shifts in institutional logic (136-137). But the nature of the object also changes. In this case practice shifts involved changes in its ontology. The attributes of the object – money capital – changed from being a stock of wealth to be conserved to a portfolio of capital assets whose growth is to be optimized as it was subjected to new practices, based on a new theory of the movement of security prices, effected by money managers who were thereby afforded power. The meaning and functioning of objects depend on the practices conducted through and with them (Arjalies, 2011, Nicolini, Mengis and Swan, 2012). Transformations in the attributes of the objects, practices, identities and powers occur together. Resources, the central element in the resource dependency theory of organizational structure, are not objective and exterior. The material and the symbolic are co-implicated. An object's institutional meaning inheres in the practices by which it is produced and distributed, the categories by which those practices are ordered, the identity of those who produce and distribute it, and the values they are understood to embody. Practice variations often presume and manifest changes in what an object is, what it does and what you can do with it (Mohr and Duquenne, 1997). Practices not only mark, they make objects. But where, in fact, do we theoretically situate their materiality? The fact is that we have no institutional logical account of the "dynamics of the material." If materiality is a site for re-coding, then we should strive to conduct studies of organizational classification, to analyze regimes of situated classification where the referent is mute. Objects will function as sites commanded by signs. If, on the other hand, materiality is integral to practice, then we are in another domain entirely, one of performativity and symbolization in which materiality is integral, critical to the formation of particular kinds of subjects and to practical meaning-making. The former takes us back to a practical cognitivism; the latter to an institutionally meaningful actor-network. It is not a question of which is correct, but of where each obtains.

The analytic status of the object, manifest in the very notion of material practice, is far from clear in the institutional logic approach. Objects are now predominantly sites through which we observe the operation of institutional logics understood as practices which constitute them in particular ways. But what does money capital matter to the emergence of professional portfolio management in the mutual fund industry, the meal to the emergence of nouvelle cuisine, the textbook to the rise of corporate publishing, knowledge to the emergence of profitable corporate colleges? We have not yet broached this question.

Just as theorists of markets-and-hierarchies looked to attributes of goods that made efficient market exchange possible, we must ask whether and which attributes of objects are integral to practices that have an institutional logical specificity. Many objects – telephones, shoes, rice, paperclips – move effortlessly across institutional fields; others, by contrast, have specific institutional entailments and are institutionally freighted. When they appear, they signal fragility, contest or transformation, as when firearms show up in a marketplace, a deed in a university laboratory, contracts in a family home,. Institutional logics join material practices and cultural understandings. The strong position is that not only are understandings internal to the operation and efficacy of material practices, but those practices have a non-arbitrary relation to those understandings. This implies that the migration of certain kinds of objects – money, guns, ballots, filing cabinets, genitalia, revealed texts – may be media through which other institutions are transformed. And on the other hand, objects, like values, may be sites that enable cooperation in the absence of consensus on the meaning of the practices through which they are materialized in our world (Nicolini et al., 2012).⁴ In their conventions of worth, Boltanski and Thévenot enumerate distinctive material forms -- the handshake, the badge, the headquarters, the personal note -- which secure states of worth (2006). What kinds of materiality constitute each institutional logic? We have, as yet, nothing to say. I am not sure, but I suspect that if we can be more precise and parsimonious in specifying the components of an institutional logic as subject-material practice-object troikas, we can sustain the possibility of transposition without insisting on extreme decomposability.

4. "Boundary objects," for example, allow collaboration across disciplines without consensus (Nicolini et. al, 2012: 614).

Micro-Foundations

One of the major contributions of this book is the elaboration of micro-mechanisms absent in the theory of institutional logics. Such mechanisms should be able to account for the ways in which institutional logics both enable and constrain human agency, thereby undoing the supposed "paradox of embedded agency" (Holm, 1995) (78, 82). TOL's central mechanism is "bounded intentionality," the ways in which an individual is culturally embedded in a social group with which they identify, that affords them not only an identity to which they are emotionally committed (86), but a cognitive schema that focuses their attention on "particular features" of organizations and their environments, conditions their goals and provides them a distinctive repertoire of practices presumed to attain them (79-81, 86-91).

TOL mediate the impact of institutional logic through the social group with which individuals identify and the features of the situation in which individuals are located, the first determines the availability of an logic, the second its accessibility (83-84).

Institutional logics provide a network of accessible structures to guide the individual's focus of attention. The activation of each aspect of institutional logics is contingent on the applicability of accessible knowledge structures to salient aspects of the situation and the environment. If no aspects of highly accessible institutional logics are viewed as applicable or relevant, individuals may rely on other available institutional logics to activate knowledge and information for further information processing. (84)

Multiple identifications and situations to which dominant schemas are not applicable thus provide occasions for institutional agency by which actors mobilize new groups around new value-practice couplets. Whereas the first is straightforward, the second opens a vexatious horizon. On the one hand, the situation is exterior and never completely masterable by the logic, given the inherent gap between logic and field. Application is necessarily contingent, dependent on acts of interpretation and power, particularly where new situations emerge or divergent logics are equally consonant with the situation (94). Aristotle recognized this contingency in his treatment of justice, which while specifying the rules of its enactment could not generate rules covering the applicability of those rules (MacIntyre, 1988: 115-118). For Aristotle, the virtue of justice thus required a supplementary virtue, that of phronesis, or practical intelligence, in order to be able to apply the practice of virtue to a particular person or situation. When it comes to institutional logics, this implies that values must be internalized, that a desire to pursue a particular good or value is an essential motor by which the reproduction of a logic can be effected in diverse situations over time. This is particularly the case where a new logic is being put in place, where "attention" is not automatic, but must be "willed," precisely, as the authors note, where one cannot count on "regulative forces" and "normative sanctions" to secure "actors' adherence" as a substitute for such identification (87, 89). In moments of institution, when objectification is not yet in place, one must depend on subjectification on the formation of a new identity that carries and is carried by new practices (135). TOL understandably turn to social movements (97, 136), where new identities and desires are fashioned and "mobilized" as a condition of creating new social realities, as an analytic frame by which to understand shifts in logic within institutional fields. Value and identity stand here as socially creative forces outside an exterior world they would remake according to their valence as the cases of J.C. Penney, Phoenix University and Prentice-Hall all demonstrate. On the other hand, the situation is not exterior, only existing as sets of practices and social relations set in motion through particular institutional logics in which different goals are paramount. Institutional logics are value-practice couplets elaborated as schemas and scripts, in which, as the authors note, identity and interest, appropriateness and consequences, cannot be hived off one from the other (87). The write:

The situational fit between the institutional logic and the characteristics of the situation will be a factor in which particular identities, goals, and schemas are activated. Observed contradictions between prevailing logics and organizing practices are likely to trigger the activation of alternative logics or the combination of existing logics, identities, goals, and schemas with new alternatives" (92).

Given that the "fit" between logic and situation is a major determinant of institutional change, we need to be able to qualify the situation independently

of the logic.

But it is not clear that we always can. While the authors reject the reduction of resource environment to culture, they also acknowledge that it is “embodied in practices” (157). Institutional fields likely have their own economics which surely condition the ways in which practices reproduce, diffuse, contract, and change. But these economics – the ways in which resources of relevance are produced and distributed – cannot be specified independently of the institutional logics that govern a field. Nor can a problematic situation be specified independently of an institutional logic. Their three case studies delineate situations with observable problems: local resistance to chain-stores, lack of working class access to colleges, and insufficient and uncertain cash flows in traditional publishing. Yet it is also true that J.C. Penney identified differential pricing as unfair because he was a particular kind of Christian, and Sperling the absence of working class college students because he was the son of sharecroppers and a labor organizer. Identities, they argue, generate interests and goals (87). The use of new words, the invocation of new “vocabularies of practice” (94, 96), signal that new identities are emerging that generate new goals, new practices, new interests, and thus the situation has already changed. The “situation” is always, already constructed. The ways in which multiple institutional logics “focus attention” in different kinds of situations and their contingent effects in reproducing or transforming them is going to require, as the authors note, further specification (100, 118). It is precisely in such situations, where rival vocabularies are at play and reference is contested, that will and force, identity as subjective commitment and power as compulsion are most likely to be important. But if power is cultural, rationalities institutionally dependent, and identities tied to practices and goals, it is not going to be so easy to specify and estimate models of institutional change.

Finally it is important to remember that institutional change requires and evokes intense passions, which is not surprising given that these are the moments when our world changes. Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury’s micro-foundations lack feeling, remaining predominantly in the cognitive or instrumental domain – focus, schema, and goals. Identity, which does carry an emotional charge, is neither developed, nor linked to an institutional logic per se. Not only do institutional logics depend on distinctive regimes of practice with their own vocabularies and the schemata composed through them, they likely depend on distinctive emotional registers, on structures of experience to which emotions are integral.

I would argue that institutions depend, both in their formation and their core, on a passionate identification. Just a little digging around in the biographies of the authors’ own examples makes that clear. James Cash Penney, whose retail chain was originally called “The Golden Rule” stores, declared:

The assumption was that business is secular, and service is religious. I have never been able to accept that line of arbitrary demarcation. . . . Is not service part and parcel of business? It seems to me so; business is therefore as much religious as it is secular. If we follow the admonition to love God, and our neighbors as ourselves, it will lead us to understand that, first of all, success is a matter of the spirit.⁵

5. <http://www.christianity.com/ChurchHistory/11630672/page3/>

Or listen to John Sperling, born to a sharecropper family who had gone on to get a doctorate at Cambridge University, a socialist-inspired faculty member

struggling against opposition at San Jose State University to create a curriculum for working students, whose needs and presence merited neither attention nor dignity. Sperling's transformation into a capitalist educational entrepreneur came after he was passed over by the membership to head a new University of California faculty union he had forged over the previous decade. As he lay in bed, he felt that,

...my useful life had come to an end. Ten years of hard work and exercise had come to naught. . . . Crawling out of that abyss was one of the hardest things I have ever done, but this time my love of literature served me well. I thought of Tom Jones the morning he discovered he had spent the night making love to his mother. His first thought was "I must kill myself." Then he reflects on that rather drastic act and concludes, "No I will not kill myself, I will go to America." Like Tom, I would not let my useful life end. I too would travel to the America of business, an America I had always held in contempt (Sperling, 2000: 57)

In an eerie Oedipalization of Max Weber's positing the parallelism of a lover and a world-view, Sperling realized he had loved the wrong woman (Friedland, 2013). For both Penney and Sperling, making a new institution involved a new ordering of love. Institutional life demands myriad moments of located passion, an order of desire to which Max Weber once attended in his treatment of the "value spheres," and we appear to have forgotten (Weber, 1958). Aristotle recognized this long ago when he pointed to virtue as a direction of desire, "desiring reason," without which practical rationality vis-a-vis justice could not function (MacIntyre, 1988: 136-137). Institutional identities imply an identification, a passion, an attachment. Institutional logics require a more-than-that which focuses attention by dictating particular goals or activating particular schema: It demands a metaphysical identification, a deep faith structure upon which the subject-practice-object trinities depend. To put it baldly, institutional logics depend upon love (Friedland, 2012, 2013).

Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury have constructed an essential, multi-level framework by which to better understand and elaborate what an institutional logic does, how it is formed and refashioned, and indeed even whether it exists. Their book offers the novice an extraordinary map through which she can navigate a rapidly moving terrain. The power of their frame, as this review hopefully makes clear, is located in the way it invites us to explore its inner architecture, to use it to generate hypotheses, to suggest variation and reconstruction. It is a valuable object to think through and with, one that has both enabled and compelled me to think anew.

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