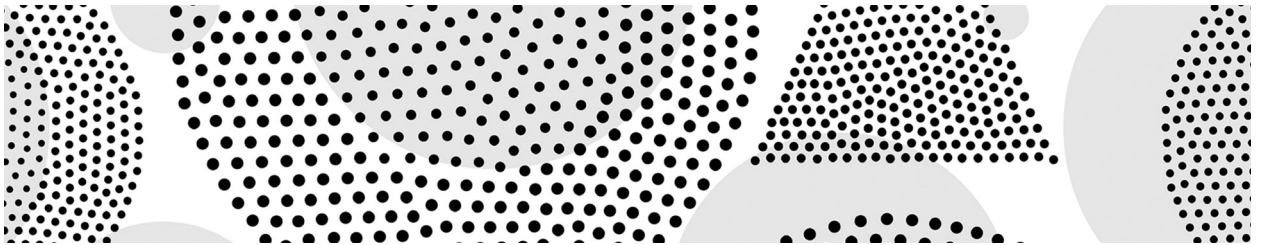
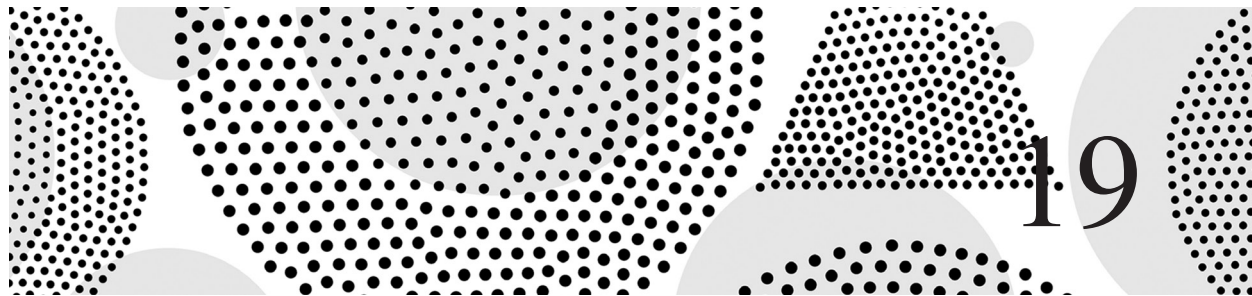


PART IV

Conversations






Advances to the Institutional Logics Perspective

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INTRODUCTION

The study of institutional logics has become, in the more than twenty years since Friedland and Alford's (1991) seminal article, one of the key theoretical perspectives in organizational institutionalism (Thornton et al., 2012). In particular, research on institutional logics has exploded since 2011 and 2012, when approximately 40 articles on the subject appeared in Web of Science each year, increasing to approximately 120 per year in 2014 and 2015. Research on institutional logics has influenced not only organizational theory and sociology, but is increasingly applied to other areas of management, including strategy, technology management and business ethics, as well as to political science, marketing, education and communication, among others. The more than  articles published with institutional logics as a key topic (with thousands of other articles

also citing the concept) has led to both an accumulation of knowledge on the determinants and consequences of institutional logics, as well as a divergence, and at times confusion, regarding the concept, the perspective and its application. The objective of this chapter is to address issues and ambiguities in this rapidly expanding literature in order to better position scholars for future research and theoretical development.

The institutional logics perspective has advanced and transformed itself considerably since Friedland and Alford's (1991) exploration of how the logics associated with the various institutional orders of society enabled and constrained organizations and individuals. While retaining the cultural emphasis of neo-institutionalism (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1977; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), the institutional logics perspective emphasizes cultural differentiation and pluralism, rather than isomorphism. Building on, yet going beyond, an emphasis

on societal logics, Thornton and Ocasio (2008) reviewed and synthesized the theory and research on institutional logics and established five key principles for the meta-theory: embedded agency, society as an inter-institutional system, the material and cultural foundations of institutions, institutions at multiple levels, and historical contingency. Thornton et al. (2012) further developed the perspective in our theoretical treatise. Advances included: an explicit cross-level model with microfoundations; a reformulation of the ideal types of institutional logics at the societal level, including the addition of community as an institutional order; and a more explicit development of how logics are embodied in practices, both at the level of the organization and the organization field. We believe the institutional logics perspective, as it has developed, provides a novel theory of agency that has importantly broadened institutional theory.

In this chapter we will not review in detail these advances and theoretical developments. The current chapter is not intended as revision or substitute for these prior efforts (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012), but as a complement to them. However, we do seek to clarify key aspects of the institutional logics perspective and detail key impacts it has had on the field. In the next section, we discuss and clarify the nature of institutional logics. We then provide a brief overview of how the institutional logics perspective has developed from early ideas to current developments on institutional pluralism and complexity, institutional emergence and change, and applications to areas such as strategy. Next, we discuss methodological issues and promising advances for institutional logics research, and encourage the use of mixed-method approaches. We then highlight the important ways in which the institutional logics perspective has advanced institutional theory, and conclude with an invitation for scholars to advance our understanding of microfoundations and bridges to different disciplinary conversations and problems.

WHAT IS THE INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS PERSPECTIVE?

We begin by clarifying key aspects of the institutional logics perspective and how it is used and, in our view, should be used in future theory and research (see also Thornton et al., 2012). One of the most cited definitions of institutional logics is that provided by Thornton and Ocasio (1999: 804): ‘the socially constructed, historical patterns of cultural symbols and material practices, assumptions, values, and beliefs by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their daily activity’. Building from this foundational imagery, the institutional logics perspective ‘is a metatheoretical framework for analyzing the interrelationships among institutions, individuals, and organizations in social systems’ (Thornton et al., 2012: 2). To further clarify the nature of the perspective, we offer the following observations to guide future research.

(1) Institutional logics are both symbolic and material (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Thornton et al., 2012), by which we mean that they are simultaneously embodied through both symbolic representations and material practices and artifacts. Institutional logics are communicated through language and other semiotic signs but are also materially observable. This signifies that institutional logics are more than theories but are concretely experienced and made durable through practices (Thornton et al., 2012).

(2) The organizing principles of institutional logics are multidimensional and institutional logics are configurations of distinct, yet interrelated dimensions. Thornton and Ocasio (2008) identified four dimensions common to all institutional logics: sources of collective identity; determinants of power and status; systems of social classification and categorization; and allocation of attention. Thornton et al. (2012) provided examples

of nine dimensions for the analysis of institutional orders of society: root metaphor; sources of legitimacy; sources of authority; sources of identity; bases of norms; basis of attention; basis of strategy; informal control systems; and economic systems. In a recent paper, Pahnke, Katila and Eisenhardt (2015) provided a simplified representation of these dimensions useful for their empirical analysis of financing of innovations: basis of norms, basis of strategy and basis of attention. While the dimensionality of institutional logics is at the core of the perspective, they remain provisional; that is, the particular dimensions that are relevant to different contexts, or empirical studies may vary. It is up to individual scholars to justify the existence of logics and their relevant dimensions with respect to a particular study.

(3) Institutional logics can be defined at various levels of analysis: world systems (Ansari et al., 2013); societies (Friedland and Alford, 1991); institutional fields (Rao et al., 2003) and organizations (Spicer and Sewell, 2010), among others. While societal logics permeate other levels (Thornton, 2004; Thornton and Ocasio, 2008), institutional logics at other levels are not merely variants or combinations of societal logics, but are also shaped by local variations and cultural adaptations that emerge from within that level (Lounsbury, 2007; Ocasio et al., 2015; Quattrone, 2015). We can identify an institutional logic at a particular level of analysis to the extent that we identify an associated institution¹ at that level (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008) and that the organizing principles of that institution have a certain degree of unifying coherence (i.e., 'logic'), albeit not complete, as institutional logics are subject to some internal contradictions (Seo and Creed, 2002). In other words, institutional logics are the organizing principles of institutions, where institutions can be identified at various level of analysis, including, but not limited to, the institutional orders of society. More research is needed on the degree of coherence of institutional logics, on how logics at other

levels of analysis are influenced by, yet differentiated from societal logics.

(4) We are making the ontological claim that institutional logics are real phenomena. Institutional logics are real in the same way bureaucracy is real, social networks are real and culture is real. We understand that not all users of institutional logics follow a realist ontology (e.g., Zilber, 2013), but some consider them instead as analytical constructs defined by researchers to make sense of a complex world. Our assumption is that institutional logics exist independently of researcher's analysis of them, and have causal powers upon individuals, groups and organizations. The analytical representation of an institutional logic is defined by researchers, but the validity of that representation is an empirical question, subject to the strengths and limitations of empirical methods (see discussion of methods below).

(5) One useful and well-established analytical representation of institutional logics is through ideal types (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Thornton, 2004; Thornton et al., 2012). But ideal types are not institutional logics, but a particular method for measuring logics. Here is an area where we have heard much misunderstanding of what we intended and perhaps we were not clear. The societal ideal types in Thornton et al. (2012) provide an ideal-typical model of societal-level logics from a reading of canonical texts such as Weber's (1978 [1922]) *Economy and Society* and contemporary organization theory. They are meant to be an example and not the only possible model. Other forms of representing and measuring logics besides ideal types are both possible and desirable, as further discussed in the methods section.

(6) As institutional orders change, and institutions at other levels change, so do the institutional logics associated with them. Institutional logics are historically contingent and evolve and change over time (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Ocasio et al., 2016). More research is needed in examining historical changes in institutional logics, both at the

level of the institutional orders of society, as well as at other levels of analysis.

(7) In defining and characterizing institutional logics it is also useful to note what are not institutional logics. Theories, frames, narratives, practices and categories are all building blocks of institutional logics but are not themselves institutional logics (Thornton et al., 2012; Ocasio et al., 2015). Ideologies, which provide an espoused normative ideal that guides political mobilization, are also not institutional logics. For example a market logic, which provides the operating principles that guide actual market practices, is distinguishable from a market ideology, which provides a political justification for mostly unregulated markets, without characterizing their real-world limitations. Institutional logics should also be distinguished from various measures or indicators of logics, including ideal types, as noted above, but also organizational forms, vocabularies of practice, functional backgrounds and governance structures.

THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS RESEARCH

Early Development

The concept of institutional logics was first introduced by Alford and Friedland's (1985) treatise in political sociology to analyze how the conflicting logics of capitalism, bureaucracy and democracy shape the formation of the modern state. In the study of organizations, Jackall (1988) independently introduced a complementary approach, one that the literature has not engaged as much with. We believe, however, that Jackall's approach remains quite relevant to the continuing development of the institutional logics perspective, particularly with respect to the embodiment of logics in organizational practices. In his field research, Jackall examines

the complex, ambiguous reality facing corporate managers, one where managers' goals and actions are shaped by institutional logics.

While placing the institutional logics of corporate managers within secularized versions of the Protestant ethos, Jackall's focus is not on society or its institutional orders, but on the institutional logics that guide situated action and decision-making. His definition of institutional logics is revealing of his underlying meta-theory:

[By institutional logic] I mean the complicated, experientially constructed, and therefore contingent, set of rules, premiums and sanctions that men and women in a particular context create and re-create in such a way that their behavior and accompanying perspectives are to some extent regularized and predictable. Put succinctly, institutional logic is the way a particular social world works; of course, although individuals are participants in shaping the logic of institutions, they often experience this logic as an objective set of norms. And, of course, managers' own fate depends on how well they accomplish the defined goal in accordance with the institutional logic of the situation. (Jackall, 1988: 112)

Friedland and Alford (1991), building on their earlier work (Alford and Friedland, 1985), introduced the concept of institutional logics to organizational institutionalism as a means to bring to the forefront the role of society in shaping organizations. Rather than viewing society as monolithic, they describe it in terms of a variety of institutional orders, each with its own institutional logic. Elsewhere, Thornton et al. (2012) described at length the importance of this seminal contribution, not only for our own work, but for practically all subsequent work on institutional logics. While Friedland and Alford's emphasis on societal logics has not been the focus of most subsequent research, it influenced important pieces such as Haveman and Rao's (1997) analysis of how change in societal logics led to ecological changes in the savings and loan industry, as well as Mohr and Duquenne's (1997) innovative study of institutional logics in poverty relief at the turn of the twentieth century.

Thornton and Ocasio (1999) shifted the level of analysis of institutional logics from society to industry in their study of executive succession in higher education publishing. This change to the industry or field level has been quite influential in subsequent research. Their study examines how the change from an editorial logic to the market logic changes the determinants of succession. While very directly influenced by Friedland and Alford (1991), linking industry logics to societal logics of the profession and the market and emphasizing the symbolic and material basis of logics, Thornton and Ocasio's view is also heavily influenced by Jackall's (1988) characterization of logics as describing how a particular social world works, and his emphasis on how institutional logics shape organizational decision-making. Following Ocasio's (1997) attention-based view of the firm, Thornton and Ocasio emphasize the role of organizational attention as mediating the effects of logics on decision-making. Thornton and Ocasio further emphasize the historical contingency of institutional logics.

After publication of the Thornton and Ocasio (1999) study, interest in institutional logics began to grow, and theoretical development flowered. In a 2002 *Academy of Management Journal* Special Research Forum on Institutional Theory and Institutional Change edited by Dacin, Goodstein and Scott, Thornton (2002) and Lounsbury (2002) published papers on changes in institutional logics and their relationship to key transformations in the social organization of the fields of higher education publishing and finance respectively. Building on the developing conversation on social movements and organizational change that was beginning to occur at around the same time (e.g., Davis and Thompson, 1994; Lounsbury, 2001), Rao, Monin and Durand (2003) adopted a social movement perspective to study the abandonment of classical cuisine for nouvelle cuisine in France. Their field-level analysis emphasizes the role of identity movements and theorization

in explaining the shift from an institutional logic to another, both variants of the professional logic. Much of the effort here was to harness the concept of institutional logic to shed light on the general theoretical problem of how institutional change happens.

In 2004, Thornton provided a book-length analysis of changes in institutional logics in the higher education publishing industry and relies on this research to further extend and develop an emerging institutional logics perspective. Three theoretical developments are given extended treatment, including the use of typologies in theory construction, and an extended treatment of the institutional logics of societal sectors, or institutional orders. Second a more explicit link between industry-level logics and societal logics, and third, a more extensive treatment of a theory of how institutional logics shape attention. This book was especially important to the advance of institutional logics research because of its novel theorizing as well as its effort to bring coherence to a growing but still nascent theoretical conversation. This provided a platform for the broadening of institutional logics research to account for institutional pluralism, to expand our understanding of emergence and change in logics, and to develop implications for varied topics in fields such as strategic management. Thornton's 2004 book and the subsequent empirical and theoretical flowering of institutional logics research has coalesced into what has come to be known as the institutional logics perspective (Thornton et al., 2012).

Pluralism and Complexity

Over the past decade, scholarly development of logics has blossomed with an increased focus on institutional pluralism and complexity (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005; Lounsbury, 2007; Kraatz and Block, 2008; Greenwood et al., 2011). Of course, this research builds on the key original insights of how multiple societal orders provide the foundation for the

mobilization of various logics that enable institutional multiplicity, contestation and change (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Seo and Creed, 2002). Thus, institutional logics research has focused a great deal on how multiple logics enable change and provide the institutional sources of organizational heterogeneity (Thornton et al., 2012). In doing so, the institutional logics perspective provides a theory of agency and approach to micro-processes.

While institutional pluralism refers to contexts where actors are confronted with a variety of institutional logics that may be more or less complementary, enabling cooperation or competition (Kraatz and Block, 2008), institutional complexity refers more specifically to how individual and collective actors cope with and respond to conflicting demands associated with different logics (Greenwood et al., 2011). Although the literature to date has placed great emphasis on the competing nature of logics, we believe that more scrutiny is required to understand the conditions under which as well as the mechanisms by which logics are indeed competing versus complementary. Recent theoretical and empirical scholarship on logics has begun to do this, focusing on the different ways in which multiple logics are configured and reconfigured (e.g., Reay and Hinings, 2009; Almandoz, 2012; Lee and Lounsbury, 2015).

Building on research that focused on the sources and consequences of co-existent (often competing) logics (e.g., Rao et al., 2003; Lounsbury, 2007), research has aimed to advance our understanding of the mechanisms by which multiple logics take shape, interrelate and have effects. For instance, Glynn and Lounsbury (2005) examine how field-level shifts in institutional logics from aesthetic to market logics changed the discursive practices of critics of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. They distinguish between stable and changing institutional fields, and characterize the former by dominant logics and the latter by competing logics, shifts to a new logic, and logic blending.

This paper, while directly building on the work on historical changes in logics by Thornton and Ocasio (1999) and Rao et al. (2003), highlights the relevance of cultural entrepreneurship (Lounsbury and Glynn, 2001) to the dynamics of logics, and provides an early emphasis on competing logics and implicitly on hybridization and logic pluralism.

Dunn and Jones (2010) highlight how the medical profession is constituted by multiple logics – care and science – which were supported by distinct groups and interests, providing a competitive tension that expressed itself in the educational infrastructure of the profession. Thus, this paper suggests how competition between field-level logics consequentially takes shape in the vocabularies and content of professional knowledge, and how shifts in the nature of vocabularies may lead to corollary shifts in the valorization of logics. Almandoz (2012) showed how institutional logics rooted in the backgrounds of founding team members had consequential effects on new bank creation. Founders with prior experiences in a community logic were better at resource acquisition and bank establishment, while those informed by a financial logic were more likely to disband before establishment in turbulent times.

Greenwood et al. (2010) examined how multiple logics shaped organizational decisions to downsize in Spain. In particular, they showed regions in which the Catholic church was influential in supporting a family logic, which moderated organizational responses to an overarching market logic by pressuring firms to downsize their workforces. This paper importantly advanced the notion of institutional complexity, highlighting how non-market institutions, especially those rooted in geographic community, can counterbalance market logics. In a similar vein, Lee and Lounsbury (2015) show how different kinds of community logics filter how field-level logics are interpreted and responded to by organizational actors. They emphasize the need to further understand the role of community logics, how logics at

different levels of analysis relate (compete versus cooperate), and the conditions under which logic manifestations at different levels (e.g., individual, organization, region, nation-state) become more salient and potent with respect to key outcomes of interest.

Since research on institutional pluralism has been especially focused on field-organization cross-level dynamics, it is not surprising that researchers have begun to probe more deeply into the practices and intra-organizational dynamics related to institutional pluralism and complexity (Lounsbury and Crumley, 2007; Lok, 2010; Pache and Santos, 2010; Lounsbury and Boxenbaum, 2013; Smets, Greenwood et al., 2015). For instance, focusing on the development of collaborative relationships within and across healthcare organizations, Reay and Hinings (2009), in the context of state-mandated institutional change, identified four mechanisms by which institutional logics co-exist, yet distinctively guide the behavior of different actors. Relying on an embedded case study of a global law firm, Smets, Morris and Greenwood (2012) develop a model of practice-driven institutional change that specifies mechanisms by which change that emerges from everyday work can concatenate and enable shifts in field-level logics.

Sauermann and Stephan (2013) show that while industrial and academic science are often characterized as conflicting institutional logics in the literature, this conventional view ignores heterogeneity within those domains as well as connections between them (see also Wry et al., 2014). Relying on survey data on more than 5,000 research-active scientists, they develop a conceptual framework to compare and contrast industrial and academic science along four interdependent dimensions of work practice and show how differences in the nature of work better explain heterogeneity in how work is organized and results are disclosed. This research highlights the importance of more critically examining relationships among logics and variance within institutional fields through a more situated

analysis of practice. For instance, we need more research on the conditions under which different logics may become organized in a more competitive or complementary manner.

Emphasizing a toolkit approach to logics (Swidler, 1986), McPherson and Sauder (2013) study how people with different professional backgrounds employ a variety of logics in their micro-level negotiations in a drug court. They find that actors not only employ their own professional logics, but are also able to access and use logics associated with other institutional and professional backgrounds in the context of negotiations where multiple logics are understood and routinely invoked. However, they also provide evidence that suggests that there are procedural, definitional and dispositional constraints that limit actors' discretion in the use of different logics. We need more research on how different logics can be drawn upon in different situations, as well as how actors may develop the social skill (Fligstein, 1997) and creative capacity (Lounsbury and Glynn, 2001) to access and use a wider variety of logics.

Another notable development in the literature focuses on hybrid organizing (Battilana and Lee, 2014; Battilana, Besharov and Mitzinneck, Chapter 5 this volume). For instance, relying on an in-depth comparative organizational case study, Battilana and Dorado (2010) showed how organizations can successfully combine distinct logics by creating a common 'hybrid' organizational identity via human resource practices. This paper importantly contributes to our understanding of the mechanisms by which organizations might go about using different HR practices for employees to manage the tensions they experience when impacted by different logics. Based on an inductive comparative case study of four work integration social enterprises that struggled to cope with competing social welfare and commercial logics, Pache and Santos (2013) show that, instead of keeping logics compartmentalized, their organizations selectively coupled elements prescribed by each logic. By doing so strategically, they

can create hybrid organizations that can gain and maintain legitimacy.

Based on an ethnography of a public–private hybrid organization, the Cambridge Energy Alliance, Jay (2013) highlighted how multiple, competing field-level logics did not result in overtly competing interests or factions inside the organization. Instead, he highlights how they provided distinct interpretive schemes that provide contradictory interpretations of outcomes – what he refers to as the performance paradox where the same outcome might be deemed a success or failure depending on the sense-making logic used. He develops a novel process model that highlights how intra-organizational sense-making processes related to this paradox can result in a shift in dominant logics or a novel synthesis between them, enabling a reinterpretation of an organization's identity.

Besharov and Smith (2014) develop a theoretical framework of logic multiplicity within organizations, highlighting how logic compatibility and centrality might vary across organizations. They argue that field, organizational and individual factors will influence these two dimensions that characterize the relationship of logics. Drawing on a year-long ethnographic study of reinsurance trading in Lloyd's of London, Smets, Jarzabkowski et al. (2015) identify three balancing mechanisms – segmenting, bridging, and demarcating – which allow individuals to dynamically balance co-existing logics in ways that maintain their distinctiveness. Such practice-based approaches to the study of logics have not only greatly enhanced our understanding of the workings of logics, but further reinforce the need to more carefully probe the multiplex relationship of logics in and across different levels of analysis. As Vaerlander et al. (2016) show in their longitudinal ethnographic study of a large multinational software development company, such practice-based approaches can also be illuminating at more macro levels. They highlight how the global transfer of practices within a multi-site organization is importantly shaped

by the constellation of logics at a specific organization site that guides how employees experience and respond to practice transfer. They probe how such practice recontextualization affects performance, what makes a particular logic or constellation of logics salient for a particular practice at a particular time, and how logics and their constellations might change, especially in the context of global collaborations when different logics are invoked at different locations.

The key thread that runs through all this work is a focus on uncovering the cross-level mechanisms by which multiple institutional logics become instantiated, interrelate and have effects at the level of institutional fields, organizations and social interactions (Thornton et al., 2012). As such, the institutional logics perspective embraces the mechanism-based approach to theorizing (Davis and Marquis, 2005; Swedberg, 2014). Our understanding of the mechanisms that underlie institutional pluralism and complexity remains in its infancy, and will provide a vibrant area of development for the future.

Emergence and Change in Logics

Another prominent area of research on institutional logics that remains vibrant is the emergence and change in field-level logics. In Chapter 7 of our 2012 book, we provided an extensive review of this literature until 2011 and proposed a typology of change based on existing research. Three forms of transformational change were identified: replacement (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Rao et al., 2003), blending or hybridization, combining elements of different logics (Glynn and Lounsbury, 2005), and segregation – the separation of logics from a common origin (Purdy and Gray, 2009). But the research further shows that not all changes in field-level logics are transformative, but instead four forms of developmental change were identified: *assimilation*, which has to do with the incorporation of external elements

into existing logics (Murray, 2010), *elaboration*, which refers to endogenous reinforcement (Shipilov et al., 2010), *expansion*, which involves shifts from one field to another (Nigam and Ocasio, 2010), and *contraction*, which refers to a decrease in a logic's scope (Reay and Hinings, 2009). The literature further highlights a variety of mechanism involved in the logic change: theorization, translation, sense-making, sense-giving, attention to events, categorization, vocabulary use and reification (Thornton et al., 2012).

Since 2012, research and theory development on the emergence and change in field-level logics has continued apace. The importance of language change is a common theme in both empirical research and theory development. For example, Ansari and colleagues (2013) examine the impact of frame shifts in the emergence of a transnational climate change logics, further expanding research on the importance of language use on changes in logics. Harmon, Greene and Goodnight (2015) theorize about the importance of inter-field rhetoric in fostering institutional change. Ocasio et al (2015) examine how vocabulary changes must reflect not only the symbolic underpinning of institutional logics, but also the material ones, and that vocabulary changes must therefore reflect vocabularies used in coordinating practices and translating these practices across contrasts, as well as vocabularies employed for sense-giving and theorizing.

The role of practices and their variation was highlighted in several studies. For example, Gawer and Phillips (2013) examined the role of practices and identity work on changing institutional logics at Intel. Joseph, Ocasio and McDonnell (2014) examined structural elaborations in corporate governance practices, in particular the adoption of the CEO as the only insider in the board of directors – a new practice that is consistent with the theory of shareholder value maximization, yet diverges from its intent by increasing the power of CEOs over external directors. Quattrone (2015) examines

changing procedures in Jesuit accounting, reflecting the interplay between spiritual self-accountability and administrative accounting and recordkeeping. While this fascinating historical study purports to be distinct from prior approaches to the emergence and change in logics, in many ways it reminds us of Jackall's (1988) account, where the focus is less on societal-level logics, but the actual practices and procedures that guide management, or in the case of Quattrone, accounting.

Strategic Management

Space limitations preclude us from a full examination of the variety of topics, research questions and applications both within and outside organization theory, generated through the institutional logics perspective, for example in marketing (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2013). We would like to briefly highlight one area: the recent, but increasing, application of institutional logics to the study of strategic management. The work here is varied. Some relates to the effects of alternatives to the shareholder value logic. For example, Miller, Brenton-Miller and Lester (2013) found that firms with a family logic were more likely to conform to industry standards in strategic choices than other firms. Ioannou and Serafeim (2015) found that weakening of a shareholder value logic led to more positive analysts' evaluation of firms adopting corporate social responsibility practices.

Another area is the effects of alternative institutional logics for technology strategy and innovation. For example, Vasudeva, Alexander, and Jones (2014) examine how country-level differences in institutional logics shape inter-organizational learning in standard-setting organizations. Pahnke and colleagues (2015) examine how the different institutional logics of venture capitalists, internal corporate ventures and government funding agencies lead to differences in patenting and product introductions.

Finally, both theory and research in strategy examine field-level institutional logics as building blocks for corporate and business strategies. Durand and colleagues (2013) examined how French industrial design firms used institutional logics as strategic resources; awareness of a managerialist logic led to changes in strategy that prevailed along with the pre-existing logics of modernism and formalism. Ocasio and Raydonovska (2016) examine how increased institutional pluralism in a field increases heterogeneity across firms in their business models and governance, as organizations vary in their commitments to the variety of institutional logics in the field. Zhao et al. (2017) highlight how the institutional logics perspective provides a foundation for a renewed approach to optimal distinctiveness research that focuses on how firms strategically respond to conformity and differentiation pressures, and how their strategic responses appeal to various audiences and affect performance outcomes. They argue that research on optimal distinctiveness informed by the institutional logics perspective has important implications for many core strategy topics such as ambidexterity, competitive advantage, product-market scope and market entry.

Overall, there has been a proliferation of, and conceptual advance in research on institutional logics over the past two decades. While the dimensionality of the core theory continues to be fleshed out particularly with regards to micro-foundations and multi-level mechanisms, the institutional logics perspective has proven to be generative across a variety of empirical research sites and theoretical questions. To enable further progress, increased attention needs to be given to improving and expanding available methods of analysis. As a community of researchers, we must be appreciative of the usefulness and the limitations of different methodological approaches – from qualitative case studies, to large sample quantitative studies, to experimental designs. It is important to not valorize methods on ideological

grounds, but to understand how a variety of research approaches is needed to accumulate and assess the strength of research findings and to generate new knowledge and insights. To this end, we develop in the next section an extended discussion of methods used to study institutional logics.

METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Our students and more senior colleagues inform us of the need to clarify the methods used to study institutional logics. Given this feedback, we review institutional logics studies with a focus on the methods, discuss why it is complicated to measure institutional logics and suggest the use of methods from sister literatures to advance methods development.

Institutional logics research has generated a diversity of methods to measure institutional logics. These methods range from identifying time periods (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Thornton, 2001, 2002), actors' functional backgrounds (Almandoz, 2012; Thornton et al., 2012: ch. 5), geographic regions (Lounsbury, 2007; Greenwood et al., 2010; Lee and Lounsbury, 2015) and actors' vocabularies associated with institutional logics (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005; Jones and Livne-Tarandach, 2008; Dunn and Jones, 2010), the reading of canonical texts (Thornton, 2004), experimental designs (Glaser et al., 2016) and visual imageries (Höllerer et al., 2013).

Researchers employ a variety of ontological approaches, including inductive, abductive and deductive, and use one or more of these approaches in a single study. Inductive and abductive methods are useful for developing theory; they enable researchers to substantively describe and interpret empirical observations that prior theory may be unable to explain. Inductive interpretative methods reveal emergent phenomena that might not be possible to measure in large-sample

representative studies in which theory is tested.

Interpretive and Text Analytical Methods

There are a variety of interpretive methods, including ethnography, historical comparative methods, and content and discourse analysis (Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy, 2002). These methods use a coherent or canonical collection of texts, including interviews, archival documents, focus groups, naturally occurring conversations, political speeches, newspaper articles, novels, cartoons, photographs, or any written or visual form of information.

Precursor research set the groundwork for a focus on written information (words), known as vocabularies of motive (Mills, 1940), which are a way to explain the influences of differences in legitimacy, identity and authority. Vocabularies also are a way to measure these attributes of institutional logics because words are used by actors to persuade audiences (rhetoric) to embrace institutional change and stability (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005). This genre of research examines how actors connect their words to the broader culture (e.g., institutional orders) to activate and given meaning to them, that is to theorize a strategy (Strang and Meyer, 1993).

This idea of 'culture and cognition', that is, measuring the underlying dimensions of how micro elements of institutional logics link to more macro or societal level logics is not new; but it has presented measurement challenges with respect to how smaller units of cultural knowledge such as words aggregate to larger cultural structures (DiMaggio, 1997). There are several standards or conventions for the micro and macro analysis of content, including manual content coding (Reay and Hinings, 2009), ideal types (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999), software counts of word frequency and co-occurrence (Jones and Livne-Tarandach, 2008; Dunn and Jones,

2010), correspondence analysis (Meyer and Hollerer, 2010) and cognitive mapping of the connections between categories (nouns) and relations (verbs) (Bingham and Kahl, 2013).

Varieties of interpretive analysis are continuing to advance with developments marrying the digital humanities and computer science enabling automated content coding of large corpora word texts (Mohr and Bogdanov, 2013: 564; Gardiner and Musto, 2015). While the traditional practice of researcher immersion in the actual context is still required for well-informed human interpretation of machine-generated codes or topics, the human subjectivity of the interpretive process particularly for large corpora is diminished by the use of software such as NVivo, Atlas TI (Reay and Jones, 2016), topic categorization with R (Jockers and Mimno, 2013) and Automap (Carley, 1993). In essence, automation of texts shifts the subjective moment of interpretation to the post-modeling stage (Mohr and Bogdanov, 2013: 560).

There are other recent developments in the measurement of situated cognition that hold promise for advancing interpretive methods useful to examining institutional logics. Cultural analytic methods combine existing online and survey-based data collection strategies with computerized text mining tools, as well as observational techniques to discern differences in actors' perceptions (e.g., DiMaggio et al., 2013; Hannigan, 2015). Other approaches such as productive methods (McDonnell, 2014) allow researchers to observe people creating cultural objects to reveal difficult to access cognitive processes including categorization and category development, automatic and deliberative cognition, sensory-motor schema, tacit knowledge, and resonance.

Composite Methods

Institutional logics can be examined with composite measures. For example, Lee and

Lounsbury (2015), in measuring two types of logics instantiated at the community level of analysis, politically conservative and pro-environmental, created a proxy variable from five related measures to represent the underlying concept of the logics. They were further able to substantiate the underlying variation in these two logics by tracing the logics' attributes back to their origin in institutional orders of the state and the market. Using these qualitative data, the pro-environmental logic was traced to the state logic and the politically conservative logic was traced to the market logic.

Comparative Methods

Comparative methods are central to the institutional logics perspective because its subsystem framework (inter-institutional system) lends itself to contrasting the effects of institutional logics across institutional orders (Friedland and Alford, 1991). While the subsystem framework has been widely used by scholars to describe society (Merton et al., 1959; Zucker, 1977: 84; Weber, 1978 [1922]; Friedland and Alford (1991) were the first to use it comparatively as a conflict theory of institutional change. Some scholars have contrasted logics across institutional orders (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Thornton, 2001, 2002; Lounsbury, 2002, 2007; Marquis and Lounsbury, 2007; Greenwood et al., 2010). Others have contrasted different variants of logics within an institutional order such as the professions (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005; Dunn and Jones, 2010; McPherson and Sauder, 2013).

Ideal types are often used in this type of comparative analysis in particular to show how the elemental categories of institutional logics are a coherent set as distinct from independent variables (Pahnke et al., 2015). Ideal types are simplified, synthetic, analytical, abstract representations of institutional logics based in empirical observation. For example bureaucracy and professionalism are ideal types that represent ontologically distinct

categories (Blau and Scott, 1962). What is important here is not what is true or not, but that the incompatibility of these two categories form part of an argument that assumes a logical difference or conflict between the categories (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005: 46).

The ideal-type method stems from Weber (1978 [1922]), who suggested that abstracting from the complexity and specificity of concrete events is useful to guide comparative analysis. In constructing ideal types, the researcher deliberately departs from reality by focusing on certain attributes for analytically comparative purposes (Astley, 1985: 502). As a typological method of theory construction ideal types can be developed inductively (Glaser, 2001), deductively (Thornton, 2004) and abductively.

Ideal types are used for the purpose of theory construction and hypothesis generation. They are useful for comparison of multiple configurations of institutional logics and nonlinear patterns of logics in cross-sectional and longitudinal studies. Ideal types are not ahistorical; it is the data that are either historical or not depending on the research question and design. Subjectivity and observer bias can be ruled out in this qualitative analysis by using an independent data source to empirically test the ideal types.

The ideal types presented in Thornton and Ocasio (1999), Thornton (2001) and Thornton (2002) are instantiations, that is realizations of conceptual abstractions in concrete instances that are specific to the publishing industry. One would not expect the matrix cell contents to be relevant to some other domain. Some of the y-axis categorical elements may be relevant across different substantive domains, but the specific instantiations (matrix cell contents) can vary as research questions, domains and historical time periods vary. The cell contents of the ideal types in Thornton et al. (2012) are 'examples' from prior institutional logics research and are not meant to be reified robust attributes applicable to other institutional domains.

Actor Dispositions

Measuring actors' functional backgrounds is another reemerging approach. Almandoz (2012) measured logics by coding founders' functional backgrounds from bank charter applications submitted to regulators. Note this method is similar to coding the backgrounds of corporate CEOs in precursor research (Fligstein, 1985). To understand how to code founders' biographical profiles, Almandoz (2012) first engaged interpretive methods to familiarize himself with the banking industry and the process of founding a bank. He employed participant observation by attending a workshop for prospective bank founders, interviewed individuals contemplating starting a bank, and read archival documents on banking compiled by the FDIC. He conducted word searches of regulatory documents describing the mission, goals and opportunities of prospective banks and the founding team as noted by regulators. This native immersion into bank founding practices enabled Almandoz (2012) to identify a theme that the backgrounds of founders represent two contrasting ideal types, a financial and a community logic. Almandoz then showed that these two logics, measured by the ratio of founders' team member backgrounds in a community and a financial logic produced significantly different consequences for the success of bank founding.

Time Dependence

Because institutional logics are historically contingent and historically constituted, measuring the effects of time is important if researchers want to be able to understand causal patterns, longer-term trends and to generalize their findings (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Ocasio et al., 2016). Ecological and neo-institutional research developed advanced methods to measure various parameterizations of time with dynamic event history models, including calendar years, organization age and event sequencing

(Tuma and Hannan, 1984). A number of institutional logics studies build on these conventions in using longitudinal research designs and quantitative modeling (e.g., Haveman and Rao, 1997; Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Thornton, 2001, 2002; Marquis and Lounsbury, 2007; Dunn and Jones, 2010). The strongest studies combine quantitative and qualitative methods to account for constitution, contingency and consequences of institutional effects over time. These studies advance beyond frequency distribution graphs and descriptive calendars of events to show event sequencing in hazard rate graphs.

Real and Ideal Boundaries

The growing study of conflicting institutional logics and how actors manage this conflict through hybrid practices and organizational forms (Lounsbury, 2007; Purdy and Gray, 2009; Battilana and Dorado, 2010; Dunn and Jones, 2010) highlights the need to further develop methods that aid researchers in defining boundaries and measuring the relative distance between them. Do sources of identity stem from a single institutional order or logic, or multiple ones (Rao et al., 2003)? How hybrid or how pure is the logic or element of a logic relative to the ideal type (Goodrick and Reay, 2011)? Geographic boundaries can distinguish institutional logics as shown by differences in the strategies of financial analysts in Boston versus New York (Lounsbury, 2007), and regional differences in the management strategy of manufacturing firms (Greenwood et al., 2010).

Another avenue to advance understanding of how boundaries affect the measurement of institutional logics lies in the affinity between institutional logics and categorization (Loewenstein et al., 2012; Durand and Boulongne, Chapter 24 this volume) and organizational ecology and categorization (Kennedy and Fiss, 2013: 10–11). Ecologists have used set theoretic approaches, such as fuzzy sets, to model grade-of-membership in

multiple categories or full membership in a focal category (Hannan et al., 2007). To illustrate our point, substitute the concept of categorical elements of a logic for the concept of category; set theoretical approaches may be well-suited to this task. Negro, Hannan and Rao (2010), for example, used crisp and fuzzy membership in overlapping categories as evidence of category emergence and change. Their research design suggests that it may be possible in a more fine-grain fashion to examine overlapping logics and the degree to which actors' behaviors align with one logic versus another. For example, Lander (2015) uses set theoretic methods to explore how organizational design elements congruent with different institutional logics are combined to contribute to achieving organizational goals in Dutch law firms.

Some combinations of institutional logics are argued to be more complimentary, others are more incommensurate (Thornton et al., 2012), but this proposition is speculative. In theory, the logics of the professions and the state are resource dependent in the sense that the professions produce knowledge and the state enacts legislation to codify and enforce knowledge. Given this argument the question remains which combinations of logics or institutional orders are more interdependent and which are more autonomous? Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) (Ragin, 1987, 2000, 2008; Ragin and Fiss, 2016) used in sociology, political science and management (Fiss, 2011; Fiss et al., 2013) could help address these types of questions. This method uses truth tables to combine measures of multiple qualities or attributes into matrices that capture how cases are distributed in an n -dimensional property space defined by these attributes (Kennedy and Fiss, 2013).

Socially Constructed Truth as Methods Bias

Even the most rigorous methods have limitations, which is why confidence in findings

can be bolstered by the use of mixed methods approaches that triangulate, i.e., validate, findings across different methods (Creswell, 2003; Kaplan, 2015). As Eisenhardt (1989) notes, methods bias can be counteracted by the triangulation of methods of analysis and studies that engage both inductive and deductive approaches in single studies. Eisenhardt (1989), for example, states, 'we build on existing theory because a prior specification of constructs can also help to shape the initial design of theory building research ... If these constructs prove important as the study progresses, then researchers have a firmer empirical grounding for the emergent theory ... In a description of her own study, Eisenhardt (1989) states 'there were strong, triangulated measures on which to ground the emergent theory' (1989: 536).

One of the virtues of the institutional logics perspective is that it is a mixed method subfield that embraces deduction, which accumulates advances in theory, as well as induction which privileges contextual understanding and development of new theory. Depending on the research question and setting, researchers engage the objective world and beliefs in universal interpretation stemming from theory testing and positivist grounded theory. Researchers also engage the enacted world and beliefs in particular interpretation from grounded theory. All ontologies present some type of a bias to data collection and researchers' conclusions. We encourage researchers to be ambidextrous in their ontologies and methods as the distinctions between types are analytical and not an ideological badge of identity.

Accumulating Generalizable Findings

While each method has its strengths and weaknesses, we are not aware of a single method that is superior to mixed methods studies. As we consider advances, there is only one set of generalizable findings in the

institutional logics literature based on a meta-analysis; these findings indicate that the market logic is colonizing professional domains (Thornton et al., 2015). Achieving greater accumulation of findings across diverse studies is an ultimate goal that requires researchers to give greater care to the selection of their research practices in a number of ways. This involves more careful citations to avoid confusing theoretical and empirical papers. It requires researchers to better distinguish those papers that are focused on determining institutional logics from those that are focused on the consequences of logics. It means discriminating the value of novel inductive analyses with limited generalizability as distinct from hypothesis testing studies that cumulate findings (Barley, 2016; Davis, 2015). Future efforts require greater attention to identifying the mechanisms that link institutional logics across levels of analysis and developing hypothesis testing studies using mixed methods and longitudinal research designs.

Ultimately, the continued vibrancy of institutional logics research is dependent upon how well researchers bring together the findings of more interpretive analysis, which emphasizes the historical and situational context, with more quantitative analysis, which emphasize generalizability and the testing of theory.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The institutional logics perspective is a highly productive research program, which employs a diverse set of methods, emphasizes different levels of analysis, focuses on a variety of dependent variables and outcomes, and identifies multiple mechanisms to explain the determinants, consequences and variability of logics. This research is quite diverse and not always consistent with respect to underlying assumptions, theoretical emphasis, methods, or in research

findings. In our book (Thornton et al., 2012), we provide an integrative metatheory to bring a common context to prior work and to set foundations for the future. Differences remain, are welcomed and are to be expected, but there is not always full engagement with prior theory and research in the perspective.

We do not expect or argue for a closed scientific research paradigm (Kuhn, 1962), as is common in the natural sciences. Yet despite, or perhaps because of, the continuing heterogeneity, the quarter century of research and theory development in the institutional logics perspective has led to fairly radical change in how organizational scholars understand institutions and organizations, which builds on yet departs from neo-institutional theory (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; DiMaggio and Powell, 1991). Ironically, Friedland and Alford (1991), which was published in the 'orange' volume (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991) that brought together and provided a synthesis of the new institutionalism, was the seminal contribution that allowed for that transformation.

Here we outline three major changes in how researchers view institutions and organizations that, in our judgment, have either been a direct result or greatly influenced by the institutional logics perspective.

1 Isomorphism to institutional pluralism

Isomorphism was termed the master proposition of neo-institutional theory (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Scott, 2008). Organizations, particularly formal organizational structures, became isomorphic with their institutionalized environments in order to gain legitimacy and survive (Meyer and Rowan, 1977). In the Meyer version, isomorphism was a property of the world system and the Western cultural account (Meyer and Rowan, 1977). In DiMaggio and Powell (1983), it was the focal point for the theorization of field structuration.

The institutional logics perspective has not only theorized the prevalence of institutional pluralism rather than isomorphism at various levels: society (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Thornton, 2004), institutional fields (Greenwood et al.,

2011) and organizations (Pache and Santos, 2010; Ocasio and Raydonovska, 2016), but, as we reviewed above, provided compelling empirical evidence of continuing pluralism at multiple levels (Lounsbury, 2007; Dunn and Jones, 2010; Greenwood et al., 2010; McPherson and Sauder, 2013). Note that the perspective does not negate the existence of isomorphic pressures. Under the perspective, shared commitments or conformity to institutional logics will lead to isomorphism among organizations or social groups that share the same logics. But the institutional logics perspective differs from the neo-institutional view on isomorphism in multiple ways, including: (i) field-level heterogeneity due to competing logics (Lounsbury, 2007; Dunn and Jones, 2010); (ii) local variations in institutional logics (Purdy and Gray, 2009; Lee and Lounsbury, 2015); (iii) organizational heterogeneity due to diverse strategic commitments (Kraatz and Block, 2008; Ocasio and Raudonovska, 2016); (iv) power differentials, conflict and contestation leading to organizational heterogeneity (Pache and Santos, 2010; Besharov and Smith, 2014).

2 From structural theory to embedded agency

Closely related to the focus on isomorphism, a significant issue for both critics (e.g., Kraatz and Zajac, 1996) and proponents (DiMaggio, 1986) of neo-institutional theory was the limited role for agency at both the individual and organizational levels. The institutional logics perspective shifted away from a structuralist approach to embrace a theory of embedded agency (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012). Embedded agency rests on the foundational assumption that institutional logics are both enabling and constraining of individual actions, and that individuals exercise agency in the formation, reproduction and transformation of organizations (Friedland and Alford, 1991). With the Weberian influences in the specification of institutional orders (Thornton, 2004), the institutional logics perspective is a theory of action, albeit action shaped by and shaping social and cultural structures. Note for example that Thornton and Ocasio (1999) is a study of organizational actions: executive succession events, as shaped by institutional logics. Organizational actions, shaped by logics, are critical in the determination of organizational structures: e.g., acquisitions (Thornton, 2001), and multidivisional structures (2002).

The embedded agency generated by institutional logics departs from structural determinism in multiple ways. Given institutional pluralism, a variety of logics are available to actors, and this multiplicity provides a source of agency (Thornton et al., 2012; Pache and Santos, 2013). The principles of institutional logics are guideposts for action but allow for local variations (Lounsbury, 2001), a variety of structural elaborations (Shipilov et al., 2010; Joseph et al., 2014) and are subject to significant ambiguity (Jackall, 1988; Quattrone, 2015). Consequently the so-called paradox of embedded agency (Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009) is not really a paradox, as embeddedness does not imply oversocialized behavior (cf., Granovetter, 1985), and adaptive change and intentional action is a property of embedded agency and the institutional logics perspective (Thornton et al., 2012). Overall, a focus on embedded agency shifts institutional theory from a top-down structural perspective to incorporation of cross-level (both top-down and bottom-up) mechanisms in research and theory development.

While the core embedded agency assumption is a fundamental change from structural determinism, it is also distinct from the overly agentic, undersocialized approach that is characteristic of some varieties of organizational institutionalism. For example, although we believe that the institutional logics perspective can be productively combined with an analysis of institutional work (e.g., Lok, 2010), at times theory and research on institutional work appears undersocialized, particularly with respect to the constitution of actors' interests (e.g. Lawrence et al., 2009). Unlike theories of rational choice, interests and preferences are not individual-level phenomena, but are shaped by institutional logics that actors have learned, experienced through practices, and with which they identify. Similarly, an embedded agency approach differs from a resource dependence perspective on institutions (cf., Oliver, 1991), one that has also been applied to interpret the determinants and consequences of institutional logics (e.g., Wry et al., 2013).

3 From an alternative to rational choice economics to the institutional contingency and multiplicity of economic and market orientations

Neo-institutional theory began as an attempt to explain organizations as a product of institutional environments distinct from technical

environments (Meyer and Rowan, 1977) and economic and market forces (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Tolbert and Zucker, 1983).² This distinction between institutional and technical environments actually dates back to Parsons (1956), and is also reflected in precursors to neo-institutional theory, such as Hirsch's (1975) account of how the institutional environment shaped industry performance.

The institutional logics perspective takes a different view of the relationship between economics and markets and institutions. Markets and institutions are not two different spheres but markets are shaped by institutions and institutional logics (Thornton, 2004). At the same time, competitive and market forces have a material existence that is not predetermined by institutions or logics but itself shapes the formation of institutional logics (Thornton et al., 2012). For example the merger waves in the publishing industry and the market for corporate control facilitated the rise of the market logic in higher education publishing (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999).

Anthropologists provide evidence of the near-universal existence of market exchange in all societies (Fiske, 1991), along with other forms of governance: authority relationships, reciprocity and communal sharing. Societies differ, however, in both the extent and organization of different forms of governance. Friedland and Alford (1991) posited market capitalism as one of the key institutional orders, with its own distinct logic. Thornton and Ocasio (1999) shifted the emphasis from capitalism to market orientation as a distinct institutional logic, implicitly arguing that market logics, associated with economic market orientations, are not universally dominant, but their prevalence is a historical contingency.

A key finding of the institutional logics perspective (Thornton et al., 2015), as previously noted, is the rise of a market logic across different sectors during the last decades of the twentieth century. An extreme form of the market logic has prevailed in many economies, particularly the United States: the shareholder maximization logic

(Lazonick and O'Sullivan, 2000). More generally, market orientations and the economic way of thinking and viewing the world have become increasingly shaped by a variety of institutions across society. From this perspective, economic reasoning and market structures are deeply embedded in institutional structures and guided by institutional logics (Thornton, 2004). Institutional environments are not distinct from economic or technical environments but rather how technical and market forces operate is shaped by the historical contingencies of institutional logics (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Ocasio et al., 2016).

In addition to the historical contingency of market logics, institutional logics research has also highlighted how markets are socially constructed, and that market logics can be instantiated in different ways across time and space. For instance, Lounsbury (2007) showed how different regional markets for mutual funds were guided by the different competitive orientations of efficiency versus maximizing performance outcomes. Thus, despite the overarching rise of the market logic, we need more research on instantiation of market logics and the social construction of different markets. This calls for more direct engagement with economic sociologists (e.g., Swedberg, 1990; Granovetter and Swedberg, 1992; Smelser and Swedberg, 2010; Du Gay and Morgan, 2013) who are interested in understanding the sources and consequences of varieties of markets and capitalisms. In this regard, it would be especially helpful to develop a cross-national comparative agenda on how market logics get translated, altered and resisted in different cultural contexts (Djelic, 2001).

While the influence of the institutional logics perspective in reformulating organizational institutionalism has been significant, other areas remain fertile for further theoretical and empirical development. One area, highlighted in our book (Thornton et al., 2012) is the microfoundations of institutional logics and its integration with both top-down and

bottom-up cross-level models. In our book, we introduced the availability–accessibility–activation model to explain how multiple logics available to individuals and organizations, yet a more limited number of logics are readily accessible to them, and different logics become activated in any particular situation. Logic activation is a cross-level phenomenon further shaped by the negotiated order among individuals who may vary in the logics most accessible to them (cf., McPherson and Sauder, 2013). The availability–accessibility–activation model has been employed by Pache and Santos (2013) to explain political responses to multiple logics but further empirical research is required to test, validate, or modify the theory.

Given the development of theory and research on microfoundations and understanding culture as a toolkit (Swidler, 1986; Thornton et al., 2012; McPherson and Sauder, 2013), we have argued that the institutional logics perspective provides a novel approach to agency that appreciates the constitutive power of broader socio-cultural structures. However, many open questions remain, including the conditions under which actors are able to invoke or combine different logics, and with what effects. In this regard, it would be useful to engage contemporary developments in the sociology of culture (e.g., Vaisey, 2009; Lizardo, 2014; Mohr and Ghaziani, 2014).

More generally, we encourage institutional logics scholars to engage problems and ideas across disciplines from sociology, political science and economics, to domains of strategy, entrepreneurship and international business. While not every study need (or should) engage the institutional logics perspective, we believe the perspective will continue to shed light on important, yet heretofore unexplored, aspects of organizations, society, politics and the economy. We believe that research on institutional logics remains in the early stages, and we invite efforts to contribute to its shaping and the continued vitality of institutional analysis.

Notes

- 1 Despite the varieties of institutional theory employed in organizational studies, the term ‘institution’ is rarely defined. A useful definition for our purposes is that an institution is a taken-for-granted, normatively sanctioned set of roles and interaction orders for collective action. Accordingly we can consider publishing (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999), French cuisine (Rao et al., 2003), mutual funds (Lounsbury, 2007) and Jesuit accounting (Quattrone, 2015) as examples of institutions, each with its own set of organizing principles and institutional logics. The institutional logics that may compete or are relatively dominant within each of these institutions are shaped by the societal logics associated with the institutional orders (Friedland and Alford, 1991), but also by factors unique to the analysis of the organization, industry and institutional field.
- 2 Meyer and Rowan (1977) contrast institutional environments with technical environments with functional demands for efficiency and boundary-spanning exchange. They are implicitly contrasting institutional theory from then prevalent contingency views of organization, such as Thompson’s (2003 [1967]). For DiMaggio and Powell (1983) the contrast is with neoclassical economics and its emphasis on competitive market forces. While contingency theory differs from economic theory, for the purpose of subsequent discussion we will treat them as equivalent, as both focus on rationality and efficiency.

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