

**UNPACKING THE “INSTITUTIONAL PORTFOLIO”  
THEORETICAL ELEMENTS FOR AN ANALYSIS OF  
INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE THROUGH OBJECTIFICATION  
OF RESOURCES AND HABITUS**

**THIERRY VIALE**

PhD Student<sup>1</sup>

Organization and Human Resources Department

HEC School of Management, Paris, France

[thierry.viale2@mailhec.net](mailto:thierry.viale2@mailhec.net)

**October 2008**

JEL Classification : A. 14 / L. 22 / L. 26

---

<sup>1</sup> On going thesis under the co-supervision of Charles-Henri Besseyre des Horts (HEC Paris, School of Management) and Roy Suddaby (University of Alberta, School of Business).

# UNPACKING THE “INSTITUTIONAL PORTFOLIO” THEORETICAL ELEMENTS FOR AN ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE THROUGH OBJECTIFICATION OF RESOURCES AND HABITUS

Abstract: the “social skill” (Fligstein, 1997 and 2001) attributed to social entrepreneurs is not sufficiently explicit as regards their dispositions for engaging in actions of change. After placing the status of change in the context of institutionalist literature, we intend to show how, with the help of Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of field and habitus, it is possible to develop what we call an *institutional portfolio* allowing a micro-individual analysis of the capacity of some individuals to undertake institutional transformations without losing sight of the evolution – at a macro-analytical level – of the structure of the field in which these individuals operate. In this respect, we intend to contribute to the various attempts at overcoming the paradox of the “embedded agency” and to give a more precise account of institutional change.

Key words: neo-institutionalism, institutional entrepreneurship, field, habitus, resources, institutional portfolio

\* \* \*

Résumé : la « compétence sociale » (Fligstein, 1997 et 2001) attribuée à l’entrepreneur institutionnel ne nous en dit pas suffisamment sur les dispositions profondes qui lui permettent de s’engager dans des actions de changement. Aussi, après avoir resitué le statut du changement dans la littérature institutionnaliste, nous montrons comment, à partir de la théorie du champ et de l’habitus développée par Pierre Bourdieu, il est possible d’élaborer ce que nous appelons un *portefeuille institutionnel* qui rend possible l’analyse micro-individuelle de la capacité de certains individus à entreprendre des transformations institutionnelles, et cela, sans perdre de vue l’évolution conjointe à un macro niveau d’analyse, la structure du champ dans lequel ces individus opèrent. A ce titre nous entendons apporter une contribution aux efforts de réflexion visant à lever le paradoxe de l’« *embedded agency* » et rendre compte, au plus près, de la transformation institutionnelle.

Mots clés : néo-institutionnalisme, entrepreneur institutionnel, champ, habitus, ressources, portefeuille institutionnel.

## INTRODUCTION

Ironically, change is undoubtedly the most recalcitrant object with which organizational institutionalism has to deal. The institutionalism of the early days, the old institutionalism according to Selznick (1949, 1957) stressed the importance of individual decision-making which meant that changes were considered as being part of organizations. In reaction, new institutionalism (Meyer and Rowan, 1977 ; Zucker, 1977 ; Powell and DiMaggio, 1983) reversed the focus by placing the organizational field and its environment (norms, culture...) at the centre of all observations, relegating the individual to the position of a structural epiphenomena. This fratricidal dispute resulted in both a certain inability to grasp intra-organizational tensions and a variation in the responses of organizations to their environment. Neo-institutionalists were to take the wise step of initiating their own reform by trying to restore some of the individual's strategic consciousness (DiMaggio, 1988). Consequently, the notion of "institutional entrepreneurship" was to contribute to bringing together structure and action, the organizational field and the individual (Sewell, 1992 ; Barley and Tolbert, 1997 ; Seo, Creed, 2002) and therefore reconcile the "ancients" and the "moderns" (Greenwood and Hinings, 1996 ; Hirsch and Lounsbury (1997).

Despite what has been achieved to overcome the paradox of the "embedded agency" (Greenwood, Suddaby, 2006), this article aims to show that more remains to be done to take into account the individual entrepreneurs' capacity to transform the institutions linked to their respective organizational fields. It is indeed possible to extend the definition of the space of action which the institutional entrepreneur enjoys (or appropriates!) in spite of the weighty constraints brought by the structure of the field. The first studies devoted to "social skill" (Fligstein, 1997, 2001) put us on the right track but, ignoring as they do the symbolic, social, cultural and economic resources which the institutional entrepreneurs are likely to mobilize

in processes of organizational change, they also leave aside the institutional micro-foundations present in processes of de-institutionalization or re-institutionalization (Jepperson, 1991 ; Suddaby and Greenwood, 2001 ; Greenwood, Suddaby and Hinings, 2002; Maguire, Hardy, Lawrence, 2004).

We intend to demonstrate here the need to shed light on what we call the *institutional portfolio* held by each individual in a given field which, in terms of the structure and history of the organizational field, can cast new light on individual initiatives in institutional transformation.

To do this, we will first define the status of change in organizational neo-institutionalism. After bringing back the notion of interest, we will show how institutionalism overcomes its divisions by combining “structure” and “action”. We will then look at the latest institutionalist progress on “social skill”. Secondly, we will analyze the theoretical compatibility between neo-institutionalism and Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of field and habitus in order to shed light on how well the latter contributes to an analysis of human processes of transforming organizations and the organizational field.

## **I. CHANGE IN NEO-INSTITUTIONALISM**

### **Restoring the place of interest**

Change is far from being unknown territory in new institutionalism (Jepperson, 1991; Campbell 2004) and considerable energy has been put into establishing categories (“evolutionary change” versus “revolutionary change”, “punctuated evolution” versus “punctuated equilibrium”...). Internal and external predictive factors of change have also

been studied (Oliver, 1992). Among the studies devoted to change, many have shown greater interest in studying completed change on a macro-analytical level, than ongoing change on a micro-analytical level (Zucker, 1977 and 1991: 106; Brint and Karabel 1989 and 1991). Such taxonomic thinking which does not explain institutionalization processes - "Institutional theory tells us relatively little about 'institutionalization' as an unfinished process (as opposed to an achieved state", (DiMaggio, 1988: 12) - thereby showing the limits of institutional theory ("Institutional theory is always in danger of forgetting that labeling a process or structure does not explain it", Zucker, in Powell and DiMaggio, 1991: 106), is handicapped by its inability to consider the individual as having interests and acting in accordance with them (Friedland and Alford, 1991). In other words, for this first kind of new institutionalism, not only do individuals have the greatest difficulty in the world identifying their interest, they are also incapable of implementing appropriate strategies to satisfy those interests. This being the case, norms and preconscious assumptions play a determining or even exclusive role in guiding the hand of the individual. Any individual strategy is inconceivable from this theoretical standpoint.

A gradual opening up to the notion of interest ("the selective deployment of interest in institutional explanations", DiMaggio 1988: 7), and to the heterogeneity of change processes ("we need an enhanced understanding of both the sources of heterogeneity in institutional environments and the processes that generate institutional change", Powell, 1991: 183) gives the possibility of reaching beyond a "static, constrained, and oversocialized view of organizations" (Powell, 1991: 183). By including varied organizational forms and individual interests in the analysis, new perspectives can be opened up to institutionalism (Fligstein, 1991). While undeniable persistence phenomena (Zucker, 1977) specific to each organizational field cannot be ruled out, there are also variations that must be grasped and explained. Institutionalism must therefore study the heterogeneity or variety of organizational

logics within the scope of the organizationally possible. To think in this way is to restore the role of the individual in change processes and organizational strategies in which they occupy a key position (Munir, 2005). To acknowledge the effects of socially-formed schemes of perception and appreciation structuring individual action socially, and leading individuals to act in line with some form of “taken for grantedness” (Berger and Luckmann, 1966) or “collective representations [that] operate on their own” (Stinchcombe, 1997 : 2), is not to transform the individual into a social marionette driven exclusively by norms and culture. Acknowledging the limits on individual action – limits that can be associated, among other things, with the three “regulatory, normative and cognitive pillars” (Scott, 2001), to which I must add the hierarchic position of the individual within the organization and the position of the organization within the field – does not rule out forms of (even relative) variations in the responses elaborated by individuals when faced with an “environmental pressure” such as, for example, a technological innovation. This could be summarized by the dialectic of the epistemological pair : “exogenous pressure” versus “different endogenous reaction of non passive actors” (Dacin, Goodstein and Scott, 2002).

The active individual must step out into the open because, even socialized and structured as they may be, individuals (re)act by interpreting situations. Even if environmental pressure on a given organizational field is exerted with the same force on all the organizations in the field – and it is far from certain that this is the case – the processes taking place in the organizations in the field sometimes compete with each other (Lounsbury, 2001 and 2007, Townley, 2002). These rivalries are the product of the relatively singular backgrounds of the individuals making up the organizations, of balances of power between different coalitions within the organization and competition between the various organizations in a given field. Relatively speaking, Powell and DiMaggio (1991) say much the same thing when they call for the edification of a multi-dimensional theory and a return

to what I will take the liberty of calling *the repressed side of the earliest throes of new institutionalist theory*, meaning the notions of individual action, balance of power and struggles for interest and power, and therefore of change or resistance to change. These are all phenomena which are commonly encountered in companies and in which individuals always play the key role. In this call for convergence, there is a will to combine together within a single theoretical approach the long-emphasized decisive role of social structure or “market-based” vision (Fligstein, 1991, 1997 and 2001) and the role of individual action in a form of power over organizations which cannot be neglected without running the risk of losing something along the way!

“We suspect that something has been lost in the shift from the old to the new institutionalism. Although the prime importance of assimilating the cognitive revolution to sociological theory is undeniable, we agree with Alexander (1987) that the goal must be a sounder multidimensional theory, rather than a one-sidedly cognitive one. Indeed, one of the key purposes [...] was to expand the universe of discourse in institutional theory to include researchers whose work placed more emphasis on the strategic and political elements of action and institutional change. The result [...] has been to integrate more firmly organizational institutionalism with general sociology, *to place interests and power on the institutional agenda*, and to *clarify and deepen the conversation about the form that a theory of change might take*”<sup>2</sup> (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991: 27).

### **Overcoming the dichotomy between structure and action**

The notion of institutional entrepreneurship provides the outline of a response to this theoretical imperative in that enables us to establish the connection between new organizational institutionalism and what Stinchcombe calls “the guts of institutions” (1997: 17); in other words, to allow a role for individuals driven to a greater extent by their interests - “organized actors with sufficient resources (institutional entrepreneurs) [who] see in [changes] an opportunity to realize an interest that they value highly” (DiMaggio, 1988: 14). This conception of the individual supposes intense political activity expressed through

---

<sup>2</sup> My italics.

struggles of interest and power relations (Levy and Scully, 2007) which are exacerbated during periods of organizational change. The notion of institutional entrepreneurship is heuristically powerful and allows us to bring together in a hitherto unlikely pairing the notion of “action” and “institution” (Barley and Tolbert, 1997), “structure” and “agency” (Sewell, 1992; Seo and Creed, 2002), to overcome the paradox of the “embedded agency” (Greenwood and Suddaby, 2006). We mean agent here in the sense of a subject possessing resources and capable of acting on the world (“agency refers to an actor’s ability to have some effect on the social world”, Scott, 2001: 76) in accordance with their interests (“Actors who have an interest in particular institutional arrangements and who leverage resources to create new institutions or to transform existing ones”, Maguire, Hardy and Lawrence, 2004: 657) by opposition to an agent conceived as an “oversocialized” or socially overdetermined subject (Powell, 1991).

*Contradictio in adjecto*, the institutional entrepreneur makes the construction of meaning possible, and therefore also the institutional renewal or institutional innovation that was difficult to conceive of hitherto. The institutional entrepreneur, without being free of all institutional constraint - as might be envisaged in the economic theory of the rational actor – is an actor in the organization who is endowed with particular resources and who, working in pre-reflexive mode, acts in an imperfectly rational manner yet remains reasonable and knows how to look after his or her interests in new institutional forms. In this respect, I believe that institutional entrepreneurs are unifiers rather than inventors. Their talent consists ultimately not so much in creating intrinsically original items (which are in fact socially supplied), but in the singular way they organize the assembly or combination of these socially-shaped parts in the light of their personal background and position in time (Dorado, 2005: 388). This freedom of assembly is not without its limits, those of the social conditions of production by the assembler, because history and background are never quite forgotten, except perhaps by



those who, as Mauss said, pay themselves with counterfeit currency of their dreams<sup>3</sup> and imagine themselves infinitely capable of assembling the parts of the organizational game in a multitude of combinations in an illusion of freedom. The product of the “structure” versus “agency” dialectic, institutional entrepreneurship enables us to grasp and account for the interaction between the institutions that shape individuals and the individuals who are constantly exerting their action on the institutions in the name of institutional renewal and the possibility of individual action (“actors [that] shape emerging institutions and transform existing ones despite the complexities and path dependences”, Garud, Hardy and Maguire, 2007: 957).

Returning for a moment to the primary meaning of the terms, an institutional entrepreneur is a person who undertakes a particular form of enterprise which is worth a closer look. Institutional entrepreneurship is a socially risky activity challenging the norm and giving rise to intense political activity to put together “new systems of meaning” and “institutional arrangements”. The action consisting in structuring the institutional environment remains “*bricolage*” without a future if the institutional arrangements are not “theorized” or “commodified” in easily acceptable forms within the framework of field-specific practices to favor their “colonization” and establish them as recognized norms (“reinstitutionalization”), (Greenwood, Suddaby and Hinings, 2002; Maguire, Hardy, Lawrence, 2004; Suddaby and Greenwood, 2001). Taking part in such normative decomposition-recomposition processes requires particular dispositions on the part of the institutional entrepreneur. Indeed, the normative innovation disposition supposes a certain social distance from the norm, thereby opening up the possibility of breaking or moving away from that norm. This enterprise of more or less intentional contestation undertaken relatively consciously, therefore contains the expression of what might wrongly appear to be

---

<sup>3</sup> My translation

a form of social audacity, but which is probably a question of position in the field in question, more than anything else. The term distance used here may lead to confusion. I do not mean that institutional entrepreneurs are rational actors who, even within the limits of their rationality, succeed in placing themselves above the social world in order to act on it in acute awareness of the issues of the situation (Leca, Naccache, 2006: 628). In fact, I mean that, by structural effects of the field, not everyone keeps the same social distance from the norm and not everyone has the same social dispositions to play with the norm in the sense of the “enabling role of individual social position” (Battilana, 2006). In other words, there is an uneven distribution of the ability to play with the rules of the social game and the cogs of the social mechanism to transform it in line with interests. Without being thought in the rational sense of the term, these interests can be clearly understood on the practical level. As such, the institutional entrepreneur is a figure whose physiognomy and social position should be more clearly defined.

### **Emergence of social skill**

As emphasized by Fligstein (1997, 2001), the institutional entrepreneur has particular aptitudes and is a strategic actor endowed with a social skill (“these entrepreneurs are skilled strategic actors”, 2001: 106). “The idea of social skill”, according to Fligstein, “is that actors have to motivate others to cooperate. The ability to engage others in collective action is a social skill that proves pivotal to the construction and reproduction of local social orders” (Fligstein, 2001: 106). This undeniably talented individual can “understand the ambiguities” (2001: 114), has “a sense of what is possible and impossible” (2001: 114), and is a negotiator who is into “brokering more than blustering” (2001: 114). We are told that this skill gives a certain practical sense of situations, the effect of which is the ability to bring about

cooperation. The notion becomes a little clearer. Garud, Sunjay and Kumaraswamy (2002) highlight “political skills” which are broken down, in turn, into sub-categories such as “networking, bargaining and interest mediation skills”. In their study, Perkmann and Spicer (2007) complete this taxonomic effort by adding two additional categories to “political skill”: “analytical skill” and “cultural skills”. The conditions in which this resource is used are also highlighted and divided into three classes: “leveraged, convened, or accumulated” (Dorado, 2005: 395). These studies culminating in types and categories ultimately tell us little about the profound nature of the resource. What is it? How can it be objectified?

One of the most recent research developments has been analysis of discourse and official texts (studied as discourse) as components of institutionalization processes. Production of discourse is a social activity that is inseparable from organizational practices and more particularly during periods of change when discourse is a crucial support transformation. Reality is socially constructed through discursive processes giving rise to shared meanings. In this respect, to account for institutionalization processes, we cannot ignore the linguistic activity that lies at the heart of construction of shared meaning in the field, and therefore the principle of construction of the field, its conservation or transformation. The mobilization of a discursive model of institutionalization (Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy, 2004) represents, in my opinion, a first step towards objectifying the institutional entrepreneur’s resource. Discourse materializes the work carried out by institutional entrepreneurs to bring influence to bear on the institutions that constrain their action and yet make it possible.

“The image of institutional entrepreneurs that is suggested by our model is as authors-generators of influential texts that are aimed at influencing the nature and structure of discourses and, in turn, affecting the institutions that are supported by those discourses”, (Phillips, Lawrence et Hardy, 2004: 648)

Performative statements (Austin, 1991) form or even establish the thing they refer to (“I pronounce you man and wife”, etc.). Here, discourse takes the form of a symbolic action, that of transforming by merely pronouncing the recognized expression. In the logic of performative statements, the person who states is often the representative of institutional authority (State, Church, etc.): “by the powers invested in me, I hereby anoint you...”. In the case of institutional entrepreneurs, the situation is a little different. Often, they are endowed with no political power. Institutional entrepreneurs take power starting from scratch in a way, thereby reintroducing the issue of power to new institutionalism (Phillips, 2003). Often, institutional entrepreneurs have no other mandate than that they give themselves and which allows them to construct their own legitimacy. Discourse is therefore a key object of study because it enables us to reveal and objectify the specific resource represented by the rhetorical or persuasive ability of the institutional entrepreneur, which is nothing other than the expression of a form of symbolic power. On the level of the organizational field, rhetorical strategies have been studied (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005) but I do not believe this has been done yet on the individual level. To date, and subject to a more comprehensive inventory in our coming reading, I have the feeling that we remain relatively unfamiliar with the components of this resource used by institutional entrepreneurs. Objectification poses a problem. The study of discourse (Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy, 2004) or rhetoric (Suddaby, Greenwood, 2005) indicates a way forward. Discourse is a first step towards objectifying the resource or skill used by the institutional entrepreneur. This is a quite symbolic dimension of the resource and it seems possible to me to go into greater depth in this objectification work which is still at its beginnings. One possibility could be to identify the resource more precisely by breaking it down into various forms of capital, such as the cultural capital, economic capital, social capital and symbolic capital (Pierre Bourdieu, 1992), combination of resources that I call *institutional portfolio*.

## **II. ORGANIZATIONAL FIELD AND THE INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEUR'S HABITUS**

### **Legitimacy of the theoretical approach**

Such recourse to the theory of field and habitus is in no way a heretical approach, seeking to make impertinent (meaning both irreverent and intellectually irrelevant) combinations. It should be remembered that my project is based on a theoretical complementarity. Powell and DiMaggio (1991) emphasized that “Bourdieu’s framework offers a particularly balanced and multifaceted approach to action. [...] Much of it dovetails with and may contribute to a broadening and deepening of institutional tradition” (1991: 26). Bourdieu, meanwhile, admitted that he felt quite close to organizational institutionalism, acknowledging many “areas of overlapping and convergence” between “his oldest and most recent works and the works of new economic sociology” (Bourdieu, 1992: 238). In other words, the theoretical meeting can take place at least around the concept of field, a concept that both theories have in common.

For neo-institutionalists, the organization field is composed of a number of organizations, united by the same activity, which in time constitute a recognized and therefore institutionalized area of life (“organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and produce consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services and products”, DiMaggio and Powell, 1983: 143). To this first definition, which successfully names the elements involved in the life of the field, should be added the one proposed by Scott (1994:

207) which introduces two key elements: a) the relational intensity that makes it possible to outline the limits of the field; b) the concept of common meanings which highlights the principle of membership among participants in the activity of a given field (“the concept of field connotes the existence of a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside of the field”). Agreement on the meaning ascribed to the activity (common meaning system) makes possible the acceptance and sharing of rules in a particular field (the stakeholders, hierarchies and the structure of relationships...). Two elements that allow us to clarify the boundaries of the field (“in more stable and highly institutionalized fields, there is high consensus on the definitions as to who the critical players are, what activities and interactions are appropriate, and which organizations are included, marginal to, or outside field boundaries”, Scott, 1998: 129). The field is also an area run by a dynamic that can encounter theoretical avatars (Wooten and Hoffman, 2008). To begin with, neo-institutionalists proposed an isomorphic or mimetic conception of the field, according to which any change led paradoxically to a relative homogenization of forms and organizational practices (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Subsequently, the neo-institutionalists took into account the “institutional logic” (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008) that irrigates the field and may be reflected in rivalries (“competing logics”) and power struggles (Lawrence 2008; Thornton and Ocasio, 1999), approaching in this way the field conception of Bourdieu.

The bourdieusian field is not limited to organization. Indeed, Bourdieu had never really taken organization into account. In this respect, our subsequent project, which consists in submitting the theory of field and habitus to the empirical “test” of organizational reality (i.e. consulting communication agencies), is an approach that seems so far to retain its originality. According to Bourdieu, the social world is composed of a large diversity of fields: to name

but a few, there is the political field, the bureaucratic field, the haute couture field, the scientific field, the academic field, the religious field, the journalism field, the literary field, the corporate field... These fields are relatively independent of each other, meaning that they have their own specific rules, interests and issues. “Each of these fields corresponds to a fundamental viewpoint of the world which creates its own object and finds within itself the principle of understanding and explanation suited to that object” (Bourdieu, 1997: 119). In other words, each field has its own logic, its own vision (of the world), “institutionalization of a point of view in things and habituses, [...] a specific mode of thinking (an *eidos*), a specific reality construction principle based on a pre-reflexive belief in the unchallenged value of the instruments of construction and the objects thus constructed (an *ethos*)” (Bourdieu, 1997: 120). Any field betrays a vision of the world which becomes institutionalized through practices and specific rules shared by the agents in the field. This “prereflexive” adherence is experienced in its most harmonious forms in the manner of a vocation (“I’ve always wanted to be...”; “I was made for...”), abolishing any distance between the logic of the field and the individual, and symbolizing the individual as becoming the field itself in the sense of being haunted and possessed by the field. We are close here to the “oversocialization” spoken of by Powell and DiMaggio (1991) for whom the individual has difficulty identifying interests and building up strategies.

In the class of circumstances in which the organizational field is relatively stable, the opportunities for transformation, without being excluded, are nevertheless reduced and institutional reform becomes less probable. It is undoubtedly in this framework that social determinism is most marked, all the more so in the case of individuals who, like fish in water (that of their field), are not always aware of the forces they can mobilize and of the fact that, unconsciously, “dispositions are left to their own devices” (Bourdieu, Wacquant, 1992 : 111). However, events outside the field (environmental pressures) such as laws and regulations,

technological progress, sociological changes... can bring about crises in the field creating rivalries which threaten the existing forms of power. In these conditions, one can sometimes observe a form of disalignment between the social properties of those who exert power and the properties associated with the new form of power being constituted : “the routine adjustments of subjective structures (habitus) and objective structures (field) are suddenly broken”, thus creating “a class of circumstances in which rational choice can take over, at least among those agents who have the means of being rational, if we may put it like that” (Bourdieu, Wacquant, 1992 : 107). The field, as a space which is structured discriminatingly between positions exerting power over the field and subordinate positions, can turn out to be a place where individual or collective struggles for power take place between the holders of legitimate authority (i.e. the authority in place and acknowledged as such for the time being) and the candidates for it, that is those who intend to change the order of the field so as to reorganize it in accordance with their own interests. “Those who, in a given state of the power struggle, monopolize (more or less completely) the specific capital, as being the foundation of power and the specific authority characterizing a field, are inclined to adopt strategies of conservation, on the side of [...] orthodoxy, whereas those who are least endowed with capital (who are often newcomers, most of the time, the youngest) are inclined to strategies of subversion, on the side of [...] heresy”.. The heretical posture has something to do with that of the institutional entrepreneur, already mentioned (cf. supra, “organized actors with sufficient resources [who] see in [changes] an opportunity to realize an interest that they value highly”, DiMaggio, 1988: 14).

For all that, the most subversive initiatives are confronted with their own self-censorship. Strategies of subversion carried out by the candidates (or heretics) who are strongly inclined to bring about institutional transformation are nevertheless confined to preserving the ultimate interests in the field to which they belong. Indeed, the agents



committed to a field share, even in a situation of struggle and often unconsciously, common fundamental interests, an axiomatic or objective complicity, which can help separate what needs to be preserved (“repressed in the taken-for-grantedness and left in the state of *doxa*”<sup>4</sup>) and what needs to be disputed or brought into play. That is why fields are places of “partial revolutions”, institutional arrangements which never really jeopardize the fundamentals, i.e. the institutional foundation on which any field relies.

### **The habitus of institutional entrepreneurs: from embodied to reified institutions**

In our view, mobilizing the notion of habitus is, as a Bourdieusian concept, the most meaningful contribution to the present neo-institutionalist debate. It enables us to pursue our analysis of the interaction between the individual and the structure (embedded agency) by offering the opportunity to objectify the distribution of the different types of resources held by the individuals engaged in initiatives concerning the functioning of institutions in relation to the structure of positions constituting the organizational field.

For Bourdieu, *homo oeconomicus* does not exist. It is “a sort of anthropological monster” (2000: 257) in the sense of a creation so pure that it is imperfect, a theoretical invention and an abstraction that cannot account for practice because it is condemned to the “amnesia of genesis”. The notion of habitus which functions inextricably with the notion of field, breaks away from the rational action theory or rational choice theory, by which individuals act as universal rational agents, agents without a history, not economically and socially conditioned, making maximal use of their utilities in the sense of material profits at

---

<sup>4</sup> Bourdieu makes a distinction between the “doxa” and the notion of “opinion”. A doxic relationship with the world refers to habit, reflex and the unreflective..., while opinion implies consciousness and deliberate thinking.

every occasion, forming their choices freely, acting according to a deliberate, conscious end and using all available resources to achieve it.

In contrast, the notion of habitus proposes to construct and understand practice in its specific “logic” by situating it in time, in the chronology of its formation and the social space in which it is realized. “The conditioning associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produces habitus, durable and transposable systems of dispositions, structured structures predisposed to operate as structuring structures, which is to say as principles generating and organizing representations that can be objectively adapted to the goal without supposing a conscious view of the ends and express mastery of the operations required to achieve them, objectively “regulated” and “regular” without being in any way the product of obedience to rules and being all these things, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing activity of a conductor” (Bourdieu, 1980: 88-89).

Among the fundamental properties of the habitus, its historic and social dimension should be pointed out. As the product of particular, socially-formed historic conditioning, the habitus, the “interiorization of exterior values”, is acquired through practice and is “constantly oriented towards practice”. It is the incorporation of a particular social history and the generator of a specific social history expressed in the form of singular social trajectories. “To speak of habitus, is to state that the individual, and even the personal and subjective, is social and collective. The habitus is a socialized subjectivity” (Bourdieu, Wacquant, 1992: 101). On this point, Bourdieu differs from the notion of bounded rationality (March and Simon, 1958): “rationality is limited not only because the available information is limited, because there are not the means to think through every situation completely, especially in urgency and action, but also because the human mind is socially limited, socially structured, and is always, whether we like it or not, imprisoned – even if we are aware of it – “within the limits of the brain”, as Marx said, which is to say within the limits

of the system of categories it owes to its training” (Bourdieu, Wacquant, 1992: 102). Therefore, if individuals limit their choices, it is not only because they do not have the means to process a large quantity of information, which is not always available to them anyway, but above all because due to their habitus, the naturalization of past conditioning which is always there unnoticed, the past weighs subconsciously on their decisions and on the strategies they elaborate. The habitus, the social economy of practice, enables the individual to act “naturally” in a given field without having to reflect and calculate before every move, the famous “collective orchestration without a conductor”.

Contrary to the reductionist discourse of critics of Bourdieu, the habitus – in its Bourdieu’s version <sup>5</sup> – is in no way mechanistic. It is essential to emphasize this point. The habitus does not condemn individuals to mechanically sterile conduct consisting in reproducing the conditions of their conditioning, by habit or by reflex, in the acts of their daily life. How is it possible to conjugate within this single notion of the habitus, on the one hand the incorporation of the social, or what we could call an *institutionalization of the individual*, determining their acts – very close in this respect to the routines and cognitive scripts driving actors incapable of clearly identifying their interests (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991) – and, on the other, the possibility given to the actor to undertake, within certain limits, original actions of creation, invention, improvisation, adaptation to new circumstances... – coming close here to the notion of cooptation in the sense of Selznick (1949), although without agreeing with it completely – because Bourdieu, without denying the reason behind the acts, does play down is clearly conscious design: “actions that are reasonable without being the product of a reasoned design or, even more so, of a rational calculation; [are] inhabited by a sort of objective purpose without being consciously organized in relation to an explicitly formed end” (Bourdieu, 1980: 86).

---

<sup>5</sup> The notion of habitus has also been addressed and developed by many thinkers, such as Aristotle, Leibniz, Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Norbert Elias...

Overcoming the binary conception seeking to oppose, irreconcilably and counter-productively, the free rational subject (“the uncreated creator”) and the structurally-driven agent imprisoned by the conditions of its own production, is made possible by the habitus in two ways. First, because in Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus, there is a difference between individual habituses. Although experiences common to the members of the same class, notably earliest experiences, bring about “unique integration”, the difference between individuals “resides in the singularity of their social trajectories to which correspond series of chronologically-ordered determinations that are mutually irreducible to one another”. (Bourdieu, 1980: 100-102). Second, because the habitus, while being socially determined, is also a “generating” principle. It engenders conduct that may be new, and this is one of its fundamental properties. The habitus admittedly allows “external forces to be exerted”, those of the socialization of the individual and those of the fields in which the individual positions himself, but actualization (exteriorization of interior values) is performed “according to the specific logic of the bodies in which they are incorporated” (Bourdieu, 1980: 88-89). Actualization is therefore largely conditioned by the conditions of production of the habitus which “may be accompanied by strategic calculations of cost and profit which tend to bring the operations the habitus performs according to its own logic to the level of the conscious” (Bourdieu, Wacquant, 1992: 107). “Generating principle”, “open system of dispositions”... the habitus is confronted with, and affected by new experiences, thereby giving rise to improvised actions or creative actions.

Whatever the degree of individual consciousness attributed to individuals regarding the dispositions they can make use of, it should be stressed that the habitus tend to remain restive and recalcitrant. It is no doubt for this reason that Bourdieu is likened to a thinker of reproduction (not to mention the reductive and therefore negative effects of a philosophy that is rich yet complex and no doubt not easily accessible, caused by the sometimes provocative

titles of some of his works, such as *Les Héritiers*, 1964 (with Passeron); *La Reproduction*, 1970 (with Passeron) or *La Noblesse d'Etat* (1989). The habitus possesses the characteristic of protecting and preserving itself. In this respect, it operates according to a “unifying” principle. The earliest experiences (or original social conditions) involved in the formation of the structures that generate preferences – that make up the habitus – form a particularly selective system of categories of perception and appreciation (“schemes”) that tends to privilege recognition of that which is “close” or “already experienced,” and to keep things that are new or challenge the initial system of experience at a distance. A little like psychologists proposing to explain the reduction of cognitive dissonance by forgetting those things that do not fit with prior acquisitions, by the process known as rationalization (Festinger, 1957). In this way, the habitus “shelters itself from crises and critical questioning [...]”. It provides for its own consistency and its own defense against change through the selection it makes between new items of information, rejecting, in the event of fortuitous or forced exposure, the information capable of challenging the information it has accumulated, and above all discouraging exposure to such information (Bourdieu, 1980: 90-91, 100-102). In this way, the habitus ensures the maintenance and regularity of conduct, and as such it is a *unifier*.

Mobilizing the habitus can therefore help to analyze practical institutional action – an apparently and deliberately individual action which nevertheless includes a share of social unthought – when it concerns micro-individual action in relation to the structure of the organization (meso) and the field (macro). This conception of action therefore brings together several levels of analysis which are often studied separately in neo-institutionalist research. The habitus brings us to think about the social element in any individual’s organizational action. In the course of their socialization (in the family, at school, at work...) individuals come to possess something which could be regarded as a form of institutional DNA.

Given the specific forms of conditioning within “a particular class of living conditions”, an individual possesses a particular institutional combination which both shapes their vision of the world and is at the centre of their creative actions. We can say then that the individual, as an undeniable product of a process of institutionalization (and, in this respect, an embodied institution) but not without the ability to think and to act, includes even in their most deliberate and thought-out actions a share of institutional unthought which is projected in their actions and inspires them (reified institutions). In other words, behind even the most “strategic” thought lies, necessarily, an institutional motive of which the agent is not fully conscious but which marks the action experienced by the individual as an illusion of full and complete freedom and of rational decisions. In this respect, the habitus provides precious support, when episodes of institutional disturbance are being considered, by allowing questions to be raised about the role of the protagonists’ personal dispositions in deinstitutionalization and reinstitutionalization, and thus making it possible to plunge into the heart of the institutional fabric.

### **Objectifying resources: structure of capitals in the institutional portfolio**

Breaking with the antihistoricity of economic interest conceived as universal and natural, the *interest* in the general theory of the field and habitus is plural, cultural and contingent, “there is not one interest but interests, variable in time and place, almost infinitely [...] there are as many interests as there are fields, like historically-formed playing fields with their specific institutions and their own operating laws” (1984b, 24-25). Interest is therefore specifically conditioned by the working of a field, meaning that from one field to another, everyone is not chasing after the same things, everyone is not competing or struggling with their neighbor for the same reasons. To simplify things a little, if the

differences in interests from one field to another were to be outlined, it could be said that the interest of the businessman (competition for economic gain) is not the same as that of a man of the church (salvation and spiritual purity), or that the interest of the soldier (honor, sacrifice and courage) differs from that of the academic (intellectual improvement through knowledge and the transmission of knowledge). A given organizational field (i.e. communication consulting field) can be a space of “competitive logics” (Lounsbury, 2007; Thornton and Ocasio, 2008, 1999). To consider interest solely from the point of view of economism, is to accept that forms of interest be neglected which, in the worst case, will go unnoticed, and in the “best” case will be perceived as being disinterested, gratuitous or even pointless and without economic foundation. There can be no investment or commitment to a field without an interest for the specific issues of the field in question : “investment is the inclination to act, engendered in the relation between a playing field offering certain issues (what I call a field), and a system of dispositions adapted to this game (what I call a habitus), with a sense of the game and the issues implying both the inclination and the ability to play the game, to take an interest in the game and to get involved in the game” (1980: 33-35).

To account for the multiple forms of investments and profits made, resources (capitals) must therefore be deployed in all the forms at the disposal of the individual. Capital can come in many shapes. I will present four main ones here, which are those most often encountered in the works of Bourdieu: economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital. These different forms of capital are irreducible to each other, although often closely related, and form what I should call an *institutional portfolio*, the structure of which is unevenly distributed according to the classes of individuals.

*Economic capital* as defined by Bourdieu differs somewhat from capital as conceived by the economists. The expression refers not only to the assets – all the material goods possessed by an individual, such as an apartment, house, jewelry, shares or bonds, real estate

property such as land or forests... - but also income from work or these assets, as this provides for a certain standard of living, or even building up or rebuilding of personal assets.

*Cultural capital* or informational capital is broken down into three forms: 1. Its *incorporated state*, meaning in the form of durable dispositions of the organism (for example, ways of doing things, such as dressing, receiving guests, setting a table, table manners...; and also ways of saying things, such as introducing oneself, expressing thanks, regrets, forgiveness, using appropriate polite expressions...). 2. Its *objectified state* in the form of material cultural goods such as books, encyclopedias, furniture, paintings, works of art or even listed monuments... 3. its *institutionalized state*, mainly school qualifications and diplomas, a “certificate of cultural competence which confers on its holder a conventional, constant, legally guaranteed value with respect to power” (1979).

*Social capital* comprises all the current or potential resources of an individual or group due to the fact that they have a durable network of more-or-less institutionalized relations, acquaintances and mutual recognition; in other words, it is the sum of the capital and power that can be mobilized by belonging to a network or a group of individuals that is not only endowed with common properties, but is also united by durably maintained ties (even if some may be inherited: family relations) and useful ties of a nature to procure material or symbolic benefits. Belonging to socially exclusive clubs such as the Polo Club, Racing Club, Automobile Club de France, Yacht Club... is a rather good illustration of what social capital or “having relations” can mean.

*Symbolic capital* is without doubt the most complex type of capital to grasp. Symbolic capital is the form taken by any of the previous three forms of capital (economic, cultural or social) when it is denied and symbolically transfigured to be rendered acceptable and therefore endure in the “arbitrariness of its possession and accumulation”. For example, in *Le sens pratique* (1980), Bourdieu points out that the principle of the pre-capitalist (or archaic)



economy resides in the fact that “economic action cannot explicitly recognize the economic ends towards which it is objectively oriented” (1980: 193). Thus, “In an economy which is defined by the refusal to recognize the ‘objective’ truth of ‘economic’ practices, that is, the law of ‘naked’ self and selfish calculation, even ‘economic’ capital cannot act unless it succeeds in being recognized through a conversion that can render unrecognizable the true principle of its efficacy. Symbolic capital is this denied capital, recognized as legitimate capital, which is to say misrecognized as capital [...] which is, along with religious capital, the *only possible form of accumulation* when economic capital is not recognized” (1980: 200).

The specific combination of the resources previously listed and held by the individual in variable proportions in the form of what I call an *institutional portfolio*, can help shed light on the singular nature of institutional entrepreneurs’ dispositions or, to put it differently, objectify the components of their “social skill” (Fligstein, 1997, 2001) resulting in their commitment to initiatives of institutional transformation. Relating the combination of these resources to the structure of the field enables us to note that there is no such thing as an institutional entrepreneur endowed with indeterminate “social skill” as research seems to suggest. There is, however, a significant variation in the distribution of resources resulting in the disposition to act and the meaning of this disposition is only clear when related to the structure of the field. In other words, an observer pressed for time can see that institutional initiatives have something to do with the freedom of action of talented and charismatic individuals. Our aim is to qualify this view. One cannot ignore the fact that the disposition to engage in institutional initiatives is also and above all a product of the history of socialized individuals whose specific socialization echoes more or less the evolution or the history of the field and that the alignment of individual dispositions with the structure of the field favours a commitment to the institutional fabric.

## CONCLUSION

As we have attempted to show in this article, Pierre Bourdieu's theory of field and habitus fits harmoniously into the neo-institutionalist theoretical framework, thus contributing in an original and stimulating way to deepening the notion of "social skill" put forward by Fligstein (1997, 2001). Indeed, the approach, via resources, that we put forward can make a relevant contribution to the institutionalist research whose aim is to reach a better understanding of institutional work. The institutional work carried out by institutional entrepreneurs is made newly intelligible through the habitus and the objectification of resources within an institutional portfolio essentially made up of symbolic, economic, social and cultural capitals.

By using the institutional portfolio to analyze institutional creation or revision present in a given organizational field, we can thus objectify the components of what constitutes the ability to act. But above all, its differential structure, depending on various classes of individuals, in relation to the transformation of the structure of a given organizational field at various times in its history (especially in times of crisis or tension), enables us to grasp the evolution of the type of resources which provide the greatest legitimacy in the field: in other words to account precisely for the institutional foundations of change at the individual level without losing sight of the field.

From a practical point of view, this approach can contribute to clarifying the effects of opportunity resulting from the transformation of some organizational fields. In certain conditions, particularly those of structural disturbance preceding transformations at variable degrees, the field opens out (temporarily), allowing at least two forms of movements:

1. *The entry of new types of individuals into the field.* Indeed, the structural disturbance can help to modify – and not lower – the “barriers” for newcomers (candidates) who are often the youngest, creating opportunities for applicants with non-orthodox profiles.

2. *Mobility within the field.* For the agents already present in the field but who have long held subordinate positions on the grounds of non-accordance with orthodoxy, i.e. a question of social un-skill which has nothing to do with the technical skill required for a particular job, disturbance can create the conditions for remobilization in the sense of professional motivation driven by a likelihood of promotion.

Objectifying the structure of the field at key stages of its history and relating it to the structure of all the kinds of resources held by the agents in the field can reveal the most favourable circumstances in one type of combination or portfolio of resources rather than another. We sense here the advantage there would be for young people unfamiliar with a field in getting to know the traditional “conditions of resources” so as to gain access to them and to the opportunities resulting from disturbance in the field. A utopian scenario would consist in mapping out a set of organizational fields coveted by students in business schools like finance, strategy consultancy... in order to reveal their specific logic and their implicit sophisticated rules, concealed more or less subtly behind declarations such as “welcoming and encouraging all young talents wherever they come”. This could have the effect of revealing the possible or probable “mechanisms” of transformation of fields for the benefit of all the uninitiated.

## REFERENCES

- Austin, J. L., (1991), *Quand dire c'est faire*, Paris, Seuil.
- Barley, R., Tolbert, P. S., (1997), « Institutionalization and Structuration : Studying the Links between Action and Institution », *Organization Studies*, 18/1, pp. 93-117.
- Battilana, J., (2006), « Agency and Institutions: The Enabling Role of Individuals' Social Position », *Organization*, 13, 5, pp. 653-676.
- Berger, P., Luckman, T. (1996 éd. fr., 1966), *La construction sociale de la réalité*, Armand Colin.
- Bourdieu, P., (1979), « Le capital culturel », *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, n°30, pp.3-5.
- (1980), *Le sens pratique*, Paris, Editions de Minuit.
  - (1984), *Questions de sociologie*, Paris, Editions de Minuit.
  - (1984b), *Economies et Sociétés*, cahiers de l'ISMEA, n°2, PUG, pp. 24-25.
  - avec Wacquant, L. J.-D., (1992), *Réponses*, Paris, Seuil.
  - (1997), *Les méditations pascaliennes*, Paris, Seuil.
- Brint, S., Karabel, J., (1989), *The Diverted Dream : Community Colleges and the Promise of Educational Opportunity in America, 1900-1985*, New York, Oxford University Press.
- (1991), "Institutional Origins and Transformations : The Case of American Community Colleges", pp. 337-360, in Powell, W., et DiMaggio, P. J., *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Campbell, J. L., (2004), *Institutional Change and Globalization*, Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford.
- Dacin, T., Goodstein, J., Scott, R., (2002), "Institutional Theory and Institutional Change : Introduction to The Special Research Forum", *Academy of Management Journal*, 45, 1, pp. 45-57.
- DiMaggio, P., (1988), "Interest and Agency in Institutional Theory" in *Institutional Patterns and Culture*, Zucker, L., (ed), Cambridge, MA : BallingerPublishing Company, pp. 3-22.
- Dorado, S., (2005), "Institutional Entrepreneurship, Partaking, and Convening", *Organization Studies*, 26, 3, pp. 385-414.
- Festinger, L., (1957), *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Fligstein, N., (1991), "The Structural Transformation of American Industry : An Institutional Account of the Causes of Diversification in the Largest Firms, 1919-1979", pp. 311-336, in Powell, W. et DiMaggio, P., (1991), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- (1997), "Social Skill and Institutional Theory", *The American Behavioral Scientist*, 40, 4, pp. 397-405.
  - (2001), "Social Skill and the Theory of Fields", *Sociological Theory*, 19, 2, pp. 105-125.
- Friedland, R., Alford, R. R., (1991), « Bringing Society Back In : Symbols, Practices, and Institutional Contradictions », pp. 232-263, in Powell, W. et DiMaggio, P., (1991), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

- Garud, R., Jain, S., Kumaraswamy, A., (2002), "Institutional Entrepreneurship in the Sponsorship of Common Technological Standards : The Case of Sun Microsystems and Java", *Academy of Management Journal*, 45, 1, pp. 196-214.
- Garud, R., Hardy, C., Maguire, S., (2007), "Institutional Entrepreneurship as Embedded Agency: An Introduction to The Special Issue", *Organization Studies*, 28, pp. 957-969.
- Greenwood, R., Hinings, C. R., (1996), "Understanding Radical Organizational Change: Bringing together the Old and the New Institutionalism", *The Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 21, No. 4, pp. 1022-1054
- Greenwood, R., Suddaby, R., Hinings, C. R., (2002), "Theorizing Change: The Role of Professional Associations in The Transformation of Institutionalized Fields", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 45, N° 1, pp. 58-80.
- Greenwood, R., Suddaby, R., (2006), "Institutional Entrepreneurship in Mature Fields: The Big Five Accounting Firms", *Academy of Management Journal*, 49, 1, pp. 27-48.
- Hirsch, P. M., Lounsbury, M., (1997), "Ending the Family Quarrel, Toward a Reconciliation of "Old" and "New" Institutionalisms", *The American Behavioral Scientist*, 40, 4, pp. 406-418.
- Jepperson, R. L., (1991), « Institutions, Institutional Effects, and Institutionalism », pp. 143-163, in Powell, W. et DiMaggio, P., (ed), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Lawrence, T. B., (2008), "Power, Institutions and Organizations", in Greenwood, R., Oliver, C., Sahlin, K. and Roy Suddaby, *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism*, Sage, pp. 170-197.
- Leca, B., Naccache, P., (2006), "A Critical Realist Approach to Institutional Entrepreneurship", *Organization*, 13, 5, pp. 627-651.
- Levy, D.; Scully, M., (2007), "The Institutional Entrepreneur as Modern Prince: The Strategic Face of Power in Contested Fields", *Organization Studies*, 28, 7, pp. 971-991
- Lounsbury, M., (2001), "Institutional Sources of Practice Variation: Staffing College and University Recycling Programs", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 46, 1, pp. 29-56.
- , (2007), "A Tale of Two Cities : Competing Logics and Practice Variation in the Professionalizing of Mutual Funds", *Academy of Management Journal*, 50, 2, pp. 289-307.
- Maguire, S., Hardy, C., Lawrence, T.B., (2004), "Institutional Entrepreneurship in Emerging Fields : HIV/AIDS treatment advocacy in Canada", *Academy of Management Journal*, 47, pp. 657-679.
- March, J.G., Simon, H.A., (1958), *Organizations*, New York, Wiley.
- Meyer, J. W., Rowan, B., (1977), "Institutional organizations: formal structure as myth and ceremony", *American Journal of Sociology*, 83, pp. 340-363.
- Munir, A. K., (2005), "The Social Construction of Events : A Study of Institutional Change in the Photographic Field", *Organization Studies*, 26, 1, pp. 93-112.
- Oliver, C., (1992), "The Antecedents of Deinstitutionalization", *Organization Studies*, 13/4, pp. 563-588.
- Perkmann, M., Spicer, A., (2007), "Healing the Scars of History': Projects, Skills and Field Strategies in Institutional Entrepreneurship", *Organization Studies*, 28, 7, pp. 1101-1122.
- Phillips, N., (2003), "Power, Discourse and Institutions : Institutional Theory and the Challenge of Critical Discourse Analysis", in Clegg, S. & Weswood, R. (eds), *Central Debates in Organization Theory*, London, Routledge, pp. 220-231.

- Phillips, N., Lawrence, T. B., Hardy C., (2004), "Discourse and Institutions", *Academy in Management Journal*, 29, 4, pp. 635-652.
- Powell, W.W., (1991), "Expanding The Scope of Institutional Analysis", in Powell, W. & DiMaggio, P., (eds), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 183-203.
- Powell, W. W., DiMaggio, P. J., (1983), "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields", *American Sociological Review*, 48, 2, pp. 147-160.
- Scott, W. R., (1994), "Conceptualizing Organizational Fields : linking Organizations and Societal Systems", in Hans-Ulrich Derlien & al. (eds), *Systemrationalitat und Partial Interesse*, Baden-Baden, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, pp. 203-221.
- (1998), *Organizations. Rational, Natural and Open Systems*, Fourth Edition, Prentice Hall.
  - (2001), *Institutions and Organizations*, Second Edition, Sage.
- Selznick, P., (1949, ed. 1984), *TVA and the Grass Roots, a Study of Politics and Organization*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press.
- (1957, ed. 1984), *Leadership in Administration: a Sociological Interpretation*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press.
- Seo, M.G., Creed, W., (2002), "Institutional contradictions, praxis, and institutional change: A dialectical perspective", *The Academy of Management review*, 27, 2, pp. 222-247.
- Sewell, W.H. Jr., (1992), "A Theory of Structure : Duality, Agency and Transformation", *American Journal of Sociology*, 98, pp. 1-29.
- Stinchcombe, A. L., (1997), "On the Virtues of the Old Institutionalism", *Annual review of Sociology*, 23, 1, pp. 1-18.
- Suddaby, R., Greenwood, R., (2001), "Colonizing Knowledge: Commodification as a Dynamic of Jurisdictional Expansion in Professional Service Firms", *Human Relations*, 54, 7, pp. 933-953.
- Suddaby, R., Greenwood, R., (2005), "Rhetorical Strategies of Legitimacy", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 50, pp. 35-67.
- Thornton, P. H., Ocasio, W., (2008), "Institutional Logics", in Greenwood, R., Oliver, C., Sahlin, K. and Roy Suddaby, *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism*, Sage, pp. 99-129.
- , (1999), "Institutional logics and the historical contingency of power in organizations: Executive succession in the higher education publishing industry, 1958-1990", *American Journal of Sociology*, 62, 3, pp. 290-301.
- Townley, B., (2002), "The Role of Competing Rationalities in Institutional Change", *Academy of Management Journal*, 45, 1, pp. 163-179.
- Wooten, M., Hoffman, A. J., (2008), "Organizational Fields: Past, Present and Future", in Greenwood, R., Oliver, C., Sahlin, K. and Roy Suddaby, *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism*, Sage, pp. 130-148.
- Zucker, L. G., (1977), "The Role of Institutionalization in Cultural Persistence", *American Sociological Review*, 42, pp. 726-743.
- , (1991), "The Role of Institutionalization in Cultural Persistence", Powell, W. & DiMaggio, P., (eds), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.