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Kerstin SAHLIN-ANDERSSON,
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Institutional Theory in Organization Studies
Los Angelos: SAGE Publications

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This five-volume set is an impressive collection of 57 reprinted journal articles and book chapters that have shaped or are expected to shape the evolution of scholarly thinking about the institutional perspective in organization studies. Given the richness and diversity of the conceptual and empirical writing that could potentially sit within the tent of organizational institutionalism, the selection of papers for such a collection is not an easy task. Some, like the seminal works of Meyer and Rowan, DiMaggio and Powell, Lynne Zucker and Dick Scott, are no-brainers. The selection of other papers is more challenging due to the proliferation of excellent institutional papers from the 1990s coupled with the blurring of the tent as concepts from different streams of organizational scholarship were stretched, borrowed and blended.

The editors have done an admirable job of meeting this challenge by defining their focus and criteria for inclusion. The focus of the collection is on how the institutional context affects 'the behaviour of organizations and how organizations impact on institutional developments' (p.xviii). The editors state in the introduction that they are interested in the institutional perspective and 'deliberately are not calling it a theory' (p.xvii). The criteria for a paper's inclusion were number of citations, citation trajectory, and representativeness of the patterns in the evolution of organizational institutionalism as a field of scholarly inquiry. The editors acknowledge the use of greater subjectivity for papers published after 2005, which have shorter citation histories. However, the editors are also authors of some of the most influential papers in organizational institutionalism in the past two decades based on citations and best paper awards. Their combined expertise lends credibility to their claim that their choices 'provide exciting and emerging "new directions" of institutional scholarship' (p.xviii).

The content of the collection is organized into five volumes which trace the evolution of thinking about the relationships between organizations and institutions and which group influential papers together into core areas of conceptual emphasis. Volume I covers the beginnings and subsequent elaborations of the institutional perspective. It pairs four seminal works—rational myths (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), isomorphism in organizational fields (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), cultural persistence (Zucker, 1977), and societal
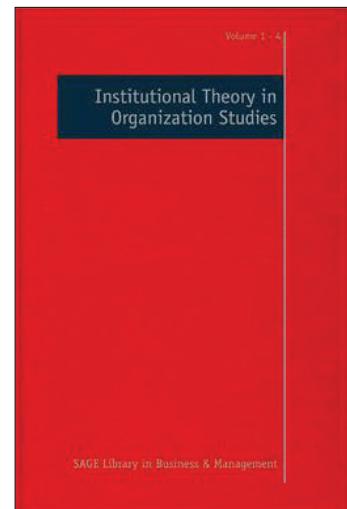
sectors (Scott & Meyer, 1992)—with eight papers that subsequently elaborate elements of organizational institutionalism. These elaborations include Scott's (1987) Administrative Science Quarterly piece on the adolescence of institutional theory, DiMaggio and Powell's (1991) introduction to their edited book New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis, and Oliver's (1991) article in Academy of Management Review on strategic responses to institutional analysis.

Volume II groups together two themes that have long been of interest to institutional scholars: legitimacy (four papers) and questions of isomorphism and diffusion (11 papers). Not surprisingly, the legitimacy section opens with Suchman's (1995) classic piece delineating strategic and institutional forms of legitimacy and includes Aldrich and Fiol's (1994) conceptual paper on the effect of legitimacy on entrepreneurs in new industries. The isomorphism and diffusion section shows the broadening of scholarly thinking about how structures, practices and ideas diffuse and travel to new organizational settings by juxtaposing a wonderful mix of papers by authors such as Pam Tolbert, Gerry Davis, James Westphal, Frank Dobbin, Lauren Edelman and David Strang and Scandinavian institutionalists Barbara Czarniawska and Bernward Joerges.

Volumes III and IV represent the burgeoning research areas of logics and language (six papers) and institutional entrepreneurship and change (four papers in Volume III and nine papers in Volume IV). These volumes combine core papers that spawned new thinking about institutional logics nesting at different levels of society, field and organization (Friedland & Alford, 1991) and structuration as the link between action, discourse and institutions (Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2004) with rich empirical papers on institutional change in settings as diverse as accounting, higher education publishing, AIDS advocacy, radio broadcasting, art museums, and French cuisine.

Volume V rounds out the collection with reflections and comments by John Meyer, Dick Scott and Art Stinchcombe followed by a section titled 'New Directions?', with the question mark signalling the subjectivity of the editors' selections. The eight papers offer several paths that the new directions in organizational institutionalism might follow: institutional work, practice perspectives, microfoundations of institutional processes, responses to multiple institutional demands, and geographic communities as units of analysis. While one might quibble over some of the specific papers chosen, the broad paths the papers sketch seem reasonable directions for future research.

Overall, this five-volume work will be a valuable addition to university libraries as a resource for doctoral students in both sociology and management and organization studies and for scholars wanting a single access site for key book chapters and journal articles on the subject of organizational institutionalism. While its price may prevent institutional scholars from purchasing the set for their private libraries, it is worth noting that the five-volume set offers more than a convenient repository of papers reproduced exactly as they were first published. Taken as a whole, the collection represents influential thinking published at different moments in time in the evolution of organizational institutionalism as a field of scholarly inquiry. Thus, the collection offers important insight into the social construction of institutional approaches to organization studies.

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