

ISTR Eighth International Conference
Barcelona, Spain
July 9-12, 2008

Proposal for a Panel:

Philanthropic Projections: Sending Institutional Logics Abroad

By philanthropic projection we mean the effort to spread ideas and practices by means of the donation of money, goods, human effort, and ideas. This panel will focus on such projections through efforts to move of models for the organization of activities such as medical care, education, advocacy, social improvement, conflict resolution, cultural expression from one part of the world to another. By institutional logics we mean organizational arrangements for putting ideas into action and for sustaining patterns of social relationships. The idea of institutional logics deserves consideration. It expresses the understanding that ideas, organizational forms, and social contexts are linked in ways that have both internal and external effects. It indicates that organizational forms carry with them, both explicitly and implicitly, both intentionally and otherwise, attributes and qualities that bear the imprint of their place of origin. It permits us to think about organizations and organizational flows across national boundaries in ways that are, on one hand, patterned, but on the other hand differ significantly from one particular organization, and organizational sector, to another. We can thus use the notion of institutional logics to tease out the particularities that create meaningful variation among otherwise general processes like the globalization of certain ways to organize civil society groups, humanitarian relief missions, or community foundations.

Organizations, in this sense, are the hermit crabs of globalization—flexible ideas that reside within portable structures. They scabble across national borders and drop their shells in remote settings where local inhabitants may find entirely new uses for a familiar form. There is a logic to the structure of a shell, but the structure leaves open multiple possibilities for how it might be used. In the process, the hermit crab finds a home from locally available materials. How actors that create and inhabit organizations think about what they are doing, understand what constitutes the available set of acceptable or legitimate ways to organize an activity, and imagine what they are trying to accomplish are thus all components of an institutional logic. In other terms, many actors *seek* to project institutional logics across borders, but local realities determine whether the projection can happen, how the projected logic is changed and used, and the terms on which it may become part of a local community and polity.

All participants in the proposal were involved, as committee members of fellows, with the Committee on Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector of the U.S. Social Science Research Council in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

The organizers of this proposed panel, David C. Hammack of the Department of History and the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations at Case Western Reserve University, and Steven Heydemann, now of the U.S. Institute of Peace, will provide an overview of the entire project based on the introductory essay they are writing for a volume of the same title, to be published in 2008 by Indiana University Press.

Other participants on the panel have contributed essays to the project and the volume. Their names, positions, and paper titles are as follows:

Sada Aksartova (Ph.D. in Sociology, Princeton University), currently a Fellow of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

Promoting Civil Society or Diffusing NGOs? U.S. Donors in the Former Soviet Union

Elizabeth Bloodgood (Ph.D. in International Relations, Department of Politics, Princeton University), Assistant Professor of Political Science, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada)

The Political Logic of Institutional Adaptation: NGOs' Strategies Abroad.

Sandra Moog (Ph.D. in Sociology, University of California – Berkeley)
Department of Sociology, Univ of Essex, United Kingdom,

Exporting Institutional Logics into the Amazon? American and German Efforts to Protect the Ecosystem and Traditional Peoples of the Amazon Basin.

Jonathan VanAntwerpen (Ph.D. in Sociology, University of California – Berkeley),
Program Officer, Project on Religion and Transnational Affairs, Social Science Research Council, New York, NY.

Moral Globalization and Discursive Struggle: Reconciliation, Transitional Justice and Cosmopolitan Discourse.

We recognize that ISTR sessions provide limited time. All proposed participants in this panel have experience in working together in making presentations under time constraints, and we would make sure to complete all remarks and allow time for some discussion.

We could cite a very large range of relevant references; the following are merely illustrative:

John Boli and George M. Thomas, eds., *Constructing World Culture: International Non-Governmental Organizations Since 1875* (Stanford University Press, 1999).

Adalbert Evers, Jean-Louis Laville *The Third Sector in Europe* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., 2004).

Meyer, John W., and Brian Rowan. 1991 [1977]. "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony." Pp. 41-62 in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, edited by Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Scott, James C. 1998. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Strang, David, and John W. Meyer. 1993. "Institutional Conditions for Diffusion." *Theory and Society* 22 (4): 487-511.

Philanthropic Projections: Sending Institutional Logics Abroad

Proposed Order, Participants, and Paper Abstracts

David C. Hammack and Stevey Heydemann:

Introduction to Session

Sada Aksartova, *Promoting Civil Society or Diffusing NGOs? U.S. Donors in the Former Soviet Union*

My paper analyzes US civil society assistance for post-Soviet Russia and Kyrgyzstan. Since the early 1990s, civil society assistance provided by public and private American donor organizations has centered on promoting the development of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and resulted in the creation of thousands of post-Soviet NGOs. I argue that US civil society assistance is a mechanism for diffusing the organizational and cultural form of the professional NGO to receiving societies and that, more generally, donors are important, but under-appreciated, agents behind the worldwide diffusion of Western organizational and cultural models. The donor-driven diffusion aims at imposing a familiar conceptual order on an unfamiliar institutional and cultural terrain. When US donors first set foot in the former Soviet Union, the organization of post-Soviet society was illegible to them. Populating the post-Soviet terrain with familiar organizational forms has made it more legible and created clients for donors' funds. After more than a decade of assistance, American donors became institutionalized having established a universe of post-Soviet NGOs vying for their continuing support. At the same time, although NGOs appear natural to US donors, they represent an institutional form unfamiliar to post-Soviet society and their activities are determined by donors' preferences and priorities.

Elizabeth Bloodgood, *The Political Logic of Institutional Adaptation: NGOs' Strategies Abroad.*

The means by which NGOs seek to influence governments' policies and practices are at the heart of their ability to exert power in international politics. These tactics and strategies are crafted to maximize the use of their limited resources and, as a result, must take careful account of the institutional frameworks within which they operate. The problem facing international NGOs is that sets of tactics designed for one political setting may be inappropriate in another. This paper examines the fit of NGO institutions and strategies to the governmental decision-making forums in which they operate and the effect of transplanting these logics to new settings when NGOs expand their operations abroad. To address the question of whether NGOs can adapt their institutional logics to different contexts, or if they are bound by their standard operating procedures, I examine the operations of Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth in their climate change campaigns in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, and Japan.

Sandra Moog, *Exporting Different Institutional Logics into the Amazon? American and German Efforts to Protect the Ecosystems and Traditional Peoples of the Amazon Basin*

After a first flush of scholarly enthusiasm about the rise of a new kind of “global civil society,” brought about by the increased power and scope of action of transnationally active NGOs and social movements in the post-cold war world, scholars recently have begun to pay closer attention to significant power inequities among different civic actors within the global public arena. Which kinds of organizations are able to attract organizational support and funding? Which ones are given voice in international fora? In other words, how is the institutionalization of the global NGO scene determining whose voices are making it into the new transnational public sphere? And what are the sources of power underlying that institutionalization?

While many scholars express concerns that Northern voices often dominate at the expense of Southern voices within global civil society, concerns about the particular role of American voices and U.S. interests have become increasingly common within this literature in the last few years. But is there a peculiarly “American” institutional logic that is coming to dominate within the transnational public sphere? If so, what might this institutional logic look like? This paper looks comparatively at the very different ways in which the movement to protect the Amazon Rainforest has been institutionalized within the United States and Germany, two countries which experienced extraordinary levels of popular mobilization around this issue in the late 1980s/early 1990s. It explores why it is that U.S. NGOs have played a much more important role in actively engaging with, and helping to shape, the institutional development of the NGO scene within the Amazon Basin countries themselves. It explores what kind of interests and political visions American NGOs have carried into their work in the Amazon, how these have differed from the perspectives of similar groups in Germany, and whether we can indeed identify the contours of a dominant “American institutional logic” in this sector of the American NGO scene.

Jonathan VanAntwerpen, *Moral Globalization and Discursive Struggle: Reconciliation, Transitional Justice, and Cosmopolitan Discourse*

When South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) set out to assess the politically motivated crimes of that nation’s apartheid past, it represented “truth” as “the road to reconciliation.” Following the South African commission, and in the midst of global celebration and critique, the language of reconciliation has proliferated. The TRC has become an internationally heralded archetype, touted as a model for newly forming commissions even as international experts and consultants caution against uncritical attempts to reproduce it elsewhere. How has the discourse of reconciliation associated with the TRC been transformed in the midst of its institutional reproduction and transnational diffusion? As reconciliation discourse has been implicated in a process of “moral globalization,” how has it been reproduced and revised? In response to these questions, this paper examines cosmopolitan engagements with, and discursive struggles over, a transnational discourse of “reconciliation,” attending in particular to the work of prominent theorists of reconciliation and practitioners of transitional justice. Focusing on the multiple uses to which the concept of reconciliation has been put, I examine its articulation as a goal and a process, a religious ideal and a political necessity, a moral prescription and a social scientific variable.