

ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Recasting Organizational Hybridity: A New Approach to the Incompatibility of Institutional Logics Through the Higher Common Principle

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Abstract

In neo-institutional theory, the concept of organizational hybridity is characterized by the combination of institutional logics that 'would not conventionally go together,' as they are deemed incompatible. However, our study shows that this criterion of incompatibility between logics is not theoretically robust enough to discriminate situations of organizational hybridity, as it struggles to differentiate incompatible logics from simply different logics. In response, this article proposes a new approach to incompatibility between institutional logics by mobilizing the concept of a higher common principle derived from the economies of worth. Through the rereading of five empirical articles mobilizing the concept of hybridity, we demonstrate how the higher common principle provides a more restrictive way of operationalizing incompatibility between logics to qualify organizational hybrids more rigorously. This study ultimately leads us to recast the concept of organizational hybridity as the combination of mutually exclusive institutional logics based on strictly distinct higher common principles.

Keywords: *Organizational hybridity; Institutional logics; Higher common principle; Incompatibility between logics*

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Neo-institutional theory has long recognized the coexistence of various institutional logics (Greenwood et al., 2010; Kraatz & Block, 2008; Zilber, 2011) in environments described as institutionally complex (Greenwood et al., 2011; Ocasio & Radoynovska, 2016; Raynard, 2016). In this context, hybrid organizations are of particular interest, considering their ability to combine institutional logics 'that would not conventionally go together' (Battilana et al., 2017, p. 129). Singularized by its articulation of logics, organizational hybridity seems 'to run counter to the core proposition of neo-institutionalism' (Battilana et al., 2017, p. 128), centered on an unavoidable isomorphism, and reveals, on the contrary, complex and varied organizational models, freeing themselves from the sole economic logic. Hybridity thus typically takes the form of a combination between a business logic and a social logic, which can be found in microfinance organizations (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Cobb et al., 2016; Zhao & Wry, 2016), social enterprises (Ebrahim et al., 2014; Pache & Santos,

2013) or public institutions (Denis et al., 2015; Jay, 2013; Polzer et al., 2016). By allowing for a combination of economic imperatives and social purpose, hybridity is an economically sustainable organizational response to today's major societal and environmental challenges, such as global warming or growing economic inequalities (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020; Jay, 2013). Nevertheless, the academic community has started to question the ability of organizational hybridity to retain analytical relevance as a concept (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020; Pache & Thornton, 2020). Indeed, via its current definition, this concept encompasses a wide spectrum of organizations with diverse purposes and configurations (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020; Mitzinneck & Greco, 2021). The exponential development of empirical manifestations called hybrid seems to point out the inability of this theoretical field to maintain unity around structuring properties, which could enable distinguishing hybridity from other modalities of coexistence between logics. The criterion of logics 'that would not conventionally go together' is a

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particular example of latent ambiguity at a time when academic works emphasize multiple combinations of logics giving birth to hybridity. The specificity of hybridity lies *a priori* in the capacity of any actor – organization or individual – to intuitively apprehend some logics as particularly incompatible. While some articles have evoked the way in which hybridity can translate incompatibility into compatibility between logics (Glynn et al., 2020), the neo-institutional approach does not offer a precise theoretical basis to grasp this incompatibility between logics beforehand and rather simply states that they present contradictions that are difficult to combine (Raynard, 2016). On this basis, many studies do not theoretically or empirically demonstrate the incompatibility of the logics at stake to establish hybridity, thus questioning the relevance of grouping organizations with few similarities under the same label of hybrid organizations. At a time when most logics are presented as contradictory (Greenwood et al., 2011; Jay, 2013; Kraatz & Block, 2008; Raynard, 2016), this equivocality damages the very relevance of the concept of organizational hybridity.

In response to this issue, this article proposes a new way to operationalize the theoretical ground of incompatibility between institutional logics by mobilizing the concept of a higher common principle derived from the economies of worth (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991). The economies of worth, an institutional theory that complements the institutional logics' perspective (Brandl et al., 2014; Cloutier & Langley, 2013; Daudigeos & Valiorgue, 2010), put forward a range of six higher common principles as the basis of all sets of meanings shared by the actors. Posed as contradictory by definition, these higher common principles allow for the precise identification of the moral foundation(s) underlying each institutional logic (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991). By doing so, this approach makes it possible to identify institutional logics that refer to the same higher common principle – which are therefore deemed compatible – and logics that are mutually exclusive – which are then deemed incompatible. In this respect, the concept of a higher common principle contributes to operationalizing the incompatibility of logics in a more robust manner and, consequently, to strengthening organizational hybridity.

Through this approach, we revisit the analysis offered by five articles claiming to study situations of organizational hybridity, including the seminal article from Battilana and Dorado (2010). In this way, we demonstrate that our approach can either converge with or challenge the interpretation leading to the recognition of organizational hybridity. Hence, we illustrate the capacity of the higher common principles to operationalize in a rigorous and discriminating way the property of incompatibility of institutional logics to better qualify organizational hybrids.

The contributions of this article are threefold. First, this theoretical article pursues a research path initiated by Cloutier and Langley (2013) to explore the complementarity between

the institutional logics and the economies of worth through the lens of moral foundations of institutional logics. Additionally, we offer to clarify the concept of organizational hybridity through an operationalization of one of its properties – the incompatibility between institutional logics – distinguishing it from partially compatible or contradictory logics. On this basis, we propose a more restrictive definition of organizational hybridity that maintains the selective character of the concept, implying that not all organizations are hybrids. This redefinition effort allows us to highlight a new direction for future work on organizational hybridity, centered on the contextualized study of combinations of logics temporarily deemed incompatible.

Hybridity in neo-institutional theory: A concept on the rocks?

Organizational hybridity: From the promise to the derivation of the concept

Hybridity is a phenomenon subject to multiple conceptualization attempts in management science (Battilana et al., 2017), giving way to a fairly dominant appropriation of this notion by the institutional logics' perspective. This approach is based on the concept of logics, defined as the 'socially constructed, historical pattern of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality' (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, p. 804). Identifying distinct and multiple logics in diverse environments has led to the recognition of tensions and conflicts inherent to their coexistence (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Christensen & Lægveid, 2011; Ebrahim et al., 2014). Sidestepping this argument, Battilana and Dorado (2010, p. 1419) introduce the concept of organizational hybridity as 'organizations that combine institutional logics in unprecedented ways'. Acknowledging the ability of some organizations to combine elements that 'would not conventionally go together' (Battilana et al., 2017), the studies on hybridity thus highlight the distinctive dimension of organizations willing and able to articulate institutional injunctions that are nevertheless perceived as contradictory. In other words, hybridity runs counter to 'the core proposition of neo-institutionalism,' emphasizing isomorphic dynamics (Battilana et al., 2017, p. 128), to recognize the capacity of some organizations to actively and jointly mobilize multiple meaning systems.

Empirically, authors particularly emphasize the delicate articulation between a social logic, advocating the resolution of social problems, and a business logic, celebrating economic performance (Glynn et al., 2020; Pache & Thornton, 2020). Once understood as competing (Friedland & Alford, 1991), these logics are depicted as combined in the social economy

sector (e.g., Ebrahim et al., 2014; Pache & Santos, 2013), including microfinance enterprises (e.g., Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Cobb et al., 2016; Zhao & Wry, 2016), social enterprises (e.g., Battilana & Lee, 2014; Doherty et al., 2014; Ebrahim et al., 2014; Mair et al., 2015), and benefit corporations (e.g., Battilana & Lee, 2014; Doherty et al., 2014; Ebrahim et al., 2014; Mair et al., 2015) or public and parapublic organizations subject to managerialism (e.g., Christensen & Lægveid, 2011; Fossetol et al., 2015; Gebreiter & Hidayah, 2019; Vickers et al., 2017). On this basis, the academic community recognizes the value of the concept of hybridity to characterize organizational approaches oriented toward solving complex economic, social, and environmental challenges (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020; Cristofini, 2021; Hahn, 2020; Mair & Rathert, 2020).

However, other empirical configurations are also recognized as hybrid situations (Pache & Thornton, 2020), hence growing the field of application of this concept. As noted by Besharov and Smith (2020, p. 6), the identification of a social or environmental logic no longer appears to be essential to characterize hybridity: 'most studies tend to focus on hybridity involving two constituent elements, typically a market or commercial element combined with some "other" element that is at least distinct from, if not at odds with, the market.' Additionally, several articles report hybrid organizations combining other types of logics: in industry, mixing manufacturing logic and cultural goods logic (Dalpiaz et al., 2016); in journalism, articulating traditional journalistic logic and open innovation logic (Lewis, 2012); in the biotech sector, linking scientific logic and market logic (Powell & Sandholtz, 2012); or in Islamic finance, combining religious logic with financial logic (Boone & Özcan, 2016; Gümüşay et al., 2020b). These examples reveal nuances in the way logics are characterized, sometimes pertaining to an emblematic institution on a societal scale, such as religion or the market, and sometimes to professional specificities of a sector of activity. From then, the logics giving birth to organizational hybridity can be anchored at two levels, the sector and the society, unveiling an exponential potential for combinations. Similarly, the organization is no longer the only relevant level of analysis for hybridity: hybrid manifestations are progressively recognized at the individual (e.g., McGivern et al., 2015; Sirris, 2019; Spyridonidis & Currie, 2016) or sectoral (Ansari et al., 2013) levels. In the same vein, the work of Raynard (2016) goes so far as to consider that at a time when most organizations are facing complex environments, the majority of them can be considered 'structural hybrids' (Raynard, 2016). Hybridity would then characterize a common phenomenon, a consequence of pervasive institutional complexity (Raynard, 2016).

This growing and pervasive use of the concept of hybridity raises questions about its value: 'research on hybridity has reached the point that skeptics might question the concept's analytical value, as a multitude of organizations can be

characterized as hybrid' (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020, p. 4). Although the exponential development of hybrid events cannot be defied, we consider it more problematic that recent works do not systematically demonstrate the adequacy between the concept of hybridity and the cases studied. Indeed, as Besharov and Mitzinneck (2020) argue, most of these studies confine themselves to identifying two distinct logics for the case studied – logics that have often already been identified as giving birth to organizational hybrids in previous works. However, the identification of institutional logics similar to those previously mentioned in the literature may seem insufficient to properly characterize hybridity for the specific case studied. Similarly, literature reviews on organizational hybridity regularly cite articles that do not purposefully mobilize this concept (e.g., Battilana et al., 2017; Pache & Thornton, 2020); the articles are quoted *a posteriori* to illustrate hybridity, without having demonstrated the relevancy of this concept for the original empirical data collected. However, according to Battilana et al.'s (2017, p. 129) definition, the specificity of hybridity lies precisely in the divergences between logics that 'would not conventionally go together,' the demonstration of which is currently lacking in many works. Consequently, we question the capacity of this theoretical field to preserve homogeneity around structuring properties, allowing us to dissociate hybridity from other modalities of coexistence between logics. Our analysis thus reveals a tendency toward a rather vague, sometimes almost incantatory, use of the concept of hybridity and questions the way in which recent works have mobilized this concept. In the following section, we propose to return to a fundamental property of the concept of organizational hybridity: characterizing institutional logics that 'would not conventionally go together.'

The incompatibility between logics: A distinctive feature of hybridity that remains ambiguous

The neo-institutional literature reports a large number of logics that have been described as contradictory (e.g., Greenwood et al., 2011; Jay, 2013; Kraatz & Block, 2008), incompatible (e.g., Battilana & Lee, 2014; Glynn et al., 2020; Gümüşay et al., 2020b; Smith & Besharov, 2017; York et al., 2016), or conflicting (e.g., Pache & Santos, 2010; Purdy & Gray, 2009; Saueremann & Stephan, 2013), which complicates the identification of what might not go together conventionally. Fueling this vagueness, the literature on hybridity and paradoxes multiplies metaphors, sometimes evoking 'by nature arenas of contradiction' (Pache & Santos, 2013, p. 972) or 'unity of opposites' (Schad et al., 2016, p. 37; cited in Gümüşay et al., 2020b). According to Battilana and Dorado (2017, p. 138), however, hybridity differentiates itself by its ability to 'violate institutionalized rules about what is appropriate or compatible.' Facing institutional complexity, hybridity is thus an organizational approach

distinguished both from adherence to a dominant logic and combination of elements perceived as potentially compatible. Incompatibility is specified in the literature as a situation where the prescriptions and prohibitions inherent in multiple logics are not easily combined or made coherent in practice (Greenwood et al., 2011; Raynard, 2016). Inconsistency between logics has thus far been pragmatically assessed by researchers in terms of the perceived degree of inconsistency between organizational actions promoted by distinct logics (Besharov & Smith, 2014). Many studies thus rely on the criterion of incompatibility of logics to account for situations of organizational hybridity (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Dorado, 2020; Glynn et al., 2020; Gümüşay et al., 2020b; York et al., 2016). Hence, the seminal definition of hybridity can be clarified by mentioning the incompatibility of institutional logics as a discriminating property.

Nevertheless, the criterion of the incompatibility of logics proves to be insufficient to operationalize the concept of organizational hybridity in a robust manner. The incompatibility of logics is simply indexed to combinatorial difficulty, without explaining what differentiates them from conflicting, contradictory, or simply distinct logics – which do not themselves correspond to precise definitions. In the absence of this conceptual clarification, recognizing hybridity as a combination of incompatible logics tends to define it ambivalently as a combination of logics that are difficult to combine. Even more troubling, some work conversely approaches hybridity as evidencing compatibility between distinct logics (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020; Besharov & Smith, 2014; Gümüşay et al., 2020b; Raynard, 2016), insofar as hybridity can result in a sustainable organizational form – thus leaving it unclear how discriminating incompatibility is when qualifying hybridity. This duality actually reflects the ambition of hybrid organizations to translate incompatibility into compatibility to gradually institutionalize their model (Glynn et al., 2020). From this perspective, a number of studies have focused on how organizations can orchestrate this transition from irreconcilable to reconcilable (e.g., Gümüşay et al., 2020b; Jay, 2013; Smith & Besharov, 2017) without first specifying what constitutes the theoretical ground of incompatibility. The authors' *in situ* assessment of inconsistency between organizational actions thus leaves unresolved the question of the very nature of their incompatibility. By relying on an ambivalent definition of (in)compatibility, these studies avoid going deeper into the nature of this opposition between logics, which could nevertheless shed light on the hybrid character of an organization.

While being flexible in the mobilization of incompatibility has allowed us to address a wide variety of situations as hybrid (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020), the lack of robust theoretical grounds for incompatibility between logics seems to run the risk of ending up as a catch-all concept in a context where institutional complexity is spreading (Raynard, 2016). In response

to this risk, we propose revisiting the theoretical grounds of the incompatibility between institutional logics as a distinctive property of hybridity: how do two institutional logics turn out to be incompatible? To answer this question, we propose a way of operationalizing the incompatibility between institutional logics by exploring the ideological oppositions on which these logics are based through the prism of the economies of worth.

The theoretical grounds of the incompatibility between logics: The contributions of the higher common principle

To explain the differences observed between logics, neo-institutional theory has developed the hypothesis of a respective anchor of each logic in one or more distinct institutional orders – or meta-logics. However, this approach faces operational and universalization challenges. We thus offer to call upon the economies of worth (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991) – also called the economies of convention or French pragmatic sociology.¹ As a complementary approach to organizational institutionalism (Cloutier & Langley, 2013), Boltanski and Thévenot's (1991) work provides a competing perspective to institutional orders through the concept of a higher common principle, which allows for a more refined explanation of divergences between logics. With this in mind, we propose a path of articulation between these theoretical frameworks and argue that an analysis of institutional logics from the perspective of their underlying higher common principles allows for a more robust and restrictive understanding of the incompatibility between logics.

The limits of neo-institutional theory to shed light on incompatibility between logics

To understand the nature of institutional logics and their oppositions, the seminal works of the field are based on the macrosystem formed by institutional orders (Friedland & Alford, 1991). According to Friedland and Alford (1991), the roots of institutionalization must be observed at the societal level rather than at the sectoral, organizational, or individual levels where logics are expressed. In other words, any professional logic present in a sector is anchored in taken-for-granted institutions at the societal level (Zucker, 1987), thus founding its ideological roots. In this continuum, seven institutional orders, representing the 'guiding principles of the society' (Thornton, 2004, p. 70), have been established (Thornton et al., 2012): family, religion, state, market, community, profession, and corporation. Making reference to one or more of these institutional

¹ For the remainder of this paper, we will use the term economies of worth, given our desire to focus this article on Boltanski and Thévenot's seminal 1991 work: 'On Justification. The Economies of Worth.'

orders, institutional logics reveal arrangements of values, symbols, and practices made temporarily legitimate due to historical contingency: logics thus intervene as an intermediary connecting institutional orders and individuals (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). Although the approach defended by Thornton et al. (2012) has been criticized for its normative and universal character (e.g., Friedland, 2017), most research on organizational hybridity has relied on these institutional orders. Therefore, in terms of hybridity, we could argue that the combined logics in hybrid organizations are based *a priori* on distinct institutional orders, thus explaining the inconsistencies observed. In their study of 20 articles on organizational hybridity, Pache and Thornton (2020) detail the logics described by the authors and systematically report the reference of logics to distinct institutional orders. This observation allows us to formulate the hypothesis that incompatibility between institutional logics is conditioned by the reference of these logics to distinct institutional orders.

If this approach is interesting to carry on our reflection on the incompatibility between logics, it has been criticized both for its lack of operationalization and its tendency to universalize the grounds of institutional logics. In practice, if 'scholars conducting studies using an institutional logics' perspective claim that the field-level logics they have identified inductively represent field-level instantiations of higher order societal logics, [...] the exact relationship between both is ambiguous at best' (Cloutier & Langley, 2013, p. 374). Indeed, the articulation between the different levels of logics (professional, sectoral or societal) is not clearly spelled out (Gümüşay et al., 2020a; Pache & Thornton, 2020), which raises difficulties in formally qualifying incompatibility. For example, in studies of organizational hybridity, it is difficult to clearly identify the institutional order(s) on which the social logic is based, even though this logic is frequently mobilized in this field. This institutional logic is associated *a posteriori* by Pache and Thornton (2020) with the institutional order of the State for all the articles analyzed, although this genealogy is not claimed by those articles. In Battilana and Dorado (2010), for example, the description of social logic explicitly refers not only to democratic participation (state order) but also to a commitment to the values of a collective and a belief in trust and reciprocity (community order). If the association of a social logic with an institutional order is not obvious, the multiplication of professional logics suggests increased difficulties in operationalizing the theoretical grounds of incompatibility between logics.

On the one hand, the understanding of incompatibility by institutional orders can also be thwarted by their lack of universality. Recent work has thus been critical of the representativeness of these institutional orders, which are based specifically on institutions firmly rooted in the Western world (Gümüşay et al., 2020a), with the risk that they may prove obsolete for the analysis of logics rooted in other cultures.

Thus, in typical hybrid configurations, social and commercial logics could in fact convey a profoundly different meaning from those proposed by the Western institutional orders of the state and the market in a different context – thus calling into question their incompatibility depending on the situation. Without proposing an alternative universal grid, the neo-institutional perspective recognizes a more universal content that confers meaning and importance to each logic: as an example, Friedland (2017) details the existence of a 'substance,' around which each institutional logic is constructed, a substance that is highly valued and leads individuals to defend them. According to Cloutier and Langley (2013), the reasons for adherence to a logic could be the place of morality in organizational life, thus considering that different but universally shared moral representations are mobilized through institutional logics. Indeed, work on hybridity testifies both pragmatically observed inconsistencies between various practices and an unconditional attachment to certain values fomenting these inconsistencies (e.g., Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Mair et al., 2015), including when this logic referred to the market, an institutional order described as distant from any form of moral legitimacy among neo-institutionalists (Cloutier & Langley, 2013).

We thus join Cloutier and Langley (2013) in putting into perspective not only the difficulties of operationalizing logics across institutional orders but also in their call for a richer understanding of the theoretical grounds of logics, including their moral dimension. In response, we propose to detail the concept of the higher common principle, borrowed from the economies of worth, as a more operational and universal theoretical grid to describe the reasons for incompatibility between logics.

The contributions of economies of worth: Higher common principles

To shed light on the incompatibility between institutional logics, we propose mobilizing economies of worth (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991) as a theoretical grid. This theoretical perspective makes explicit the articulation between systems of meaning widely shared at the societal level and the coordination actions undertaken by actors on a daily basis, thus revealing a theoretical proximity with the stream of institutional logics (Brandl et al., 2014; Cloutier & Langley, 2013; Daudigeos & Valiorgue, 2010; Demers & Gond, 2020; Huault & Taupin, 2012). Indeed, 'both orders of worth and institutional logics can be seen as higher common principles that reflect the degree of legitimacy of certain rules and values in society and define appropriate forms of conduct' (Patriotta et al., 2011, p. 1805). Friedland's work on institutional logics further demonstrates a conceptual proximity to the economies of worth, similarly questioning the value of these logics (Friedland, 2017). Theoretical divergences have been established by the

literature, however, considering the distinct objectives pursued by these conceptual frameworks (Boxenbaum, 2014; Brandl et al., 2014). Institutional logics thus have the particularity of offering a sectoral anchoring to systems of meaning, a level of analysis that is nonexistent in the economies of worth (Boxenbaum, 2014). In contrast, the work of Boltanski and Thévenot is characterized by the universal moral dimension of higher common principles, which, in essence, convey a representation of the common good. Despite these differences, recent studies have focused on theoretically and empirically demonstrating the ability of economies of worth to inform neo-institutional approaches by borrowing various key concepts: justification (Jagd, 2011; Patriotta et al., 2011; Taupin, 2012), test (Dansou & Langley, 2012), and compromise (Demers & Gond, 2020). Here, we propose to similarly assess the contribution of the concept of a higher common principle to the neo-institutional literature and the concept of hybridity.

Borrowing from political philosophy, Boltanski and Thévenot (1991) explain six utopian forms of society organized around a single moral principle, labeled the higher common principle. In this way, they present these six principles as absolute norms governing good or evil according to opposite criteria (listed in Table 1). Indeed, the principles are distinguished by the antagonism of their characteristics so that actions that are morally great according to one principle are devalued according to a competing principle. For example, the 'inspired' principle advocates the spiritual quest and the surpassing of oneself as absolutes, so that it is necessary to extricate oneself from the duties of social rank and to reject the dominant authority – criteria that are primordial according to the domestic principle – to rely on the search for inspiration (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991). Accordingly, the 'inspired' principle fundamentally challenges the 'domestic' principle by its formulation of contrary moral injunctions. Through their antagonism, the common higher principles reveal their singularity and can be identified as 'pure' moral forms (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991). However, in a given situation, these principles are not called upon and put into practice as absolutes: 'the complex societies we are studying do not allow themselves to be enclosed in any of the worlds we have identified' (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991, p. 243). They are thus mobilized jointly in the same situation, similar to institutional orders.

This repertoire of higher common principles thus constitutes an alternative theoretical grid to institutional orders for the understanding of the ideological grounds of any logic. Boltanski and Thévenot's approach is particularly noteworthy for its ability to propose an operational and universal grid for the analysis of systems of meaning, taking into consideration their moral dimension – including when this logic relies on references to the market or the corporate world (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991; Cloutier et al., 2017). Actors thus find a certain sense of justice in the expression of one or more

principles inherent in an institutional logic, thus constituting the breeding ground for incompatibility with other logics. However, in Boltanski and Thévenot's (1991) theoretical perspective, these same principles are not systematically associated with an institutional order, considering that the same institution may

Table 1. Characteristics of the six higher common principles (on the basis of Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991)

Higher common principles	Characteristics (cf. Appendix I for a detailed presentation)
Inspired principle	Primacy of singularity
	Inspiration as a sought-after state
	Search for the surpassing of oneself
Domestic principle	Acceptance of the random and the mysterious
	Importance of status-based hierarchy
	Attachment to the distinctive signs of a social rank
Fame principle	Primacy of tradition and habits
	Mutual respect and formality in interpersonal relations
	Duty and responsibility to the less fortunate
Civic principle	Primacy of momentary fame and renown
	Individual need for consideration satisfied by identification
	Prevalence of the public fact and of visibility
Market principle	Primacy of membership in a group
	Representation of the group as a duty
	Subordination of the individual interest to the general will
Industrial principle	Prevalence of the law
	Prevalence of the desire for individual possession
	Immediate competition in a market
Industrial principle	Opportunism as a desired state
	Mediation of interpersonal relationships through transactions
	Primacy of the objectivity of scientific methods and tools
	Search for performance and efficiency
	Search for routinization, prediction, reliability
Industrial principle	Prioritization by skills and expertise
	Adaptation to local production conditions

well rely on one or more different moral principles in different contexts and cultures. For example, the French State is described as straddling the industrial and civic principles in Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), although it may have other meanings depending on the context. The proposed approach thus remains operational and universal to characterize institutional logics and their underlying principles in situ, thanks to a detailed description of each principle and its manifestations (see Appendix 1).

Facing difficulties in applying institutional orders and a 'moral myopia' (Cloutier & Langley, 2013, p. 363) in neo-institutional theory, we unveil a possible complementarity between this current and the economies of worth. Because higher common principles are mutually antagonistic, we argue that the concept of a higher common principle has a stronger analytical force than institutional orders to capture the property of incompatibility between logics attributed to organizational hybridity. In this view, hybridity would be the combination of institutional logics relying on strictly distinct higher common principles. Our article is based on this theoretical argument and demonstrates its validity by reinterpreting empirical works on hybridity.

Toward a reinterpretation of the empirical findings of organizational hybridity

To show how the higher common principles approach better characterizes and recasts the incompatibility between logics as a property of hybridity, we propose reinterpreting six cases presented as organizational hybridity in five empirical articles (here: Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Gümüşay et al., 2020b; Murray, 2010; Pache & Santos, 2013; York et al., 2016). These articles were selected according to a revelatory sampling logic (Gioia et al., 2012): their selection allows us to highlight convergent and divergent results in terms of hybridity between our approach and past research. To do so, we selected articles according to two criteria. The first criterion consists of the number of citations, ranging from 108 (article published in 2020) to 2,976 (published in 2010). The second criterion is based on having enough data available on the nature of each combined logic to allow for reinterpretation according to our approach. Taking advantage of previous works mobilizing the same type of hybrid organizations, some articles do not offer detailed descriptions of the combined logics to justify the hybridity, thus complicating our reinterpretation attempt: this is, for example, the case of Smith and Besharov (2019), although it was cited 332 times. This approach thus allows us to test our argument without claiming representativeness or exhaustiveness of the sample. We develop a detailed argument for one of these articles – the seminal article from Battilana and Dorado (2010) – and then offer a synthesis of our analyses for the other four articles.

Revisiting organizational hybridity in the seminal article of Battilana and Dorado (2010)

Battilana and Dorado's (2010, p. 1419) seminal article questions the management of hybrid organizations 'combining institutional logics in unprecedented ways'. Operating in the same economic and financial context in Bolivia, the organizations studied, BancoSol and Los Andes, offer similar microfinance services to support economic development in the most disadvantaged areas and fight poverty. The organizational innovation lies mainly in the status adopted by these microfinance organizations: unlike nongovernmental organizations, they operate as for-profit companies with a social mission. BancoSol and Los Andes are presented as combining banking and development logics, which are considered incompatible: the two logics thus appear to have 'a high degree of divergence' (Battilana & Dorado, 2010, p. 1436) due to their ability to impose different objectives, targets, and managerial principles (see Table 2). As a result, BancoSol and Los Andes are presented as hybrid organizations.

Based solely on the description of the logics provided in the article, the reinterpretation allowed by the economies of worth would converge with the American neo-institutional perspective. By tracing the moral principles inherent to the banking and development logics, we found that the banking logic would seize the industrial and market principles, while the development logic would seize the civic principle (see Table 2). The two logics would therefore call upon antagonistic moral principles so that they could be considered mutually exclusive and therefore incompatible, thus contributing to the recognition of any combination of them as hybrid.

Nonetheless, institutional logics are translated into material practices, norms, and values instantiated in organizations (Thornton et al., 2012). Beyond the succinct description of each logic, it is appropriate to explore the materialization of these logics to shed light on the actual combination of these common higher principles in the practices of the two organizations. Therefore, we proceed to examine the detailed data provided on the organizational practices of BancoSol and Los Andes to assess whether they meet the criterion of combining incompatible logics.

Reinterpretation of the BancoSol case: A convergence for the recognition of organizational hybridity

The BancoSol entity is characterized by an integrative approach to banking and development logics. In response to these divergent logics, the head of BancoSol advocates the consolidation of a single objective shared by all of these employees, considering that they have to 'focus organization members' attention on the end pursued by the organization'

Table 2. Comparison between banking and development logics (from Battilana & Dorado, 2010, p. 1423) and their inherent principles

Characteristics	Banking logic	Development logic
Goals	Search for individual interest	Search for collective interest
	'Deriving a rent or profit'	'Development and poverty alleviation'
Targeted population	Resources optimization	Rebalancing representation for the benefit of the excluded
	'Clients as customers and seen as more or less risky source of income'	'Clients are beneficiaries and seen as more or less deserving of support'
Managerial principles	Search for performance and efficiency	Contribution to general will
	'Maximizing profit while fulfilling fiduciary obligations not only to investors but also depositors'	'Maximizing the impact of donor funds on development and poverty alleviation'
Higher common principles	Industrial principle:	Civic principle:
	Search for performance and efficiency, long-term management of clients as a portfolio of resources	Primacy of the good and the general will over individual interest
	Market principle: opportunistic profit seeking	

(Battilana & Dorado, 2010, p. 1434). In other words, 'converting social workers into bankers and bankers into social workers' (Battilana & Dorado, 2010, p. 1426) through appropriate recruitment and socialization processes. A closer look at the processes presented reveals the coexistence of the civic and industrial principles (see Table 3). In this case, the civic principle can be seen in the desire for representative governance to take into account the two reference logics in an egalitarian and democratic way. Its manifestations are also perceptible through membership in the group and easy access to this group for all actors. The industrial principle is presented jointly through the primacy of skills, tests, and performance measures. The coexistence of these institutional logics also contributes to the formation of compromises between civic and industrial principles, according to Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), as illustrated by the incentive system chosen: while respecting the search for objectivity in the evaluation of efficiency, it focuses on the evaluation of collective rather than individual performance. On the other hand, the market principle is not apparent in BancoSol's organizational practices, suggesting that it is less central to banking logic. In the presence of two contradictory principles specific to two distinct logics, the study of the BancoSol organization by the economies of worth converges toward the recognition of organizational hybridity.

While acknowledging the hybrid nature of BancoSol, the study by Battilana and Dorado (2010) emphasizes the difficulties related to this strategic choice, causing tensions and conflicts. On this basis, the authors propose a comparison with the hybrid organization Los Andes, which is based on identical institutional logics while mobilizing organizational processes that are considered more effective. The hybrid nature of this organization should therefore be evaluated in a similar way with

regard to the higher common principles mobilized by the logics involved.

Reinterpretation of the Los Andes case: A divergence on the hybrid nature of the organization

In this article, the authors distinguish the Los Andes by its ability to create a new organizational identity, combining banking and development logics. To maintain organizational hybridity, Los Andes aims to overcome the ideological conflict between these logics by refocusing on the means: 'instead of relying on commitment to the end pursued by the organization (i.e., its mission), Los Andes's approach to socialization thus relied on commitment to the means used to achieve this end' (p. 1430). To overcome the perceived antagonism between the two logics, Los Andes specifically relies on operational excellence as a means to 'reconcile its social goals with deriving an economic yield' (p. 1427). Combined with the recruitment of actors who do not fit into either reference logic, the adoption of organizational excellence has led to the formation of a new hybrid organizational identity.

However, the higher common principles suggest a different interpretation of the data available in this article. While the authors present this new identity as representative of the banking and development logics, the higher common principles observed only appeal to the banking logic (see Table 4). The study of organizational practices in the Los Andes shows an exclusive refocusing on the industrial principle through the valorization of individual performance (individual evaluation and variable remuneration) and the objectification of selection criteria (primacy of tests and measurement instruments).

Table 3. Institutional logics and inferences of higher common principles referenced in the case of BancoSol

organizational characteristics	Higher common principles identified at BancoSol
Governance	<p>Governance representative of the group: development logic// civic principle</p> <p>'In 1992, BancoSol's 1st year of operation, five of the seven individuals in senior leadership positions were early hires who had BancoSol-NGO at its founding and worked as loan officers for the first 3 months of operation. The other two, who were new, had backgrounds and experience in conventional banking.' (p. 1425)</p> <p>Since 1996, governance based on skills: banking logic// industrial principle</p> <p>'By 1996 the ratio had dropped to one out of five, and all but the marketing director had work experience in conventional banks.' (p. 1425)</p>
Alignment with the mission	<p>Subordination of the particular interest to the general will: development logic// civic principle</p> <p>'He [the founder] developed and posted a list of 30 things a bank did that BancoSol did not. For example, if conventional banks kept unwashed people out of their offices, BancoSol would welcome them; if only Spanish was spoken in conventional' (p. 1425)</p> <p>Enrollment to the group: logic of development// civic principle</p> <p>'Otero described the secret of BancoSol's success as "converting social workers into bankers and bankers into social workers." He believed that it was the only way for commercial microfinance organizations to succeed in sustaining their hybrid nature' (p. 1426)</p>
Recruitment	<p>Willingness to represent different logics: development logic//civic principle</p> <p>'Whereas BancoSol-NGO hired almost exclusively individuals with backgrounds in development areas, BancoSol's hiring system resulted, in the words of one interviewee, in the hiring of individuals with backgrounds in finance, auditing, economics, social work, law, and lots and lots of anthropologists and sociologists' (interview, 11 April 1997). (p. 1425)</p> <p>Choice based on skills: banking logic// industrial principle</p> <p>'Hiring individuals with required capabilities regardless of whether they steeped in the development or banking logics.' (p. 1433)</p> <p>'Those with backgrounds in social work, anthropology, and sociology had capabilities more suited to working with the poor; but those with backgrounds in finance, auditing, law, and economics had capabilities more suited to lending.' (p. 1425)</p> <p>Recruitment process centered on the objectivity of tests and the evaluation of skills: banking logic//industrial principle</p> <p>'Candidates recruited through advertising in newspapers. Preliminary selection based on the capabilities criterion: selection of candidates likely to have the desired capabilities. Preliminary testing (two or three exams). First exam tested abilities in the areas of spatial, mechanical, and numeric reasoning, verbal logic, and comprehension. Second exam tested abilities to work in teams, interact with others, and exercise leadership. If relevant, a third exam tested for the technical knowledge needed to carry out the responsibilities of the particular position. About three candidates per position were interviewed to assess their ability to do the job and their affinity with BancoSol's culture. Interview with the group with which they would be working. Three-month testing period after initial training seminar (see Table 5), after which they were hired permanently. (New hires were most likely to leave during this period).' (p. 1433)</p>
Career advancement	<p>Career advancement management through skills and performance assessment: banking logic//industrial principle</p> <p>'Promotion was based on annual evaluations of performance and on an internal application process in which candidates were evaluated based on their CVs and conversations with co-workers.' (p. 1434)</p>
Control and incitation mechanisms	<p>Measurement system focused on the evaluation of the contribution to the social mission: banking and development logic//compromise between industrial and civic principles</p> <p>'BancoSol's top managers found it important to align employee career paths and incentive systems with the mission of affording clients (regardless of income or ethnicity) opportunities to better themselves.' (p. 1426)</p> <p>'Until 1996, BancoSol did not use any performance-based incentives, relying instead on its lofty mission to generate motivation and commitment among its employees. Performance-based incentives first introduced in 1997. Incentives were connected to the collective performance of the branches, not to the performance of individuals. In 1997, only 10% of the loan officers' total compensation was dependent on the performance of the agency where they worked.' (p. 1426)</p>

Table 4. Institutional logics and inferences of higher common principles referenced in the case of Los Andes

organizational characteristics	Higher common principles identified at Los Andes
Governance	<p>Tripartite governance according to the skills mobilized: banking and development logics//industrial principle</p> <p>'IPC successfully advocated the creation of a German-style joint general management committee made of three managers to replace Velasco. In keeping with Los Andes' prioritizing of candidates' socializability, the individuals hired for the positions had to be relatively junior. One manager would assume responsibility for investor relations. (...) Another manager would assume responsibility for the area of loans. (...) The third manager was to assume responsibilities in the area of general administration.' (p. 1429)</p>
Alignment on the mission	<p>Refocusing on technical resources: banking and development logics//industrial principle</p> <p>'According to Los Andes 1998 annual report, a focus on long-term operational success that would enable the organization "to reconcile its social goals with deriving an economic yield" was at the heart of its vision for sustaining a balance between the development and banking logics.' (p. 1427)</p>
Recruitment	<p>Selection based on a set of skills rather than on adherence to a logic: banking and development logics//industrial principle</p> <p>'Hiring individuals with little or no work experience to avoid bringing in individuals steeped in the development or banking logics' (p. 1433)</p> <p>'Los Andes leadership thus decided to hire recent university graduates with the basic technical background required for loan evaluation (e.g., auditing, accounting, and business)' (p. 1428)</p> <p>Recruitment process centered on the criterion of little experience, objectivity of tests: banking and development logics//industrial principle</p> <p>'Candidates recruited through advertising in newspapers. Preliminary selection based on the socializability criterion: selection of candidates with little or no work experience. Preliminary exam testing of abilities in the areas of spatial, mechanical and numeric reasoning, verbal logic, and comprehension. Exam testing on content covered during an initial training seminar. No further interviewing considered necessary. Three-month testing period, after which they were hired permanently. During the 1st month, they worked as "shadows" to a loan officer. (New hires were most likely to leave during this period.)' (p. 1433)</p>
Career advancement	<p>Transparency of a process based on individual merit and performance rewards: banking and development logics//industrial principle</p> <p>'A story circulating in the organization was that of the unexpected and immediate firing of a trusted manager who was discovered to have hired a relative for an administrative assistant position. This firing became symbolic of Los Andes' commitment to a merit-based system of hiring, which stood out in the Bolivian context, where nepotism was rampant and career advancement depended more on last name and personal connections than on individual merits.' (p. 1430)</p> <p>Management of career advancement through the objectivity of tests: banking and development logics//industrial principle</p> <p>'Promotion was based exclusively on exams. Candidates were asked to define solutions to potential situations they might face as managers.' (p. 1434)</p>
Control and incitation mechanisms	<p>System centered on the evaluation of individual performance and variable compensation: banking and development logics//industrial principle</p> <p>'Introduced at the outset a carefully designed and continually revised system of individual performance-based incentives. In 1997, loan officers could get as much as 105% of their base pay as incentives based on individual job performance. Best candidates identified through exams and role playing tests. Loan officers could expect to progress to regional manager positions as the organization continued to grow and expand. Promotion was based exclusively on exams. Candidates were asked to define solutions to potential situations they might face as managers.' (p. 1434)</p> <p>'To avoid any perception that an individual might be promoted or judged favorably for reasons other than job performance, candidates for internal jobs were required to take a written exam as well as a role-playing test in which they were presented with an administrative problem and had to decide upon a course of action. In keeping with the focus on operational excellence, the incentive system, which applied exclusively to loan officers, tied pay to the number and quality of the loans in officers' portfolios. A carefully designed and continuously improved bonus system that rewarded loan officers' individual performance (high number of loans but low delinquency) dramatically affected their total compensation' (p. 1430)</p>

Thus, the recourse to operational excellence implies a reorientation of practices toward the valorization of individual merit in a transparent and objective system, a formula that finds an even more favorable echo in a country where 'nepotism was rampant and career advancement depended more on last name and personal connections than on individual merits' (p. 1429). On the other hand, references to civic principles, specific to the development logic, seem to have disappeared from organizational processes as described by Battilana and Dorado (2010). Battilana and Dorado's (2010) emphasis on operational excellence reflects a clear emphasis on the industrial principle in the new logic of microfinance, according to the data at our disposal.

Through this seminal article, Battilana and Dorado argue for two distinct models of hybridity: BancoSol's integration, based on the articulation of the two logics at the risk of maximizing conflicts, and Los Andes' learning focused on mediating incompatible logics through an organizational identity promoting operational excellence. Surprisingly, the prism of the economies of worth leads us to apprehend the results obtained by the authors in a different way by presenting operational excellence not as a neutral modality of articulation of the banking and development logics but rather as a set of material practices that convey a single higher common principle: the industrial principle, specific to the banking logic. Thus, according to our approach, the narrative of Battilana and Dorado (2010) on the case of Los Andes does not allow us to satisfy the criterion of incompatibility between logics and, specifically, the criteria of hybridity, as soon as the central moral principle of one of the two logics – the development logic – is no longer represented in the practices of the organization.

The comparison of BancoSol and Los Andes provides an illustration of the distinct implications of both approaches, the institutional logics' perspective, and the higher common principles. By relying on universal moral criteria, the higher common principles offer a more specific interpretation of the incompatibility between institutional logics, making it possible to conclude more rigorously whether a situation of organizational hybridity exists. In this case, according to our approach, the absence of conflicts and tensions observed at Los Andes has more to do with the absence of a real coexistence of logics in a hybrid model than with a fruitful combination between incompatible logics. However, the neo-institutional analysis by institutional orders does not allow us to identify this gradual disappearance of a logic: the association between the two logics and the institutional orders of the state and the market *a posteriori* is not that enlightening to give a universal and operational account of the change of logics observed in Los Andes. Our argument, however, does not aim to question the results presented by Battilana and Dorado (2010), which are foundational for the concept of hybridity, but rather points out the implications of a poorly delineated definition of the concept. In

essence, our revelatory approach emphasizes that the adoption of an established property of incompatibility between logics leads to a substantial reinterpretation of cases of organizational hybridity.

Revisiting organizational hybridity on an expanded set of articles

On the basis of this initial observation, we offer to replicate our approach to four other articles to show complementary illustrations of the contribution of the higher common principle to a stricter apprehension of hybridity situations. The following table (see Table 5) summarizes our study of all the articles analyzed and highlights the different cases of convergence or divergence between the authors' initial interpretation and the one that we can make on the basis of our operationalization of organizational hybridity and the available data. The detailed analysis of each case is available in Appendices 2, 3, 4, and 5.

The results of our analysis converge with those previously obtained by Murray (2010) and Gümüşay et al., 2020b: according to the available data, these works highlight mutually exclusive logics, giving rise to organizational hybridity. For all that, our demonstration also unveils discrepancies in results for the analysis of Pache and Santos (2013) and York et al. (2016), in addition to Battilana and Dorado (2010). According to our approach, the latter cases do not satisfy the criterion of mutual exclusion of common higher principles, thus questioning their hybrid character.

Moreover, in terms of divergence, our results highlight two distinct cases. First, organizational hybridity must be distinguished from the supremacy of one institutional logic over another, leading to the predominance of one (or more) principle(s) specific to this single logic: if a principle inherent to one logic governs all practices, hybridity is not established, as in the results presented for Los Andes. In this sense, an organization is hybrid if each logic and its underlying higher common principles are observed in the material, symbolic, and discursive practices of that organization, reflecting an actual combination of these logics at the organizational level. Second, our definition of organizational hybridity also excludes organizations that mobilize two institutional logics that refer to the same higher common principle. In this case, the two logics, although distinct, mobilize a partially shared representation of the common good, which facilitates the adoption of convergent practices, symbols, and values: we can therefore evoke a partial compatibility of these systems of meaning. For example, in both Pache and Santos (2013) and York et al. (2016), the absence of hybridity is explained by the reference to the same moral principle in the two supposedly incompatible logics. Thus, in York et al. (2016), the economic and ecological logics reveal similarly the industrial principle as an ideological foundation, in addition to other principles. Through our approach,

Table 5. Synthesis of the institutional logics and higher common principles underlying the logics in the articles analyzed (see Appendices for detailed analysis)

Articles	Institutional logics	Higher common principles	Hybridity (according to IL)	Hybridity (according to EOW)
Battilana and Dorado, 2010	Banking logic	Industrial principle: search for performance, objectivity of evaluation, role of skills	YES	YES
BancoSol Case		Market principle: search for individual interest		
	Development logic	Civic principle: representative governance, enrollment in the group		
Battilana and Dorado, 2010	Banking logic	Industrial principle: search for performance, transparency and objectivity, role of skills	YES	NO
	Development logic			(1 single principle)
Los Andes Case				
Pache and Santos, 2013	Social welfare logic	Civic principle: democratic governance, membership to the group, expression of the general will	YES	NO
(cf. Appendix 2)				(1 shared principle)
	Commercial logic	Industrial principle: adaptation to local conditions, weight of local expertise Industrial principle: search for performance, control, reliability, primacy of expertise and skills		
Murray, 2010	Logic of academic science	Market principle: competition, desire to possess, payment for a transaction Principle of opinion: search for visibility, consideration, renown	YES	YES
(cf. Appendix 3)				
	Commercial logic	Domestic principle: respect for habits, a sense of privacy Market principle: desire for possession, opportunism, freedom of transaction		
York et al., 2016	Ecologizing logic	Industrial principle: primacy of expertise, standardization of production Civic principle: subordination of individual interests to the general will, influence of the law	YES	NO
(cf. Appendix 4)				(1 shared principle)
	Economizing logic	Industrial principle: optimization of resources and costs Industrial principle: optimization of resources and costs, search of efficiency, reliability		
Gümüşay et al., 2020b	Religious logic	Domestic principle: respect of rituals, traditions, and habits, consultation des "anciens"	YES	YES
(cf. Appendix 5)		Inspired principle: primacy of singularity Civic principle: representativity of the group		
	Market logic	Industrial principle: search for objectivity and efficiency, standardization Market principle: financial opportunism		

IL, Institutional logics; EoW, Economies of worth.

organizations are thus more restrictively qualified as hybrids, considering that the criterion of logics that 'would not conventionally go together' can be duly established by the mutual exclusion of the common higher principles proper to both logics.

Discussion

This article sheds light on the incompatibility of institutional logics as a property of organizational hybridity through the lens of higher common principles derived from the economies of worth. By mobilizing a theoretical perspective complementary to that of institutional logics (Brandl et al., 2014; Cloutier & Langley, 2013; Daudigeos & Valiorgue, 2010), our approach aims to demonstrate the relevance of the concept of a higher common principle to illuminate the ideological and moral roots of institutional logics in a more robust and restrictive way than Thornton et al.'s (2012) institutional orders. In doing so, the illustrative scope of our analysis conducted on five articles suggests two contributions to the institutional logics stream: we strengthen the concept of hybridity – via a finer understanding of the criterion of incompatibility between logics – and deepen the distinction between incompatible and contradictory logics, contributing to enrich the theoretical reflection on the essence of institutional logics.

Distinguishing incompatible and partially compatible logics: toward a better understanding of hybridity

This article offers an operationalization of the incompatibility between institutional logics to strengthen the concept of organizational hybridity. We propose substituting the criterion of 'mutual exclusion' of logics morally speaking, in the sense of the economies of worth (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991), for the logics 'that would not conventionally go together'. From this perspective, an organization is labeled hybrid when the institutional logics it combines are based on distinct higher common principles. Thanks to this distinctive property, our study thus formalizes a more restrictive and robust definition of organizational hybridity, one that clearly discriminates between hybrid and nonhybrid organizations. In this way, our approach formally opposes the recognition of a large number of structural hybrids. In our argument, these organizations reveal distinct realities, as the institutional logics mobilized can be based on partially common or fully distinct ideological foundations. In response to academic skepticism about the concept of hybridity (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020), our first contribution to the field is to make explicit the conceptual specificity of hybridity, so that it more rigorously encompasses manifestations of the same reality.

Moreover, our approach also gives the contradictions observed between logics a more precise theoretical ground.

In previous works, the conceptual strength of hybridity resided precisely in the capacity of any actor to intuitively apprehend certain logics as particularly contradictory, even when the demonstration of this contradiction remained rudimentary in empirical works. Through the mobilization of higher common principles, our proposal operates a requalification of these inconsistencies perceptible in practice to discern in what way they testify or not to a situation of incompatibility between logics on the ideological and moral level. Our article thus challenges the academic community to demonstrate more precisely in what way apparent contradictions can testify to more fundamental ideological inconsistencies by relying on the higher common principles.

Our article is positioned in line with seminal works on hybridity (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Jay, 2013; Pache & Santos, 2013), calling it an atypical organizational response circumscribed to a limited number of organizations (Smith & Cunha, 2020). As such, our approach is unique in its ability to question more recent developments related to hybridity, which conversely demonstrate a willingness to recognize 'variation in how hybridity is organizationally configured, temporally situated, and institutionally embedded' (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020, p. 4). Adopting a broad understanding of hybridity, emerging research develops the hypothesis of distinct degrees of hybridity across organizations (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020; Smith & Cunha, 2020). Rejecting the original binarity of hybridity, this argument presents hybridity as a function of four variables: compatibility of logics, centrality of logics, multiplicity of logics, and structuring of logics (Besharov & Mitzinneck, 2020). The recognition of logic compatibility as a continuum – as opposed to a binary criterion – is supported by our results, testifying to partially compatible logics to distinct degrees. As such, the presence of a variable number of higher common principles shared by different logics is likely to reveal distinct levels of compatibility. However, if distinct degrees of compatibility can be identified through our alternative theoretical grid, these do not prove to be orthogonal with the possibility of recognizing an *a priori* incompatibility between logics. We argue for a differentiation between incompatibility, as the mutual exclusion of logics proper to hybridity; partial compatibility, experiencing a gradation; and perfect compatibility between logics. This article thus suggests that the criterion of (in)compatibility between logics could be different from the other variables identified by Besharov and Mitzinneck (2020), insofar as it constitutes a discriminating property of hybridity, rather than a factor of variation. By questioning these conceptual foundations of hybridity, our results call for further theoretical and empirical work not only on the incompatibility of logics as a specific property but also on the other identified variables – centrality, multiplicity, and structuration – to clarify their function in the field.

Finally, our analysis also foreshadows some answers to the unresolved question of the possible ending of hybridity. By

recognizing a wide variety of structural hybrids, recent works adhere to a broader spectrum of hybrid configurations not only in terms of combined logics but also in terms of the maturity of the combination. As early as Battilana and Dorado (2010), the hypothesis of more mature hybrids, having consolidated patterns of articulation between incompatible logics, is put forward. On this basis, Glynn et al. (2020) develop the hypothesis, according to which hybridity cannot be the result of an unnatural combination of logics, as long as we include in this category mature organizations whose institutionalization is beyond doubt, such as the public sector. Hybrid forms could thus 'become institutionalized, taken-for-granted, and eventually even expected to go together' (Glynn et al., 2020, p. 55) in a context where the hybridization of logics would have taken on a sectoral or even societal scope, resulting in the institutionalization of a new logic (e.g., Ansari et al., 2013). Conversely, in our more restrictive approach to organizational hybridity, we call for a contextualized examination of organizational forms, leading or not leading to the recognition of a combination of incompatible logics based on higher common principles. From this perspective, we propose that an organization could be recognized as a hybrid temporarily and then no longer correspond to this conceptual category as soon as the analysis of logics no longer reveals a combination of incompatible logics due to their institutionalization. In other words, no organization can be essentialized by its hybrid character: the evolution of the sector as well as of society can lead to the naturalization of organizational forms that were once qualified as hybrid.

Distinguishing (in)compatible and contradictory logics: A reflection on the nature of institutional logics

In addition to the contributions relating to the concept of hybridity, this article clarifies the differences between incompatible and contradictory logics, thanks to the principles of the economies of worth. The contradictory aspect of institutional logics is raised as early as seminal neo-institutional works (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Meyer & Rowan, 1977). As the works on paradoxes (Smith & Lewis, 2011) point out, these contradictions are actually consubstantial to the identification of distinct logics: the logics are seen as both contradictory and 'interdependent in that the boundaries between these two elements define one another; they fit together with one another to create an integrated whole, and finally that the opposite dots located in the alternative slivers suggest the seeds of its opposites within each element' (Smith & Cunha, 2020, p. 104). In other words, it is the existence of alternative logics that give a logic its singularity and coherence. Our results delimit *a contrario* a more restricted scope for the incompatibility of institutional logics, requiring the respective mobilization of distinct higher common principles. From this point of view, two

logics can be recognized as contradictory – by showing distinct prescriptions – and compatible – through the joint mobilization of at least one common moral principle. Supporting the hypothesis of incompatibility as a particularly advanced form of inconsistency between logics, our approach challenges the works positioning contradictory logics as the inverse of compatible logics (Besharov & Smith, 2014): in our perspective, incompatibility is opposed to compatibility between logics, while maintaining that both compatible and incompatible logics can be recognized as contradictory. On this basis, our study offers research avenues for understanding the nature of the relations between logics in more detail, thus allowing for a more precise mobilization of these terminologies at a later stage.

Consequently, this distinction between (in)compatible and contradictory logics allows us to draw a finer line between the concepts of hybridity and institutional complexity. Institutional complexity has previously been distinguished from institutional pluralism (Ocasio & Radoynovska, 2016), considering that pluralism encompasses complexity, without the reciprocal being true. Among plural configurations mixing multiple logics, complexity is thus defined as a modality of coexistence of logics deemed incompatible (Greenwood et al., 2011). However, this concept is also presented as a situation where multiple and momentarily contradictory logics clash (Raynard, 2016) and can encompass different degrees of incompatibility (Ocasio & Radoynovska, 2016; Raynard, 2016), thus revealing rather blurred conceptual boundaries. By characterizing the criterion of incompatibility between logics as an indispensable criterion for the recognition of hybridity, our results thus allow us to consider that any hybrid organization faces a form of institutional complexity, without the reciprocal being true. At a time when a wide number of logics can present various degrees of compatibility in essence, the specificity of the concept of institutional complexity versus institutional pluralism can thus be questioned – *a fortiori* when the criticisms addressed to the concept of hybridity can be applied to it. If the majority of environments show some form of institutional complexity, what analytical value can be given to this concept? By definition, the term 'complexity' invokes particular difficulties in disentangling an institutional configuration composed of multiple logics and could be challenged when applied to most of them. In this respect, we recognize that our argument has the capacity to question the specificity of the concept of institutional complexity when the criterion of contradiction proves to be not very distinctive.

Understanding the dynamics of institutional logics and higher common principles

The approach we propose assumes that each institutional logic is rigorously associated with the higher common principles that underlie it. However, as early as the seminal neo-institutional works, the academic community recognizes the capacity

of logics to evolve (Thornton et al., 2012; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999), considering that none of them can be considered 'pure' (Gümüşay et al., 2020a): they contain by essence attributes shared with other institutional logics (Gümüşay et al., 2020a) due to the mutual influence they exert in various institutionally pluralistic environments. Once a temporal evolution of logics is proven, the question of the temporal validity of our analysis of the higher common principles and, ultimately, of the evaluation of incompatibility arises.

First, our analysis formally introduces the possibility for institutional logics to undergo multiple reconfigurations through an evolution of their material practices, beliefs, and assertions without revealing a transformation of its inherent higher common principles. Boltanski and Thévenot (1991) thus note the permanence of higher common principles, whose materialization can take diverse and evolving forms, without translating into an evolution in the substance of the dominant principles. In this respect, the recognition of the changing character of institutional logics is not incompatible with a longer subsistence of the higher common principles they rely on.

Furthermore, our discussion of the contributions of the economies of worth runs entirely counter to a desire to essentialize institutional logics through higher common principles to consider them immutable. In contrast, this theoretical grid proves to be compatible with a contextualized study of logics, aiming to temporarily unveil the higher common principles to which the concerned logics refer. Our approach is thus in line with the works suggesting the need to understand logics in a contextualized way, considering, for example, that a logic called 'market' can have different meanings depending on the contexts and temporalities in which it is recognized as such (Gümüşay et al., 2020a). From this perspective, we propose the grid of economies of worth as a complementary tool for the contextualized study of logics to associate, for a given time and perimeter, the materializations of logics with higher common principles. Consequently and *a fortiori* for longitudinal studies, the incompatibility of logics implies a periodic reexamination to verify its empirical validity. In terms of hybridity, this contextualized study aims to frequently reassess the hybrid character of an organization, which can evolve in the long run toward a partial compatibility of institutional logics as well as toward the maintenance of incompatibility.

From interlogics hybridity to intralogic complexity

By using the higher common principles for the study of logics, our results finally demonstrate the capacity of one single institutional logic to combine several higher common principles while maintaining a form of internal coherence. This proposal amounts to considering that a logic can preserve unity and distinctiveness, even though it is paradoxically based on elements that are likely to be contradictory. Recent works

argue in favor of the recognition of an intralogic complexity, in addition to an interlogics complexity (Gümüşay et al., 2020a). From then on, our argument raises the same questions addressed by the concept of hybridity, this time at the level of the institutional logics themselves: how can these logics be identified as a coherent whole when they are based on elements that are deemed contradictory? These contradictions and dissonances not only are consubstantial with the evolution experienced by the logics, which are subject to constant institutional influences and pressures, but also call into question the relevance of grouping contradictory elements under the same label of 'logic.' In our analysis, the relevancy of higher common principles is conditioned by the possibility of recognizing distinct institutional logics. However, as Pache and Thornton (2020) found, a significant portion of the articles on hybridity do not detail the symbolic, material, and ideological foundations on which the combined logics rest. Therefore, before proceeding to a contextualized analysis of the hybrid interlogics configuration, this paper argues for an earlier demonstration of what constitutes the integrity of these logics, similar to the developments of early works on institutional logics.

Conclusion

While our paper contributes to the development of a robust framework for organizational hybridity, it also has some limitations and invites further works in this direction. First, answering the call of Cloutier and Langley (2013), our paper deliberately infers a complementarity between the economies of worth and the institutional logics' perspective. The purpose of this study is not to support the relevance of this complementarity, which has already been widely debated by various academic works (e.g., Brandl et al., 2014; Cloutier et al., 2017; Huault & Taupin, 2012). In line with recent studies, our approach offers a path of articulation centered on the capacity of one concept – the higher common principle – to illuminate the ideological grounds of institutional logics without distorting these two theoretical perspectives. From this point of view, we acknowledge our proposal as internally valid only in the perspective where the concept of higher common principle is compatible with the framework of institutional logics, thus revealing a limiting theoretical condition. Moreover, the validity of our theoretical argument also rests on the commonly accepted definition of institutional logics (Thornton et al., 2012), which our discussion, however, raises as potentially problematic.

Second, our methodological approach is intended to be argumentative and illustrative, proposing a theoretical basis that we confront with a few articles that put forward the hybrid character of the organizations studied. If confronting these articles already underlines two configurations of

institutional logics that should be detached from hybridity, we recognize that this analysis has a limited scope, given the limited number of articles used in our study. Consequently, it would be relevant to pursue this approach with a systematic literature review, selecting a (quasi) exhaustive set of articles dealing with organizational hybridity. By evaluating a wider range of academic articles, this systematic review would lead to a more refined appreciation of the extent of the implications induced by our redefinition of organizational hybridity. This more holistic approach, however, assumes a selection of articles with sufficient data to illuminate the higher common principles inherent to each institutional logic. Indeed, the article by Battilana and Dorado (2010), like the other articles selected, has the particularity of substantially developing the characteristics and material instantiations of the institutional logics giving birth to hybridity. With our definition of hybridity, any systematic review will thus be limited to articles offering significant details on the logics in presence, demonstrating the symbolic and material elements founding their singularity.

Additionally, we recognize that mobilizing the material as presented in these articles may raise questions about its completeness and representativeness – our selection being based precisely on the extent of the data made available by the authors in the articles rather than on the original sample. Our approach could thus be complemented by empirical works that could shed more light on whether certain combinations of higher common principles recurrently give birth to organizational hybridity. While the original works on hybridity specifically reflected the articulation of social and business logics (e.g., Battilana et al., 2014; Ebrahim et al., 2014; Pache & Santos, 2013), our approach testifies the ability of these institutional logics to draw on distinct higher common principles in a way that other configurations of moral principles could be recognized as typical of organizational hybridity. Similarly, as works on hybridity reported possible extensions at both the individual (McGivern et al., 2015; Spyridonidis & Currie, 2016) and sectoral (Ansari et al., 2013) levels, it suggests the potential to demonstrate the relevance of higher common principles at other scales in future research.

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