Coping with the Unintended Consequences of Institutional Work[1]

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Introduction

Generally, the concept of *work* indicates "actors engaged in a purposeful effort" (Phillips & Lawrence, 2012, p. 224) to manipulate some social-symbolic facets of the context in which they operate. Particularly, the notion of *institutional work* designates the purposeful effort to manipulate institutions by creating, disrupting or maintaining them (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). This is a term which focuses on efforts rather than on accomplishments (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2009). And yet, much of the social actors' efforts go in the direction of coping with what they perceive as consequences of their institutional work. The reflexive or skilled actors (Fligstein, 2001) monitor the effects and changing conditions of their activities. This mundane

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but essential fact about institutional work, and about any purposive activity for that matter, led to the focus on coping with the unintended in the present paper.

The problem of indirect and surprising outcomes of individual purposeful actions is usually traced to Bernard Mandeville and Adam Smith (Schneider, 1990). In sociology, the essence of this phenomenon was beautifully captured in Weber's (1964; 1968; see Cherkaoui, 2007; Swedberg, 2007) formula of the "paradox of [unintended] consequences of action" and it continued to fascinate scholars ever since (see Merton, 1936; Mica, Peisert, & Winczorek, 2011). From the vast range of problems which this generic phenomenon implies, we speak to the issue of coping with the unintended in institutional work. We proceed in an exploratory manner and put our findings regarding the unintended in new institutionalism theory in order. We develop the discussion by introducing examples from planned organizational change and public policy which seem promising and relevant for this research problem.

Our aim is twofold. First, we seek to offer a theoretical basis for framing responses to unintended consequences of institutional work. Second, we endeavor to sketch the linkage between the ways in which actors perceive the success of their activity and the modality in which they cope with its unintended consequences. We believe the problem to be relevant as plain observation supports the proposition that the presence and paradoxical character of unintended consequences are often a matter of perception. Further, these are also related to the measure of institutional work success. These facts suggest that the manner of coping with the unintended is linked with the awareness and evaluation of the unexpected and unwanted outcomes, though we are not yet sure about the extent and manifestation of this influence.

We explore the manner in which the perception of unintended outcomes of institutional work further reverberates on the strategies of coping with these. Our argument proceeds in a few steps. First, we delineate the problem of coping with the unintended and show the manner in which the study of this problem could advance the knowledge regarding less researched, yet essential, subject-areas in institutional work theory. Following this, we make a brief synthesis of the unintended problem in new institutionalism and organization studies. Eventually, we filter the existing literature in order to identify modalities of coping with particular types of unintended consequences of institutional work. We present the patterns of responses, which occur in five

scenarios: *institutional success*, *institutional failure*, *institutional compromise, institutional mid-course shift* and *constant reinstitutionalization*.

In a recent publication, Lawrence, Leca and Zilber (2013, p. 1024) identified three streams of research in the scholarly discussion on institutional work: *how* institutional work occurs, *who* does institutional work, and *what* constitutes institutional work. By way of analogy, as well as by way of some anticipation, the study of coping with the undesirable and unexpected outcomes of institutional work could be depicted as centering on the following aspects: *how* coping with the unintended occurs, *who* copes with the unintended, and *what* constitutes coping with the unintended. Our paper addresses the problems of *how* and *what* by revealing the relation between the perception of the presence and types of unintended consequences and the modality of coping with these. This is an inquiry which has the potential to broaden the conceptual apparatus of the new institutional perspective and to address some overlooked issues in this theory.

What input is there to new institutional theory from looking into the issue of coping with the unintended consequences of institutional work? We can sketch an answer by looking into the under-analyzed aspects in institutional work literature. In this respect, Lawrence et al. (2013, p. 1029) discussed three facets. The first is that, albeit according to the definition of institutional work the focus should be on the work itself, the current research has the tendency to zoom in on the institutional outcomes of the activity. Recent studies on institutional work promote the actors' reconstructed interpretations of previous intentions and the evaluation of effects as intended or unintended by these[3]. This fact undermines somehow the initial framing of institutional work as "purposive action aimed at affecting institutions". It enlarges it to include any activity with institutional outcomes (Lawrence et al., 2013, p. 1029). In our opinion, investigating the modalities of coping with the unintended could prove a fair solution to this problem by building a bridge between research which focuses on the work itself and research concerned with actual outcomes. In this paper, we zoom in on the immediate outcomes and on entrepreneurs' coping with these, and not on the long perspective. We assume that the entrepreneurs are outcome-oriented. Thus the interplay of work and outcomes must be taken into account in the theorizing of institutional work. The analysis of coping modalities would maintain the previous interest in the

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[3] For a critical and competent discussion of these two aspects in the interpretive methodology, the reader is referred to Denzin (1989).

work, while also developing the recently pursued line of research dealing with the institutional effects.

The second issue is the underestimation of the actual effort required by the institutional work and the abandonment of the research of reflective purposefulness in the latest studies on new institutionalism (Lawrence et al., 2013, p. 1029). In connection with Emirbayer and Mische's (1998, p. 971) definition of the reflective intelligence as "the capacity of actors to critically shape their own responsiveness to problematic situations", we treat the unintended as one of the crucial problems faced by institutional entrepreneurs. We consider that analyzing the patterns of coping with the unintended could bring these topics back onto the research agenda by giving insight into how reflexivity is developed. This is determined by the actors' experience with the consequences of their actions, when they interpret and try to overcome the unintended and unanticipated results. The respective outcomes of institutional work are defined as more or less intended, or as more or less unintended, in relation to the actors' expectations, sense-making processes, and error correction activities. The analysis of coping with the unintended could lead directly to, and help the inquiry into, the reflective purposefulness of actors.

Eventually, the third ignored research path is the moral aspect. According to Lawrence et al., (2013, p. 1029): "The reflexive dimension of institutional work also points to actors' responsibility and morality when engaging in institutional work". Investigating the patterns of coping with the unintended could advance the understanding of the allocation of responsibility for the undesirable outcomes to the actors who initiated the work.

The unintended consequences of institutional work

In general, the sociological literature offers three analytical traditions of framing the unintended consequences: the unexpected-perverse effects interpretation, the ramified-(un)anticipated consequences stream and the invisible hand-spontaneous order perspective (see, Nozick, 1974; 1994; Ullmann-Margalit, 1978a; 1978b; Giddens, [1984] 1986, pp. 10-14; [1976] 1993, pp. 83-84; Hirschman, 1991; 1995; Zingerle, 1998, pp. 179-181; Moroni, 2012; de Zwart, 2015; Mica, 2014; 2015). The unexpected-perverse effects interpretation points out that because of limitations of foresight, the actions of individuals have consequences that are unintended and

sometimes even contrary to what was pursued and anticipated (see the unanticipated-perverse effect perspective in Mica, 2015). The ramified-(un)anticipated consequences stream deals with the effects of purposive activities on third parties, also called externalities, which were not initially accounted for but are further constitutive of the circumstances of social action (see Mica, 2014, p. 75). While, the invisible hand-spontaneous order perspective, paraphrasing Adam Ferguson, depicts the social institutions as the unintended consequences of interdependent individual actions, yet not of human design (see Mica, 2015).

There are several elements which differentiate between these three analytical frames (see typology of dimensions and modes of unintended consequences in Baert, 1991). However, because of space limitations, let us refer to the unit of action solely. Thus, the unexpected-perverse effects stream focuses on purposive social action, and on the consequences for the actors who initially carried out the action. The ramified-(un)anticipated consequences traces indirect outcomes which are usually linked with purposive social action and individual behavior, thus not with purposive social action solely. While the invisible hand-spontaneous order stream concerns outcomes at the level of the social system which are traced to social interaction or situations of interdependence, thus not to purposive social action or individual behavior as was the case in the first two perspectives.

Extrapolating these framings from the sociological literature, gives us three possibilities of looking at the unintended consequences of institutional work. Which one is/are the most appropriate one/s for the purposes of new institutional theory? When employing Lawrence and Suddaby's (2006, p. 215) definition of institutional work as "the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions", what emerges is that this is a special kind of purposive social intervention[4]. We could even call it a "meta-action" as it is performed in order to shape institutions. This focus on purposiveness in the definition of institutional work suggests that we should choose the first two framings of unintended consequences – i.e., the unexpected-perverse effects and the ramified-(un)anticipated consequences. The former will speak about unexpected outcomes, perverse effects, happy accidents, the lucky turn of events, shifts in the course of institutional work etc. While the latter

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[4] In comparison to social action, social intervention is characterized by the intention to transform the social reality in a clearly stated direction (see Sieber, 1981, p. 9).

will deal with externalities-side effects and with unintended consequences that were not unanticipated by the actor who initiated the institutional work.

What could we expect from depicting the unintended outcomes of institutional work per these two frameworks? What would be their general traits? Regarding the dimension of "value attached to the effect from the initial perspective" (see Baert 1991, p. 206), for example, although we should refrain from making generalizations, the unexpected-perverse effects interpretation and the ramified-(un)anticipated consequences stream are rather inclined to see the outcomes as "undesirable" (see Baert, 1991, pp. 202-203; Hirschman, 1991; 1995; Moroni, 2012; de Zwart, 2015; Mica, 2015). While the invisible hand-spontaneous order theory has a tendency to underline the fortunate instead. Hirschman (1991; 1995), for instance – who distinguished between the "blessing in disguise", i.e. the unintended effects of human action tradition from Pascal, Nicole, Vico, Mandeville, Adam Smith, Goethe on the one hand, and the perverse effect orientation starting with the French Revolution on the other – is known to have underlined the following distinction:

> The perverse effect, which appears to be a mere variant of the concept of unintended consequences, is in one important respect its denial and even betrayal. The concept of unintended consequences originally introduced uncertainty and open-endedness into social thought, but in an escape from their new freedom the purveyors of the perverse effect retreat to viewing the social universe as once again wholly predictable" (Hirschman 1995, pp. 47-48; see 1991, pp. 36-37 – see also discussion about the negative connotation of the side effects).

As far as the "relationship with the initial intention" is concerned – the unexpected-perverse effects interpretation, because of the visibility of the perverse effects, is usually associated with the scenario when "effects frustrate the initial intention" (Baert 1991, p. 206). Nevertheless, in some instances it may be different – as when "effects fulfill initial intention" (see the serendipity effects and the lucky turn of events manifestations) or when they fulfill an emerging intention (see the shift in mid-course). In the case of the (un)anticipated-externalities stream, the story goes more like this: usually, the intentions are fulfilled, but there is an expectation (on the part of the theorist at least) that, in the long run, the externalities turn up undermining the initial intentions.

Thus, very few ideal types of fortunate scenarios notwithstanding, the unexpected-perverse effects stream and the ramified-(un)anticipated consequences perspective have a predilection to underline or to expect the unintended outcomes to be undesirable. As can be inferred, this negative-unintended bias is perceivable when it comes to the coping with the unintended as well. More so than in the case of unintended consequences, both in the lay sense and the academic understanding, the coping with the unexpected and unforeseen outcomes almost automatically infers that the actors deal with effects that are contrary to the initial intentions, in the sense of being undesirable.

Such underlining of the undesirable element in the definition of coping with unintended consequences evidently makes things easier for us. Thus, we will stick with it for a while. Nevertheless, in the actual analysis we will look for patterns of coping with the (undesirable) unintended also in relation to successful outcomes of institutional work. This means that we leave the issue of dealing with the positive unintended outcomes in relation to distinct outcomes of institutional work to be followed in an autonomous research, without the subsequent findings necessarily calling into question the herein efforts.

What do we know about strategies of coping with the unintended consequences thus far? At the outset, it should be outlined that this issue revolves around paradoxes of awareness and ignorance of side-effects. The question posed by these puzzles is to what extent giving attention to these ramifications does block or inhibit our actions – i.e., the action-inattention paradox in Campbell, 2011; see attitudes concerning the side effects and repercussions of actions in Hirschman & Lindblom, 1962; ignorance and surprise in Gross, 2010). The coping with the unintended also regards the manner in which anticipation, nonanticipation or overrarted insight into the negative externalities waiting to happen may impact on our decisions and actions (see Hirschman, 1967). Eventually, the coping with the unintended also concerns the reification and alienation processes causing the situation that: "man, in connection with the unintended precipitations of his own conduct, comes to confront a world he may think he never made but which he did make, if with a considerable degree of inadvertence" (Schneider, 1971, p. 670).

Coping with the unintended consequences of institutional work

Coping with the unintended is the activity of individuals and organizations aimed at integrating, neutralizing or eliminating the outcomes of the institutional work which deviate or are not conform with their initial intentions. Emirbayer and Mische (1998) linked the problem of unexpected and counterintuitive outcomes with the practical-evaluative course of agency. Continuing their discussion, we see that there are different ways in which this might be positioned in the internal structure of the practical evaluation. The managing of the unexpected and the counter-intuitive might occur as mainly an internal[5] mode of coping, but may also evolve into taking concrete action. Further, we could spot it in relation to one of the five "tones" within the internal structure of practical evaluation – i.e., *problematization*, *characterization*, *deliberation*, *decision*, and *execution*. For instance, coping with the unintended might be an internal process mainly manifested during the problematization phase. Wherein, the institutional entrepreneur might decide that the undesirable outcomes are not so problematic after all. The internal coping might also occur at the decision level when the entrepreneur notices the unintended consequences, and yet decides not to counteract. During this internal mode of coping, the entrepreneur is retrospectively assigning meaning to the primal project of work. Thus, he or she often reformulates the initial intention (Meyer, 2008, p. 527). Conversely, coping with the unintended might also evolve into taking action in order to reinterpret or ameliorate the unintended outcomes. These steps might range from underlining the positive outcomes achieved in the process, to a one hundred percent change in approach and policy. It is this type of coping that constitutes the focus of this paper.

Strategies of coping with the unintended consequences of institutional work

The systematic treatment of unintended consequences of institutional work is mainly at the beginning (Lawrence et al., 2009, p. 11). Although it is time and again mentioned as a *must* for future research, there are not many analytical and conceptual developments that would extend beyond mere footnotes or digressions. As far as the existing case-studies are concerned, these seem to suggest that there is a relationship between the perception and evaluation of the outcome of institutional work and the modality of coping with the unintended consequences. In order to

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[5] Emirbayer and Mische (1998, p. 974) talk about the "internal conversation".

investigate this point we will explore patterns of handling the unintended in relation to various institutional work sequences.

With regard to purposive action, Portes (2000; 2010, 18-24) well-known typology of "[l]inear purposive action and five alternative action sequences" talked about the linear purposive action (as the linear pattern) and about the 'hidden abode', the latent function, the mid-course shift, the unexpected outcome and the lucky turn-of-events (as the non-linear patterns). When applying this classification to institutional work, the linear purposive action, the hidden abode, the latent function and the lucky turn-of-events would speak about institutional work that is successful (in a more or less linear fashion), the mid-course shift would depict institutional work that is changing, while the unexpected outcome would refer to "end-states that are qualitatively distinct, and sometimes the opposite of, those originally intended" (Portes 2000, p. 10). Thus, in the main, we would have three types of institutional work outcomes: institutional success (with the one linear and three non-linear sub-types), institutional mid-course shift (non-linear) and institutional failure (also non-linear). We find it relevant to add two more types: institutional compromise and constant reinstitutionalization (Pawlak 2011). The achieved classification algorithm is more general, and it also incorporates the evaluation of the institutional work outcomes. In our extension of the Portes typology, we speak about institutional success (with sub-variants that are more or less linear), institutional compromise, institutional shift in mid-course and constant reinstitutionalization. This is a more or less exhaustive classification of how actors would perceive their outcomes – see it at work, under different names, also in Jarzabkowski's (2005) five patterns of goal directed activity, abstracted from the strategy literature.

Institutional success

This is the ideal and linear scenario in which the entrepreneur has the perception that the institutional work has either occurred according to his or her initial intentions and envisaged means, or that the institutional work became successful due to an unexpected and improvised set of events. The former is the "pure" and linear scenario of institutionalization according to intentions. While the latter refers to non-linear alternatives, such as the hidden abode – when the

intended goal of the entrepreneur is not the apparent one – and the lucky turn-of-events – the intended goal is the announced one, but its achievement was improvised (see Portes 2000; 2010); or the serendipity effect – the lucky accident or discovery in institutional work (see Merton & Barber, [2004] 2006), etc.

What does the coping with the unintended entail in these scenarios? For instance, the experience of success in the institutionalization according to intentions seems to imply that the outcomes contrary to the initial goals are absent, that they fell beyond the awareness of the institutional entrepreneur, or that they are considered to be irrelevant. No unintended consequences, no coping with unintended consequences. So that, seemingly, the case studies of successful institutional work do not have much to offer if it comes to response strategies to the unintended. However, let us not jump to conclusions and be systematic about this. The case of institutionalization, according to the intentions of the actor performing the institutional work, is not as "boring" as it might seem at first sight. Sometimes the actors need to put in a great deal of effort to persuade others (and sometimes even themselves) that they achieved what they really intended. When it comes to coping with the unintended, at least two scenarios stand out.

First, there is the case in which the perceived success of institutional work hides the unintended consequences of the activity. The tendency to loose sight of the undesirable outcomes is due to the over-confidence and re-assurance gained by the social actors subsequent to the experienced accomplishments. These encourage them to reproduce their framings of reality. The actors simply get carried away and ignore the very possibility that unintended consequences might have occurred, and when these unwanted outcomes are eventually recognized, it might be too late. Illustrations can be found in the classical instance of "nothing fails like success", Miller's (1992) "Icarus paradox" (of how very successful companies determine their own downfall) and Thorstein Veblen's "trained incapacity" (see discussion in Wais, 2005). Vaughan ([2005] 2009, p. 34; see 1996) used the formula "normalization of deviance" to depict the phenomenon that years before the NASA's *Challenger* accident took place, "the technical anomalies that deviated from design performance expectations were not interpreted as warning signs but became acceptable, routine and taken-for-granted aspects of shuttle performance to managers and engineers". A sequel to this term may be termed "the normalization of unintended" and depict the process by which the great unforeseen unintended outcomes are usually preceded

by warning signs that get misrepresented. The undesired outcomes, which come into the open in these circumstances, are actual surprises. In cases of institutionalization according to intentions, the unintended consequences are *strong*, in the sense that social actor cannot predict the unintended outcome (see Linares, 2009), and they are less frequent, while the coping strategies are *spontaneous and unstructured.*

The scenario that the actors are alert and recapture the unintended outcomes in order to strengthen the institutional work they are engaged in is also possible. Yet this variant occurs rather when the goal of the institutional work is not yet accomplished and the actors are still in the course of mobilizing allies beyond their intentions. In organization sociology and public policy analysis, this incorporation of unintended consequences during goal-oriented activities is the script of adaptive management and intelligent trial and error (Woodhouse & Collingridge, 1993; Gross, 2010, p. 78-79). No doubt, in the unintended literature, the most fervent supporter of this trend was Hirschman (see Hirschman & Lindblom 1962, pp. 221-222). He argued for the discovery and incorporation of side-effects of development and public policy decisions in order to induce possible "linkages" with other decisions and actions. In new institutionalism, a similar discussion about the potential of "capturing" the unintended consequences of institutional work in order to strengthen the agency was advanced by Slager, Gond, & Moon (2012). These authors showed how the valorizing activities, i.e., the unintended consequences of standardization as institutional work, were eventually integrated by the standard making organization in the standardization process, and how this strengthened the standard in counter-intuitive ways – see also discussion about incidental and strategic rule-setting in Quack (2007). In all of these cases, the unintended consequences are somehow *awaited* and *assimilated* and the coping is *planned and monitored, yet also open to surprises*.

What about the coping with the unintended in non-linear scenarios of institutional work success? The new institutional literature is less generous in this regard, and we were less lucky in tracing corresponding examples. Thus, we must settle only for some insights and theoretical expectations. The hidden institutional work, for instance, was hinted at by Martí and Mair (2009, p. 97) in relation to agency of the powerless, as institutional work not so much about change as about "enlightenment and emancipation". We can talk of a similar hidden agenda also in Hirsch and Bermiss's (2009) "institutional 'dirty' work", where the institutions are preserved through

strategic decoupling. Though, their examples regarding the claims of post-socialist east European states to have privatized and created new capitalist markets seem more indicative of mechanisms of institutional work which are quasi-acknowledged/hidden and which remain latent for various organizational reasons (on social reasons and latent function see Boudon 1990, pp. 136-137). The lucky institutional turn-of-events, where the means of the institutional work are improvised, certainly raises questions about the error-correction mechanisms. According to Tilly (1996), the error-correction mechanisms, which are constrained by culture and previously established social relations, render the unintended consequences systematic. It is the working of this "invisible elbow" that helps the institutional entrepreneur to pull ashore eventually (see invisible elbow in Tilly, 1996). While the serendipity in institutional work, where chance and luck play a major role, seems to be indicative of some sort of garbage can model (see Cohen, 1972) in coping with the unintended consequences. Still, disorderly coping with the unintended need not be the case (see Mendonça, Cunha, & Clegg, 2008).

Institutional failure

This is the scenario in which the entrepreneur comes to the conclusion that his or her efforts of creating, maintaining or disrupting the institution were unsuccessful. There is a strong cognitive element in establishing that a certain institutional work has failed, and there is also the issue that certain types of institutional work are liable to particular kinds of institutional failure – see a discussion on failure patterns and perception in relation to distinct world views in public management in Hood (2000).

The recent institutional work literature lists some interesting contributions on institutional failure. For instance, McGaughey's (2013) paper on lightening protection standards showed that the institutional work triggered in order to replace one institution with a new one failed because it mobilized the defenders of the old institution. Thus, efforts to bring in new standards might increase the legitimacy of the previous ones. In a similar vein, Singh and Jayanti's (2013) study showed that the institutional work of pharmaceutical companies to set a new definition of the social roles of sales representatives failed when recognized by the broader public as illegitimate. The fact that the outcome of the institutional work was an introduction of the regulations

prohibiting the very practices promoted by the institutional entrepreneurs means that the institutional work actually "backfired" (Singh & Jayanti, 2013). In such instances, the unintended consequences are *dramatic* and *surprising*, sometimes, even *perverse* – see Boudon (1982).

Regarding the coping with the unintended consequences, the question to be asked is the extent to which these consequences were, indeed, unforeseen or unanticipated by the institutional entrepreneur. De Zwart (2015), supported in a recent study the necessity of focusing some more on *unintended but not unanticipated consequences* with several illustrations. For example, Susan Greenhalgh's research of one-child policy in China indicated that its initiators and makers anticipated the female population deficit, yet this did not prevent them from implementing it. This urges us to understand why, even when the negative outcomes are foreseen, the carrying out of the institutional work is still "the dominant strategy" (see Elster 2007, p. 305). Invoking, Hirschman (1967), this would be the *principle of the hiding hand* in institutional work – i.e., in certain types of institutional work, the difficulties and unintended consequences are *hidden from us, by us*; while in other types, on the contrary, we show *too much foresight and "sincerity" in the foresight of prospective difficulties*.

When speaking of institutional failure, we should also consider cases when failure occurs as a way of coping with dilemmas, unintended consequences of unsolvable problems, as in instances of *fracasomania* (complex of failure, Hirschman, 1975), successful failure (Seibel, 1996) and the preoccupation with failure (see Best, 2014). These examples concern coping with the unintended in cases in which the initial experience or prospect of unintended consequences becomes obsessive and it influences the very strategy and trajectory of institutional work. Although potent and certainly undesirable, in these cases, the unintended consequences are rather *weak*, in the sense that the social actors are able to predict them (Linares, 2009). This is due to the fact that they are more frequent (there is no one unintended consequence, but many unintended consequences) and the causal mechanism which led, or is possible to lead to the breakdown, is more or less clear. Although subject to debate, the reasons for the institutional failure are out in the open and the actors are aware of the failure.

The failure complex – *fracasomania* – was introduced by Hirschman (1975; see Santiso, 2000) in relation to the cognitive style of policy making and problem solving characteristic of Latin American countries (Brazil, Colombia and Chile in particular) in the late 1950s and early

1960s. When applying this notion to institutional work, *fracasomania* would depict the insistence on the failure of past efforts, the ignorance of cumulative knowledge, and the conviction of each institutional entrepreneur that he or she is starting the institutional work, or the dealing with the unintended consequences, "from scratch over and over again" (Hirschman, 1975, p. 394). The unintended consequences are *stubborn*, and the coping with these is *active*, *recurring* and *continuously imitative of foreign solution*, with the *ignorance of accumulated knowledge in coping, or of progress in this regard*. The entrepreneur manages the unintended by beginning the institutional work from the scratch.

Successful failure was indicated by Seibel (1996) as a modality of coping with quasi-solvable problems and unintended consequences by the nonprofit organizations, with the tacit complicity of officials and the larger public. His initial examples regarded the help for battered women and the employment of the handicapped. In relation to institutional work, the successful failure would depict the phenomenon that the sensible and stubborn institutional work, or unintended consequences of institutional work, are passed to other actors with a low expectation that these will ever be resolved. As with *fracasomania,* the unintended consequences are *stubborn*, yet the coping with these is *less enthusiastic, with low expectancy of efficiency,* and *rather the satisfaction that something is being done* (see Seibel, 2012, p. 164).

The preoccupation with failure is linked to the unintended consequences which are probable to take place in the future, or to be discovered to have already taken place but were previously misinterpreted. As in the cases of *fracasomania* and successful failure, there is an expectancy of unintended consequences. In this case however, this is not grounded in the experience of previous institutional failure. It emerges from the definition of the general situation as vulnerable to unintended outcomes and uncertainties regarding the success or failure of already developed institutional work. If in the obsession with failure the unintended consequences are visible and explicit, in the preoccupation with failure these are *contested, subjected to struggles, controversies and "hot negotiations"* (see discussion in Callon, 1998; see also Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007). Inspired by Niklas Luhmann and Michel Foucault, Best (2014) framed as provisional governance the activity of managing development programs by international financial institutions and donors, in circumstances of preoccupation with failure and provisional expertise. The term depicts an approach which is more *pro-active, indirect, symbolic and anticipatory of*

possible unintended outcomes. Viewed from the lens of institutional work, this is an activity with uncertain outcomes. The successes and failures can be revised after the fact. The response to the prospect of unintended consequences is to try to smuggle the institutional work as much as possible in a given structure and to embed it in the institutional reality.

Institutional compromise

This is the case when the outcome is perceived as partially and incompletely reflecting the intentions of the institutional entrepreneur. Sometimes the institutional work is simply undermined. Other times, the compromise occurs on the background of several deals and negotiations, being eventually accepted and, sometimes, even anticipated by the entrepreneur. Such situations with a happy ending were documented in Zietsma and Lawrence's (2010) study of boundary and practice work in the British Columbia coastal forest industry. According to their research, after 20 years of struggles and negotiations companies logging forests, environmental groups, aboriginal peoples and province authorities were able to achieve common understanding about the rules of forest industry. The new practices of forest industry and the boundaries of the field became an institutional compromise. Similarly, the already mentioned research, by Slager et al. (2012), on standardization as institutional work, showed that by re-capturing its effects, the standard was continuously modified. This happened via the constant exchange between the standard-maker (the institutional entrepreneur), the standard adopters and the third parties. The outcome was a compromise which, although not intended by the standard setting organization, was eventually welcomed because it strengthened the regulatory power of the standard. In this rather fortunate case, the institutional work partially recalls what Schickler (2001, p. 13) designated as "common carrier" – "whereby several groups support the change, but each group believes it will promote a different interest".

Identifying patterns of coping with the unintended for these variants is not an easy task. Schickler's (2001, p. 3) analysis of innovation, adaptation and change of U.S. congressional institutions showed that by adopting changes based on "untidy compromises among multiple interests", actors build institutions penetrated by tensions and contradictions. In institutional compromise, the unintended does not stem from cognitive errors, but from *tensions* and

contradictions among various interests and parties – "The 'unintended effects' of an institutional innovation often derive not from the failure of members seeking a single goal to anticipate the consequences of their actions, but rather from the tensions among the multiple interests that produced the change in question" (Schickler, 2001, p. 13).

In order to understand the coping with the unintended consequences, we should first master the manner in which these multiple interests interact and effect the institutional work, in more or less conflictual ways. For studies treating the unintended and paradoxical as the presence of seemingly contradictory features or pressures, and not as surprising and ironic outcomes of institutional work, we can turn to the quite proliferating, since the 1980's, interest in strategies of coping with contradictions and complexity in organizations and planned organizational change (Poole & Van de Ven, 1989; 2004; Seo, Putnam, & Bartunek, 2004; Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013). The unintended consequences further preserve the ironic element, yet this is not a situational irony but a more endemic and contingent one (see Hoyle & Wallace, 2008). In the *endemic* type, irony is a characteristic of all organizations; in the *contingent* one, it is seen as flourishing in certain historical conditions (Hoyle & Wallace, 2008). The coping with the tensions and contradictions will also reflect these characteristics.

Institutional mid-course shift

This is the case when the outcomes of institutional work were initially unintended and arose from the shift of goals or of institutional logic in the course of the work itself. Various scenarios are possible. Regarding the goals, for instance, on the basis of Warner and Havens' (1968) conceptualization, we can speak of goal displacement in institutional work when, due to the intangibility of intended state of affairs, an orientation occurs toward the peripheral goals of institution maintenance. Importantly, the intangible goals are further maintained. Paraphrasing March and Simon (1958, p. 185) this would be *Gresham's law of planning: Daily routine drives out institutional work.* Jarzabkowski (2005, p. 61), for instance, depicted the phenomenon of "inertial activity", wherein the goals persist, the performance is sub-optimal and "the activity drifts from the original purposes of the goal, such as firm profitability, towards maintenance of

the activity itself". From this moment on, coping with the unintended, if any, will target the outcomes of the maintenance work, and not those of the initial intentions which are intangible.

What about the coping with unintended consequences in institutional mid-course shift? The displacement of goals or of institutional logic also entails the displacement of the coping with the unintended. The actors not only have to manage the unforeseen outcomes and ramifications of the new goals or logics, but also those emerging from the shift itself. This process is more or less evident depending on the case study at hand. The more the shift in goals or logics occurs with the overt and direct participation of the social actors, the better the chances that the analyst will have access to its manifestations.

Gawer and Phillips (2013) delivered such an in-depth case study of "institutional work as logics shift" with conscious participation and feedback provided by the organization orchestrating the shift. They looked at the forms of institutional work performed by Intel Corporation while moving, during the late 1980s and 1990s, from a traditional supply chain logic dominated by computer assemblers to a logic stemming from quite different organizing principles. Gawer and Phillips identified forms of institutional work carried out by Intel Corporation externally (external practice work and legitimacy work) and internally (internal practice work and identity work). As far as coping with unintended consequences is concerned, the external works implied managing the external tensions caused by the shift of practices. While the latter consisted of attempts to orchestrate the shift as well as to deal with its ramifications, especially in terms of internal tensions brought by the participation in the new practices. Thus, it emerges that similarly to the coping with the unintended consequences per institutional compromise, herein the managing is directed towards *tensions* and *contradictions* and it is *endemic* and *contingent.*

Lawrence and Dover's (2015) paper on housing for the hard-to-house, showed how places (understood as meaningful locations) influence institutional work. Their discussion of places complicating the institutional work is a good illustration of institutional mid-course shift. Wherein, the centre for HIV positive individuals was set in order to change the institutions of community solidarity and expend its boundaries. Yet, the material design of the building and introduction of new actors (i.e. addicted persons injecting drugs) changed the aims of the institutional entrepreneurs. The centre became the advocate of a new practice of supervised injections and a model for similar centres worldwide. We see how the authors' conclusion nicely

captures the intricacies of what we refer to as institutional mid-course shift: "some places are incorporated into institutional work as 'practical objects' that introduce unexpected complexity to these processes" (Lawrence & Dover, 2015, pp. 20-21).

Constant reinstitutionalization

In this case, the institutional work managed to remove the previous institutional order, but has not yet entered the new one (see Jepperson, 1991, p. 152); or it managed to reinstate a new order, yet this is one which – because of the transition from the previous one – appears as chaos. The depiction of an institution as completely new, or as one which has just undergone some sort of transformation, requires a certain kind of power from the actor. It is a matter of social construction and persuasion. The same is the case for referring to the institution as a newer version of the initial institutional structure. According to the constructivist approach, the reproduction and transformation of social order are very fragile (Meyer, 2008, p. 527) and in that case, the attempts to reproduce or transform leads to questioning the legitimacy of the order. When reinstitutionalization is not achieved the connection between problems and solutions is not set, so actors are not freed form the burden of "all those decisions", because they must choose between competing solutions when facing a permanent problem (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Overall, the first instinct is to depict the institutional work as still in progress and not as having been finalized, one way or another – i.e., according or contrary to the initial intentions.

The continuous repetition of institutionalization seems to be the essential unintended consequence of reinstitutionalization. As illustrated by Maria Tullberg's (see Czarniawska, 2008, pp. 86-87) study of planned change in Swedish Rail, reinstitutionalization aimed to reduce anxiety and chaos in the environment generates new chaos which successive reinstitutionalization attempts to control. Reorganization happens to be compulsively repeated. The same point was made by McKinley and Scherer (2000) in relation to the unintended consequences of organizational restructuring. The authors revealed two mechanisms which promote further restructuring: the cognitive order produced for top executives, and the creation of turbulence in the organizational environment. Both of these provide feedback and encourage the development of restructuring as a self-reinforcing loop. The problem of constantly reforming public

administration was also thoroughly presented by Brunsson (2009). He showed that for modern organizations the reform stopped being something exceptional and became routine.

The process occurring in these illustrations might be depicted as a reinforcing unintended consequence, wherein the activity of reinstitutionalization becomes compulsively taken up over and over again. In the situation of constant reinstitutionalization as an unexpected consequence of institutional work, the actors do not perceive the results of their institutional work as definitive, or as having reached the bottom-line. They continue to fight over the definitions of the situation and over what problems should be connected with what solutions. The institutional work is still open and the entrepreneur is expected to try to change the institutional order according to his or her intentions, but he or she seems to be overwhelmed by the unintended consequences of his or her work. Paraphrasing the findings of Fairhurst, Cooren and Cahill (2002, p. 502) on successive downsizing, the reinstitutionalization waves are *a mix* of what the institutional work aims to accomplish but also the unintended consequences of the prior reinstitutionalization. This means that, in the constant reinstitutionalization, the managing of unintended outcomes of initial processes is viewed as a condition of (re)reinstitutionalization according to initial intentions. Coping with the unintended and the initial intention are part of the emerging intention in the course of reinstitutionalization. In this case, the unintended consequences are *reinforcing*, and coping with them has the tendency to be *compulsive and to get out of hand*.

And yet, reinstitutionalization should not solely be viewed in relation to obsessive institutional work. Regarding organizational restructuring, for example, McKinley and Scherer (2000) documented the existence of several "dampers or self-correcting loops (Masuch, 1985, p. 747) that balance the self-reinforcing dynamics" and make it occur in less typical waves. In addition to analogous dampers of constant reinstitutionalization, one could also imagine the extreme case where the entrepreneur gives up the institutional work altogether. He or she drops out or is replaced, leaves institutional chaos behind and the reinstitutionalization is to be taken up by other actors, if any. Hirschman's (1975) *fracasomania* with the actors' insistence on the failure of past efforts, and the conviction of each institutional entrepreneur that he or she is starting the institutional work anew, fits this profile quite well. Coping with the unintended is *abandoned* by the initial entrepreneur, or *hijacked* by a new one who deals with the situation by reinstitutionalization.

In her study of Swedish Public Television, Norbäck (2011) reformulated the idea of institutional work, claiming that this not only stands for creating, maintaining and disrupting the institutions, but also for connecting institutionalized solutions to problems. This brings us to the question of the durability and stability of institutions, and eventually to the problem of social order. If, paradoxically, the institutions are durable on the macro level because of the constant reinterpretation of connections between problems and solutions on the micro level, then the social order becomes an issue of social construction. As Norbäck (2011, p. 271) put it "stability does not lead to durability, since durability requires transformation, which is the opposite of stability". Viewed from this perspective, the unintended consequences of institutional work are again "*normalized*". Paraphrasing Goudsblom (1977, p. 149), we can state that, as in the work of Norbert Elias and Anthony Giddens, *yesterday's unintended social consequences are today's unintended social conditions of "intentional institutional work"*. Coping with the unintended in constant reinstitutionalization is the *form taken by institutional reproduction*.

Table 1: **Coping with the unintended consequences of institutional work**

Institutional work outcome	Unintended consequences	Coping with the unintended	Illustrations of coping with the unintended
Institutional success			
Institutionalization according to intentions (*already successful, linear*)	Ignored, normalized --> Strong	Absent, normalization of unintended consequences --> Spontaneous and unstructured	*Nothing fails like success*, Icarus paradox Miller's (1992) Trained incapacity (Thorstein Veblen quoted in Wais, 2005) Normalization of deviance (Vaughan, 1996; [2005] 2009)
Goal-oriented and adaptive institutional work	Awaited and assimilated	Planned and monitored, yet also open to surprises	Adaptive management and intelligent trial and error (Woodhouse & Collingridge, 1993; Gross, 2010) Standardization (Slager et al., 2012) Transnational law-making (Quack, 2007)
Hidden institutional work (*non-linear*)	Incessant (?)	?	The "hidden" abode (Portes, 2000; 2010) Hidden forms of institutional work (Martí & Mair, 2009)
Latent institutional function (*non-linear*)	Incessant (?)	?	The latent function (Merton, [1949] 1968; Boudon, 1990; Portes, 2000; 2010) Institutional "dirty" work (Hirsch & Bermiss, 2009)
Lucky institutional turn-of-events (*non-linear*)	Incessant	Error-correction mechanisms, which are constrained by culture and previously established social relations	Invisible elbow (Tilly, 1996) The lucky turn-of-events (Portes, 2000; 2010)
Serendipity in institutional work (*non-linear*)	Incessant	Logic in disorder, garbage can model	Serendipity effect (Merton & Barber, 2005) Serendipity in organizational practice (Mendonça, Cunha, & Clegg, 2008) Garbage can model (Cohen, 1972)
Institutional failure (experience // inevitability // prospect)			
Institutional failure (*as outcome*)	Unintended but not unanticipated consequences --> Dramatic, perverse	Hiding hand principle in institutional work	Hiding hand principle (Hirschman, 1967) Unintended but not unanticipated consequences (de Zwart, 2015)
The failure complex (*as way of coping and problem-solving*)	Stubborn	Active, recurring, imitative of foreign solutions, with the ignorance of accumulated knowledge in coping, or of progress in this regard	*Fracasomania* (Hirschman, 1975)

Successful failure (*as way of coping and problem-solving*)	Stubborn	Less enthusiastic, low expectancy of efficiency, satisfaction that something is being done	Successful failure (Seibel, 1996; 2012
Preoccupation with failure (*as way of coping and problem-solving*)	Contested, subjected to struggles, controversies and "hot negotiations" (Callon, 1998)	Pro-active, indirect, symbolic and anticipatory of possible unintended outcomes	Provisional governance (Best, 2014) Preoccupation with failure (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007)

Institutional compromise

Outcome of competing/converging interests	Tensions and contradictions among various interests and parties	Endemic, contingent	Compromise, unintended consequences in the sense of tensions and contradictions among multiple interests (Schickler, 2001) Endemic irony, contingent irony (Hoyle & Wallace, 2008) Dualities and tensions of planned organizational change, reinforcing cycles ways of managing (Poole & Van de Ven, 1989; 2004; Seo, Putnam, & Bartunek, 2004; Jarzabkowski, Lê, & Van de Ven, 2013)

Institutional mid-course shift

Shift of goals or of institutional logic in the course of the work itself	Tensions and contradictions as ramifications of the shift (internal and external)	Displaced, endemic, contingent	Managing the external and internal tensions caused by institutional work as logics shift (Gawer & Phillips, 2013) Incorporation of "practical objects" which introduce unexpected complexity (Lawrence & Dover, 2015)

Constant reinstitutionalization

Compulsively repeated institutionalization	Reinforcing	Tendency to be compulsive and to get out of hand	Planned change in Swedish Rail (Maria Tullberg's quoted in Czarniawska, 2008) Successive downsizing (Fairhurst et al., 2002) Organizational restructuring (McKinley & Scherer, 2000) Constantly reforming public administration (Brunsson, 2009)
The failure complex	Weak, all over the place	Abandonment (initial entrepreneur) or hijacked // Passive, rhetoric, institutional work from the scratch (new entrepreneur)	*Fracasomania* (Hirschman, 1975)
Connection between institutionalized solutions to problems	Normal, conditions of institutional work	Coping is the form taken by institutional reproduction	Institutional work (Norbäck, 2011)

Summary and conclusions

Having reviewed these patterns of coping with the unintended in the five types of institutional work outcomes, several conclusions emerge. To begin with, the presented cases support our starting assumption that the manner of coping with the unintended is linked with the awareness and evaluation of types of unexpected and unwanted outcomes which are derived from the framing of institutional work outcomes.

The existing literature helped us identify types of unintended consequences in relation to the five outcomes of institutional work (see *table 1*). In the case of institutionalization according to intentions, the unintended consequences are ignored (and ulteriorly strong) but can also be awaited and assimilated. Depending on whether we are dealing with the experience, inevitability or prospect of institutional failure, the unintended consequences are stubborn, dramatic and perverse, but these can also be subjected to negotiations and contestations. For the institutional compromise we identified unintended consequences as tensions and contradictions among various interests and parties. Similarly, with the institutional mid-course shift we came across tensions and contradictions as ramifications of the change in institutional goals or logics. Eventually, in terms of constant reinstitutionalization, we discussed instances of reinforcing weak, and normal unintended outcomes. The identification of these types allows us to move from the mainstream theoretical point of view where the unwanted effects usually fall under the common category of paradoxical ones. As such, we see that the less alert the institutional entrepreneur is to unwanted occurrences, the more paradoxical these effects will be when they eventually present themselves. Correspondingly, the continual recording and expectation of unintended consequences weaken the element of surprise in their perception.

Coping with the unintended is actually coping with types of unintended consequences (see *table 1*). For example, when the unintended consequences are initially ignored and then revealed as strong, coping will move from non-action to spontaneous and unstructured reactions. When there is preoccupation with failure and the unintended consequences are contested, coping is pro-active, indirect, symbolic and anticipatory of possible unintended outcomes. When there is a transformation of goals or of logics – institutional mid-course shift – the coping is displaced, endemic and contingent, and it focuses on the tensions and contradictions which emerged in connection with the shift.

In addition to these general conclusions, there are particular observations emerging from the discussion of patterns of handling the unintended in the five types of institutional work outcomes. First, it makes sense to talk about coping with the unintended even in situations of successful institutional work (Lawrence et al., 2013, p. 1029), which happen to be largely documented in the current literature. The institutional entrepreneur and the audience often do not recognize the unintended consequences of institutional work. In this case, coping with unintended consequences is absent and followed by spontaneous and unstructured reactions when the undesired effects are eventually recognized. Conversely, there are also instances of adaptive management and intelligent trial and error. In such planned and monitored institutional work, there is an effort to anticipate and assimilate the unintended. From initially being undesired, the outcomes might even be considered a strengthening proponent to the purposive activity. Such framing might often be the case of self-persuasion and reinterpretation of past intentions during the action.

Second, one should not necessarily experience institutional failure in order to engage in coping with the unintended. In addition to the institutional entrepreneurs who encounter failure as outcome, there are also those who experience failure as way of coping and problem-solving.

Third, our findings suggest that a "healthy" preoccupation with failure results in a behavior similar to the one of goal-oriented and adaptive institutional work within the broader category of institutionalization according to intentions. The problem is then to discern when preoccupation with failure becomes obsessive to the extent that it blocks the institutional work. There is a lot written in neoinstitutional literature about the awareness of the actor. While this seems to be linked with success, an actor who is *too aware* might also be unable to achieve his or her goals because of the exclusive focus on the unintended. The implication is that, in addition to alertness and close monitoring of outcomes, the institutional success might be achieved especially due to the ignorance of the unwanted outcomes. Invoking Hirschman (1967), this would be "the principle of the hiding hand" in institutional work. In an analogous manner we may infer that, sometimes, the "social skill" (Fligstein, 2001) of the entrepreneur stems from "hiding" the prospect of unintended consequences of institutional work from him or her.

Fourth, the continuum between institutionalization according to intentions and institutional failure is not unidimensional, and coping with the unintended in cases of institutional

compromises is rarely the "behavior in-between". The compromise might lead to a completely new institutional situation which redefines the purposes of the initial activity. We supported this argument by pointing to the transformation of goals during the institutional work. The multidimensionality stems from the fact that the institutional compromise is situated at the intersection of several institutional works, some pending, and some newly emerging, wherein the actors are supposed to show their social skills. The institutional compromise is achieved by negotiations with other actors, so that the mode of coping is often situation dependent and, sometimes, displaced. The transformation of goals may be also an effect of institutional mid-course shift occurring after the shifts of broader logic or because of the introduction of new actors and actions. The complexity of the conditions to be tackled by the institutional entrepreneur is surpassing his or her foresight. Thus things are getting complicated by practical objects and the need to focus on the maintenance of peripheral goals. While coping with these new conditions, the institutional entrepreneur shifts the goals of the institutional work and he or she eventually reaches the outcome which initially was not intended.

Fifth, the institutional work is not a linear purposive activity. It is frequently followed by pending reinstitutionalization which has the tendency to develop as a self-reinforcing loop, although the institutional context dampers this process. Thus, constant reinstitutionalization is a problem of agency in an unstable institutional setting, or one of agency leading to institutional instability. A focus on such instances may render the institutional scholars more sensitive to the issue of the perception of social order. As recently documented at large, durable and large organizations and administrations become compulsively self-reforming. When viewed from the outside, these occur as quite stable. And yet, the actors engaged in routinized reforms which feel like chaos.

Having discussed these possible patterns of coping with the unintended in relation with the awareness and evaluation of types of unexpected and unwanted outcomes of institutional work, the following question emerges: When are certain behaviors to be expected, and not others? Under what conditions does the institutional entrepreneur react to institutional failure by underlining the desirable outcomes, and when does he or she react by changing its institutional approach altogether? Although the answer is exogenous to our analysis here, the findings point to the fact that there is much more to explaining the patterns of coping with the unintended than the

linkage between the perceptions of types of unintended consequences discussed herein. Additional factors to be taken into account in further research include the visibility of the effects, the degree of commitment to the goal, the size and other characteristics of the constituency that is affected by the measure, the expectations with regard to the long run evolution of institutional work (are the unintended consequences just a minor set-back?), and the measurement of outcomes.

When approaching the issue of coping with the unintended, it is important to take into account the temporal dimension of the actors' orientation towards the outcomes of their action. The issue of time might be equally discussed in relation to the institutional entrepreneur, the third parties affected by the institutional work, and the researcher. Herein, we deliberately focused on the former. We put aside the possible perspectives of other actors who might be considering the outcomes of institutional work many years after this was conducted. We looked at the institutional entrepreneur's short-term responses to the arising new situations. We also did not follow coping with the unintended in the sense that actors arrive at some type of mental balance when remembering their past actions. The perspective of other actors was of relevance to us only if this overtly influenced the conditions of actions of the institutional entrepreneur and was assimilated by him or her[6].

The institutional entrepreneur was somewhat unable to catch sight of the institutional work in its entirety. His or her response to the unintended was possible only here and now. So, in this sense, we talked about temporal limits to awareness. Invoking Schutzian vocabulary, it might be stated that we looked at the dynamics leading from "in-order-to motives" to "because-of motives" in the institutional work (Schütz, 1951). Going back to the introductory discussion on the holes in the new institutional theory, we now see the manner in which coping with the unintended can be helpful in overcoming these setbacks more clearly. By studying the handling of unwanted effects we move within a conceptual framework which addresses the work itself, and not solely its outcomes. We are then capable of remedying the first theoretical shortcoming identified by Lawrence et al. (2013) regarding the abandonment in recent studies of the interest in the institutional work and the taking up of the institutional end results as an object of inquiry. Nevertheless, it emerges that the focus on work must always be connected with the focus on

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[6] For a discussion of attention, and not intention, being constitutive for social action, see Campbell (2011; 2012).

outcomes because actors evaluate the work and cope with obstacles and unintended side-effects in order to achieve their goals.

The focus on coping with unintended consequences is also helpful in understanding the development of reflexivity and the actual efforts of the actor engaged in institutional work. This pertains to the second issue raised by Lawrence et al. (2013) concerning the neglect of the reflective purposefulness issue. How we handle the unintended is an illustration of such an effort. Managing the contrary to intention effects is an everyday practice of the institutional entrepreneur who has to evaluate the results of his or activity and to adapt the approach accordingly. Coping is messy (Lawrence et al., 2013, p. 1029). It stimulates the entrepreneur's reflexivity and puts his or her skills to the test (Fligstein, 2001). Managing the unintended means dealing with all the small obstacles and accidental happenings which institutional work presupposes. It requires the persuasion and mobilization of the actors in a given field to co-operate, and more often than not leads to institutional compromises. To a certain extent, institutional work recalls Lindblom's (1959) "muddling through".

Eventually, the study of coping with the unintended is also able to shed some light on the manner in which the institutional entrepreneur is held accountable for the outcomes of the institutional work. This is the third issue indicated by Lawrence et al. (2013). The unwanted effects are taken into account by the institutional entrepreneur who changes the institutional setting. As shown by the case of constant reinstitutionalization, this might get out of the hand and cause an uncontrolled chain of events. This is an important warning for institutional entrepreneurs. When triggering the institutional action, the institutional entrepreneur is usually attributed responsibility for its consequences. By studying how he or she is coping with the unintended, and how various moral stances are engaged in the evaluation of outcomes and reformulations of intentions, we can gain an insight into the moral-normative aspects of institutional work.

This last aspect brings us to the problem of intention and allows us to add one more item to the Lawrence et al. (2013) list of ignored issues in recent studies of institutional work: The problem of intentionality. If the actor is held accountable for his or her intentions (as is the case in traditional Western ethics), what does it mean that the actor intends, or that he or she engages in purposive action? It is essential to answer this question because an improved treatment of

intentionality can advance a more effective problematization of the actors in the new institutional theory (Hwang & Colyvas, 2011). For this purpose it would be useful to frame intending as an on-going practice in the manner of Lawrence and Suddaby (2006). As institutional work covers actions of creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions, its study should also highlight the issue of intending. Concrete empirical research on categorically non-accessible consciousness and temporality of subjective meaning is a huge methodological challenge (Meyer, 2008, p. 529), but this problem could be tackled by investigating how actors are coping with the unintended outcomes of their institutional work. We depict coping not only as dealing with the external reality but also as reformulating, clarifying, transforming, reinterpreting, evaluating etc. the actors' own intentions (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Schütz, 1951). The study of coping with the unintended clarifies what it means to intend and how in the process of intending the actors spell out what the aims and purposes of their actions are.

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