

About the new institutionalism in a changing world

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To address the concept of *"New Institutionalism"* I take as a basis the contributions made by DiMaggio (1983) in which he describes it as a theory that seeks to propose a sociological institutions. This proposal aims, in addition to staying away from traditional thinking based on the economy, to explain how (and why) through which institutions emerging in a certain way in a defined context. The main premise of the theory, he argues, is the analysis of the way they interact and the effects of Institutions on society.

This position is confirmed in the text of Aspinwall & Schneider (2000a, p.4) when they claim that within the *"New Institutionalism"* analysis, institutions affect the outcomes. In their remarks *"institutions contain the single bias built into agents have their society over time, which in turn leads to Important distributional consequences"*.

Referring to the institutions in this new framework, there are discrepancies between the different fields of social sciences. From the point of view of political science, it is argued that the *"New Institutionalism"* is characterized by a *"clear lack of conceptualization of what Institutions are, or how they can be defined"* (Aspinwall & Schneider, 2000b, p.5).

From the point of view of rational, institutions are observed like (making up institutionalism) *"long-lived equilibrium patterns of rational behavior and thus realized outcomes in a strategic game that society plays"* (2000c, p.4). Finally, from the standpoint of sociology *"the institutionalist structure is culturally one" (...) "have roots and cultural institutions in fact sees culture and institutions as somewhat synonymous"* (2000d, p.5).

For the European Union, beyond the economic integration process, we may notice that *New Institutionalism* is of great importance because of the role that institutions in policy formulation and decision-making mechanisms that affect all states members. These countries face a constant dichotomy in which the interests, both national and European

Union, interact in dynamic intense. It is here that the new institutionalism becomes a thought of great importance to the study, understanding and analysis of the Union.

At this point, some argue that institutions influence society through their results or, on the other hand, society influence the institutions to benefit personally with their results. This system of government known as government multilevel, and is defined as the "*illuminates the intimate entanglement between the domestic and international levels of authority*" (Piattoni, 2009, p.168).

It is in this context of inter-governmental cooperation to institutions function interdependent way (independent variables) intervening outcome variable, and can be based on values, ideas and national standards in different levels.

Between the Rational, Sociological and Historical institutionalism

To begin, I want to define each of the above institutionalism to proceed to identify the similarities and differences between each of them.

Speaking of *Rational Institutionalism*, which approached from the perspective of Hall & Taylor (1996), is defined as a theoretical approach to study the institutions used by different stakeholders in order to maximize their utility.

The other hand, referring to *Historical Institutionalism* do from the perspective of Tilly (1984), where he refers to it as a method of social science to find sequences or patterns of social, economic, political behavior and change it over a period of time. According to the author, it is a method that seeks to measure "*large structures, large processes, and make huge comparisons*" (Tilly, 1984, p. 1503).

Finally, mentioning the *Sociological Institutionalism*, I turn to the definition given by Lowndes (2010) in which he states that it is a new way (New Institutionalism) which deals with the way institutions are creating meaning and / or felt in people who relate to it, "*providing theoretical important building blocks for normative institutionalism within political science*" (Lownde, 2010, p. 65).

Within these three institutionalist approaches, we can say in general that the best matches are the sociological and historical institutionalism; as the rational disagree on different levels of the previous two.

From a scientific point of view, sociological and historical institutionalism is similar in the sense that both provide that their groups have a shared identity either by common agreement such as past shared / common experience.

Meanwhile, the rationalist approach focuses on individuality above groups.

In a second reading, research designs, both sociological and historical approaches *Case Studies* are used to find connections between the different cases, lies in the rational approach are using macro analysis of narratives.

One of the most marked differences between approaches refers to the time horizon. While historical and sociological develop their work in the interests of long term, rationalism does in the short term. Likewise, the external validity of the first two is greater because it can be generalized, whereas the latter may have higher internal validity, but poor durability due to the volatility of the approach.

However, to observe them from the category of the role of institutions for human actions, we may find that there is a greater affinity between approaches of historical and rational institutionalism (both they consider the factor of chance as an important element for analysis), whereas for the sociological institutionalism the important factor is mostly cultural constraint.

Regarding the formation of preferences, both historical and sociological the endogenous process is rewarded while the rational approach rewards Exogenous to the model or decision as the main trainer of preferences.

Referring to the creation of institutions is presented, from my point of view, the only category in which the three approaches clearly differ. Regarding the *Sociological Institutionalism*, institutions are following a developmental factor; occasional sudden changes caused by events or new interpretations. In relation to the *Historical*, institutions are resulting from the delegation and have the characteristic of being potentially expansive.

Finally, the creation of institutions in the *rational* approach is based on collective dilemma as a dynamic force.

Ultimately, speaking of the historical development of the institutions we all show limits compared to others. The sociological institutionalism suggests that the evolution of institutions is the product of cognitive processing and memory of common events. Regarding historical institutionalism, the evolution of institutions occurs in consequence of contingent processes that depend on their experience, and their consequences. In both cases, we talk about the process from back to front or from the past to the present.

In a major conceptual shift, or at least greater than the above two cases, rational institutionalism explains the evolution of institutions around the negotiation process and based on evolutionary selection; that is, a process dependent on the pursuit of maximum profit and not as a result of past processes.

References

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