The challenge of sustaining organizational hybridity: The role of power and agency[1]

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Abstract
Hybrid organizations harbor different and often conflicting institutional logics, thus facing the challenge of sustaining their hybridity. Crucial to overcoming this challenge is the identification process of organizational actors. We propose a theorization of how power relations affect this process. More specifically, we argue that an actor's power influences her own professional identity: an increase [decrease] in her power, via the heightened [diminished] control that this power provides her over organizational discourse, boosts [threatens] her identity. Our theorization has implications for the longevity of a newly adopted logic within an organization. If the new logic modifies incumbent power relations, the identities of (formerly and newly) powerful individuals are influenced, which may lead these individuals to promote or resist the new logic, thereby affecting the odds that the logic will survive within the organization. We illustrate our theorization with a case study in a professional service firm. Our study contributes to nascent research on hybrid organizations by emphasizing the role of power and agency in the longevity of hybridity.

Keywords:
Power, resistance, agency, identity, organizational discourse, institutional hybridity, commercial logic, professional logic, bureaucratic logic, knowledge management, professional service firm, lawyer.

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1 Introduction

The environment surrounding corporate law firms has much changed in the last decades (Ackroyd and Muzio, 2007, Galanter and Henderson, 2008). Society has come to require more transparency and accountability, legal professionals are asking for more autonomy and discretion, and clients request not only improved cost efficiency but also shorter delivery time and new service specializations. To accommodate these demands, many law firms have become hybrid (Cooper et al., 1996; Greenwood et al,. 2011; Smets et al., 2012) and combine different, often conflicting, institutional logics: the bureaucratic logic, the commercial logic and the professional logic. An institutional logic here refers to the socially constructed frame of reference that organizational actors use to infuse their work with meaning. This frame includes components that Thornton et al. (2012) categorize as material (e.g., organizational structures, information systems, managerial controls) or symbolic (e.g., meaning and justification of procedures).

The notion of 'professional' logic does not have a fixed meaning, but is associated with a specific type of work (i.e., the professions) and organization (i.e., the professional service firm or PSF). The concept of the PSF is similarly ambiguous (Kipping and Clark, 2012). While it can refer to a rich variety of organizations, a canonical example is the law firm that mostly employs accredited professionals who possess expert niche knowledge and define appropriate conduct via an ideology of self-directed controls (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). This ideology, called professionalism, professional ethos or professional logic (Brint, 1994; Frette, 2007; Malsch and Gendron, 2013), refers to two sets of norms (Von Nordenflycht, 2010: 163): norms of ethical conduct and dedicated service requiring self-discipline (Leicht and Lyman, 2006) and norms of

self-regulation requiring autonomous decision-making (Evetts, 2013). Because scholars question the role of dedicated service in daily professional reality (Brint, 1994; Sugarman and Pue, 2003), we focus on the second norm: autonomous decision-making, characterized by a predilection for discretion (i.e., self-reliance on one's judgment) and inner-directed or lateral peer control (Lazega, 2001). Professionals justify autonomous decision-making by arguing that their work is opaque and difficult to assess based on ex-ante criteria (Von Nordenflycht, 2010). Recent organizational shifts towards fewer self-directed controls and heightened work routinization have threatened autonomous decision-making less in law than in other fields, including accounting (Malhotra et al., 2006), management consulting (Kipping and Clark, 2012), medical practice (Briscoe, 2007) or engineering (Malhotra and Morris, 2009). Legal service PSFs have remained smaller and governed by more conservative structures that are less receptive to innovation or external pressure to change (Malhotra et al. 2006: 191). The professional logic shapes the identity of lawyers more than that of accountants, consultants or engineers; it encourages lawyers to see themselves as autonomous employees, able to manage work in a quasi-entrepreneurial fashion, according to their profession's norms (Dubar and Tripier, 1998).

The commercial logic stresses the outcome of the decision-making process: the revenues generated. The commercial and professional logics are said to have always coexisted, especially in corporate law (Dezalay, 1995). The commercial logic is, however, enjoying rising prominence, notably in large legal houses (Ackyod and Muzio, 2007). Promotion decisions (e.g., advancement to partner) often emphasize a lawyer's ability to reach targeted hours billed (Galanter and Henderson, 2008). Client control over the means and output of a lawyer's work (Malhotra and Morris, 2009) has reached such levels that Leicht and Fennell (2001: 106-197)

speak of 'client capture'. For instance, a client's internal legal and tax department may dictate an outcome that external lawyers are merely asked to legitimize. The commercial logic encourages lawyers to see themselves as salespeople able to bill high fees and as relationship managers able to build long-lasting client bonds that secure an ongoing revenue stream.

The bureaucratic logic stresses a different aspect of the decision process outcome: work rationalization and cost efficiency (Kitchener et al., 2000). The bureaucratic logic took hold as competition and shifts in client demands encouraged law firms to promote efficiency via bureaucratic and procedural controls (Malhotra et al., 2006). The emphasis on bureaucratic rather than self-directed and lateral controls is a core concern in the PSF archetypes literature (Malsch and Gendron, 2013), which stresses that classic and collegial professional partnership structures have been discarded for more business-like arrangements. Still, hierarchical controls are not entirely new to PSFs, as illustrated by the overarching position that equity partners have always enjoyed. What is new is the creation of non-partner track positions that obfuscate the PSF's pyramidal structure and multiply opportunities for hierarchical controls (Galanter and Henderson, 2008). Procedural controls, perhaps least familiar to the traditional coordination mechanisms in law firms, involve standardized templates, 'best practices', approved protocols (Brivot, 2011), knowledge management systems (KMS), task specialization, management by objectives and explicit performance indicators. Since the mid-1990s, many large PSFs have adopted a KMS despite the resistance of professionals and have specialized tasks by designing practice area concentrations and poaching teams of specialized lawyers from rivals (Empson, 2001; Malhotra et al., 2006). The bureaucratic logic encourages lawyers to see themselves as

responsible for efficiently producing output by relying on organizational resources that reduce costs for the organization's owners, its equity partners.

The three logics have long been viewed as mutually exclusive (Freidson, 2001) or, at best, as able to co-exist only in an unstable and fragile equilibrium (Greenwood et al., 2011; Lowendahl, 2000; Malsch and Gendron, 2013). Organizations combining various logics are often seen as bound to eventually shed their hybridity: one logic, it is argued, ends up dominating the other(s) (Reay and Hinings, 2009). Recent work challenges this view by illustrating that logics can be layered, sedimented and combined in the long run (Brock et al., 2007; Malhotra et al., 2006; Muzio et al. 2013), notably in international law firms (Empson et al., 2013). Managing hybridity requires that organizations address harmful internal conflicts that arise when employees subscribing to one logic form a coalition to resist the influence of another logic (Pache and Santos, 2010). To this end, organizations can 'create a common organizational identity that strikes a balance between the logics the organization combines' (Battilana and Dorado, 2010: 1420). Doing so is fairly unproblematic for new organizations that hire early career professionals (Ibarra, 1999) with limited experience and few preconceived notions of how to behave and what to value. Hiring and socialization policies can then teach and reinforce desired behavior and values. In contrast, older organizations cannot, upon becoming hybrid, replace employees with new recruits. Instead, they engage with employees who, due to their background, have absorbed the incumbent institutional logic(s) into their professional identity. If a new logic is introduced, individual identities can be uprooted.

Our theorization zeroes in on these identities. We emphasize the link between an actor's professional identity and her power, drawing on a rich literature on identity construction,

organizational discourse and power, specifically Weber's (1978) concept of power. At the heart of our work lies the argument that a shift in an actor's power ultimately influences her own professional identity. In particular, our theorization lays out how those whose power rises can nourish their identity (via their heightened control over organizational discourse), whereas those whose power declines see their identity threatened (due to their diminished ability to steer discourse). The former will, in turn, promote that which boosted their power and nourished their identity, whereas the latter will resist that which decimated their power and threatened their identity. In other words, when power shifts, individual identities are altered, which shapes an individual's reaction to that which caused the power shift. Accordingly, when the adoption of a new institutional logic modifies incumbent power relations, individuals may promote or resist the new logic, depending on how their identity is impressed on by the power shift. Our theorization thus implies that power relations are interconnected with the longevity of organizational hybridity. We illustrate our theorization via a case study in a corporate law firm that experienced a shift in power relations during our sample period.

Our theorization accentuates the role of agency in organizational hybridity. Prior work on hybridity has given only limited consideration to agency (Alvesson et al., 2008; Lawrence and Suddaby, 2005; Thornton et al., 2012). We link organizational hybridity with agency via identity construction. While research debates the role of the 'who' involved in building identities, it focuses on agents who shape the identity construction of *other* organizational actors (Alvesson et al., 2008; Brocklehurst, 2001; Glynn, 2000; Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003), without exploring the twin question of whether and how agents can mould their *own* identities. We address this question and argue that individuals can shape their own identities via their power. Alvesson et al.

(2008) point out that the connection between power and organizational hybridity deserves more attention as it has been largely sidestepped by prior work, which has explored the various organizational strategies for dealing with institutional logics. Yet Thornton et al. (2012: 145) encourage scholars to investigate power in the context of organizational hybridity and to explore 'how multiple logics constrain and enable actors' ability to resist and shape ongoing political struggle (...). Much more research is needed on the conditions under which actors are able to resist the imposition of new logics and practices, as well as how counter-mobilization occurs.' We respond to this call by focusing on both agency and power as well as by contending that they interact to influence the longevity of organizational hybridity.

Our work on power reinforces the conjecture of Pache and Santos (2010) that conflicts between carriers of different logics may emanate not only from ideological disagreements but also from power considerations. In line with other research on power and identity construction, they view power as static and stable, a limitation they recognize (Holmer-Nadesan, 1996; Simpson and Macy, 2004). In contrast, we see power relations as dynamic in that they are subject to forces. Our theorization highlights that these forces arise within social relations as organizational actors consent to provide an individual with power by agreeing with the basis underlying this power. When this basis shifts (e.g., after the adoption of a new logic), power accrues to different individuals. Little research on organizational hybridity has jointly considered power and consent. Rather, power is often approached from the perspective of harmful internal conflicts that require damage control strategies (Battilana and Dorado, 2010; Pache and Santos, 2013: 995). Our study emphasizes that power can involve not only internal conflict but also

consent, thereby further underscoring the role of agency. We hope that our work provides a springboard for future work on how agency, power and organizational hybridity are interlaced.

2 The role of power relations in professional identification

Our theorization starts by discussing shifts in power relations and the role of institutional logics therein before detailing how such shifts can shape an actor's identity construction process.

2.1 Power relations

Power has been extensively theorized by various scholars, including Clegg (1989), Giddens (1984), Lukes (1974) and Weber (1978). Theorizations differ along the dimensions that characterize power and address manifold questions (e.g., Does power involve outside or self regulation of the mind and body? What is the role of structure versus agency as antecedent and/or consequence of power? Is power a positive enabling force or a negative constraining restriction?) (Lawrence et al., 2012). We draw on the work of Weber (1978: 53) who defines power as 'the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests'. This definition highlights the social nature of power: power lives in the relation between the powerful individual and other organizational actors whose implicit or explicit consent is implicated (Courpasson, 2000). Although much research has dealt with the conflicting nature of power relations and the passive role of organizational actors therein (Foucault, 1978; Simon and Oakes, 2006), we emphasize not only the consensual nature of power relations, but also the active role of organizational actors. Actors can actively choose to provide consent to a powerful individual based on the rationale they narrate themselves to justify this consent. The consent shapes the

narrative contract between themselves as the audience and the powerful individual as the storyteller. The narrative contract defines what is permitted by the audience in how the storyteller represents facts (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004; Gabriel, 2004). The audience is more tolerant towards the storyteller when it agrees with the rationale in which the storyteller's power is rooted. Weber (1978), in his definition above, speaks not of the rationale but of the *basis of power*. Drawing on the work of Finkelstein (1992), we detail four such bases: (1) structure (formal organizational structure and hierarchical authority), (2) ownership (an individual's ownership claims), (3) expertise (her ability to contribute to organizational success) and (4) prestige (her personal prestige or status).

The professional, commercial and bureaucratic logics each involve a power basis that revolves around expertise, although expertise of a different kind. The professional logic values expertise that highlights professionalism, thus sustaining an expertise basis of power that focusses on judgment and autonomy. The commercial logic is anchored in revenue generation and values professionals who produce business via client relations, thereby speaking to an expertise basis of power that stresses relationships. The bureaucratic logic underscores work rationalization and cost efficiency, emphasizing an expertise basis of power moored in specialized technical knowledge differentiated by task and deployed in isolated client transactions. In other words, each institutional logic highlights a distinct expertise: the professional logic promotes professional expertise, the commercial logic endorses relationship expertise and the bureaucratic logic favors technical expertise. A logic can, via the specific expertise it underscores, bear on the power bases that organizational actors use for consenting to power. When there is a shift in organizational logics, power bases that actors approve of change

as well, as do power relations. Our discussion of the link between institutional logics and power leads us to postulate the following proposition.

Proposition 1. A shift in the institutional logics that characterize an organization may be accompanied by a shift in organizational power relations.

2.2 Organizational discourse

Scholars differ widely in their definition of organizational discourse, which has no fixed agreed-upon meaning.[i] We align ourselves with Alvesson (2004) who, relying on Watson (1994), contemplates discourse from the perspective of language in social circumstances. According to Watson (1994: 113), discourse is 'a connected set of statements, concepts, terms and expressions which constitutes a way of talking and writing about a particular issue [...]'. Discourse, in other words, pertains to a means of communication that revolves around language.

Under the Weberian view of power, discourse is controlled by powerful individuals who shape it at two points. The first point is that of the origin of discourse: powerful individuals can shape the content of discourse (i.e., what is or is not said?), its form (i.e., how is something said or not said?), and its broader environment (i.e., where is something said and by whom?) (Fairhurst and Cooren, 2004). The second point is that of reception: the discourse of powerful individuals is accepted by an organizational actor who consents to the basis on which their power rests. Such individuals acquire credibility as storytellers, which promotes the verisimilitude of their discourse (Gabriel, 2004).

A discourse whose points of origin and reception are shaped by powerful individuals becomes dominant among the many, and often contrasting, discourses that compete within an

organization (Kornberger and Brown, 2007) and 'vie with one another for supremacy' (Thomas and Linstead, 2002: 75). Because power relations shape organizational discourse, shifts in power relations imply a change in organizational discourse, as our second proposition highlights.

Proposition 2. A shift in organizational power relations may be accompanied by a shift in organizational discourse.

2.3 Professional identities

An individual's professional identity is her self-concept defined by her role as an organizational member. Identities continuously change: they represent a process of becoming rather than a state of being (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003). Identity changes can be substantial, depending on the mismatch between an individual's self-understanding and the frame of reference provided by the social ideals that define her historic and social context (Alvesson et al., 2008). This mismatch is redressed during her identity construction process when she updates her prior beliefs about the self via narratives she tells herself (Brown, 2001; Whittle and Mueller, 2012). Narratives are modified as she makes sense of her context through iterative interactions with a salient audience (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004).

A key salient audience is the organization that employs her. Drawing on the interactions with the organization and its dominant discourse, she forms a desired identity image, an inner picture of her self (Alvesson, 1990). Self-images, if corroborated by the organization and its dominant discourse, are absorbed into her self-narratives and become part of her identity (Schlenker, 1985). Identity construction, according to Czarniawska (1997: 49), involves a 'continuous process of narration where both the narrator and the audience are involved in

formulating, editing, applauding and refusing various elements of the ever-produced narrative'. The individual emerges from the identity construction process with a professional identity that has integrated the dominant discourse of the organization. Humphreys and Brown (2002: 425) then speak of identification, the 'self-perception of an active and positive connection between the self-narrative and the dominant identity narrative of the organization'. A powerful individual, who steers the dominant discourse, can thus influence the identity construction of other actors and guide their meaning construction to the 'preferred redefinition of organizational reality' (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991: 442).[ii]

Actors who absorb the dominant discourse self-select into social categories, their in-groups (Hogg and Terry, 2000; Scott and Lane, 2000). In-groups are reshuffled and reconfigured as the professional identity of organizational actors changes: actors who adhere to similar meanings and have related professional identities coalesce and cluster whereas those who heed different and opposing meanings drift apart and separate. It is via these changing in-groups that the identities not only of organizational actors in general but also of powerful actors in particular are influenced. Consider an individual whose power rises and who can, via her heightened control over organizational discourse, attract others into her in-group. In-groups are at the root of the social aspect of their member's professional identity (Tajfel, 1981) and shape their identity work by helping them make sense of their social context and their place therein (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004; Kärreman and Alvesson, 2001; Scott and Lane, 2000). An in-group that grows and welcomes new actors signals a match between a member's meanings and those endorsed by the group (Rao et al., 2000). The identity of in-group members, including that of the powerful individual, is confirmed and nourished (Milton and Westphal, 2005). Now take an individual

whose power diminished and who, via her lesser control over organizational discourse, attracts fewer actors to her in-group. A shrinking in-group signals a mismatch between a member's meanings and those promoted by the group (Rao et al., 2000). The identity of in-group members, including that of the powerful individual, is undermined. An individual's leverage over organizational discourse thus affects not only the professional identity of other organizational actors but also her own professional identity, as stressed in our third proposition.

Proposition 3. A shift in organizational discourse may be accompanied by a shift in identity of organizational actors, including those with power.

2.4 Institutional logics

An individual whose power declined and whose in-group shrank faces an identity dilemma (Humphreys and Brown, 2002). To maintain a positive self-image (Tajfel, 1981) and protect her identity, she could join another in-group. The individual would then have to agree with the discourse promoted by the new in-group. This discourse, however, originates from newly powerful organizational actors, whose power basis differs from that of the formerly powerful individual (otherwise her power would not have declined in the first place). Consider a formerly powerful individual whose power basis was relationship expertise and a newly powerful individual whose power basis is technical expertise. The relationship expert built her identity around relationship expertise: there is then a mismatch between her self-narrative and the dominant discourse, which centers on technical expertise. The relationship expert fails to integrate this discourse into their professional identity and is unlikely to join an organizational group defined by technical expertise.

To protect her identity, the relationship expert can, alternatively, prevent her incumbent in-group centered on relationship expertise from shrinking further and attempt to attract new members. She may, for this, rely on a shadow discourse that contrasts with the official narratives underwritten by the organization. The reality depicted by official narratives depends on meanings and interpretations, which are open to be re-fixed (Clegg, 1994), notably by the shadow discourse (Holmer-Nadesan, 1996). This discourse can, for instance, promote the individual's former power basis (e.g., relationship expertise) and discredit the power basis newly endorsed by the organization (e.g., technical expertise). Whether the individual is successful in resisting depends on the appeal of the shadow discourse: if it gains wider acceptance than the dominant discourse, because it better resonates with the identities of other organizational actors (Clegg, 1994; Ashcraft, 2005), the new power basis may be demoted and, with it, its underlying institutional logic. Our last proposition illustrates that a logic can be affected by the identities of formerly and newly powerful individuals, and those of other actors.

Proposition 4. A shift in the identity of organizational actors may be accompanied by a shift in the institutional logic of the organization.

In sum, our theorization underscores that institutional logics, power, discourse and identities are linked, as illustrated in Figure 1.
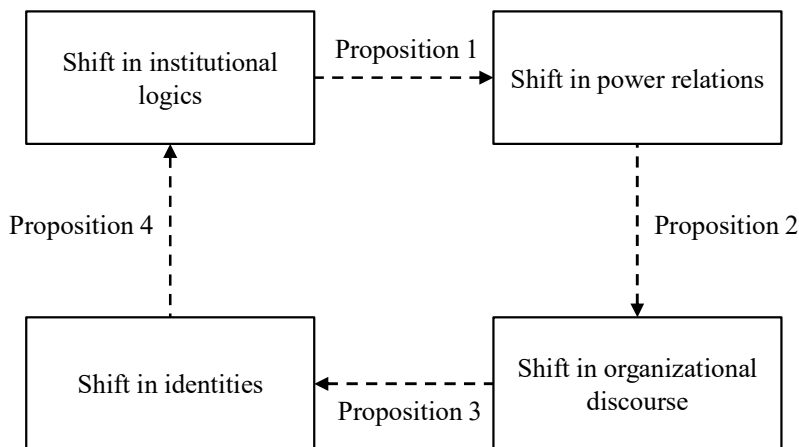
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┌─────────────────────┐   Proposition 1    ┌─────────────────────┐
│ Shift in institutional│ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─► │ Shift in power       │
│ logics              │                    │ relations            │
└─────────────────────┘                    └─────────────────────┘
        ▲                                              │
        ┊ Proposition 4                   Proposition 2 ┊
        ┊                                              ▼
┌─────────────────────┐                    ┌─────────────────────┐
│ Shift in identities │ ◄─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ │ Shift in organizational│
│                     │    Proposition 3   │ discourse            │
└─────────────────────┘                    └─────────────────────┘
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Figure 1: The link between institutional logics, power, discourse and identity

3 Method

We developed our theorization from a rich literature on power, identity and discourse. We refrained from using an inductive approach that builds on data, as doing so can be problematic for theory building. Boxenbaum and Rouleau (2011) point out that data is insufficient for theory building because theory builders necessarily approach empirical material with preconceived notions about organizational life that guide their data analysis. Astley (1985) and Weick (1989) further argue that the complexity of organizational phenomena requires conceptual categories that act as a lens for perception, as nothing is perceived except through this lens. Accordingly, we use our data for illustrating our theorization, thereby stepping into the footprints of Butler (1997: 944) who contends that 'the test of an illustrative case is the richness of its story in relation to the general picture given by a broader framework of which it is an exemplar (…).'

To provide this richness, we collect data about CaseFirm (further described below) from 1999 until 2011, proceeding in two phases. Between 1999 and 2005, we gathered archival data including memoranda sent by the knowledge management system (KMS) sponsors to organizational members, KMS user guidelines, document downloads, statistical reports prepared by the knowledge manager, and recommendations about how to create a KMS-friendly context written by the headquarters of the international law firm network that CaseFirm belonged to.

Between 2005 and 2011, we attended seven meetings, after which we taped and transcribed a total of 66 one-on-one interviews with 46 informants (in the 12 instances where taping was not permitted, we took detailed minutes right after each interview). All interviews involved current and retrospective accounts of whether/how individuals used the KMS and what they thought about its impact on their work and their relations with colleagues. Retrospective accounts have often been used by management researchers and are viewed as valid research tools, if carefully used (Forgues and Vandangeon-Derumez, 1999; Miller et al., 1997). Nonetheless, they can involve various problems, including ex-post rationalizations, memory lapses or motivations by interviewees to present themselves advantageously (Golden, 1992). To mitigate such problems, we triangulated interview accounts with archival data. We compared the drop in KMS usage reported during a certain period with actual document downloads. We found few instances of decoupling between interview data and other data sources.

4 CaseFirm and its knowledge management system

At the start of the sample period in 1999, CaseFirm, located in France, had an organizational structure of the professional partnership archetype described in Greenwood and

Suddaby (2006). It employed 55 accredited lawyers who specialized mostly in tax law and seven legal secretaries. The lawyers were trained to deliver tax and legal advice to clients whom lawyers reportedly saw as their own property. The division of labour was not prescribed by the national office but specific to each local office. Routine operational decisions were made by CaseFirm's past and current managing partner. Key decisions were taken collegially during 'partners meetings' organized on an ad hoc basis with all partners, of which there were 18 in 1999. Knowledge was shared informally.

CaseFirm then introduced, in 1999, a centralized KMS based on the advice of the managing partner. At the time, CaseFirm was growing its employee base, both internally (by recruiting junior lawyers) and externally (by poaching from rivals entire expert teams in legal niche areas, including insurance law and real estate law). Its profits were declining as local law firms fiercely competed for corporate legal and tax services. Knowledge management was a new managerial fad from the United States. CaseFirm's managing partner was sure that a KMS would boost its productivity. Powerful members of the international legal network that CaseFirm belonged to pressured CaseFirm's managing partner to adopt a local KMS and to connect it to other KMSs in the network. To draft the functional specifications of the KMS, all CaseFirm partners were consulted during meetings that dissipated initial fears and resistance. The KMS was presented as an optional decision aid aimed at codifying best practice opinion letters that were to be diffused throughout CaseFirm. It would speed up training, make quality more consistent and allow lawyers to respond faster to simple client requests. The optional nature of the KMS, combined with its already widespread use amongst local and foreign law firms, ultimately convinced the most hostile partners to rally behind it. Rationalizing the dissemination

of codified knowledge ended up being viewed as a natural next step, particularly since many organizational actors were curious about opinion letters written by newly 'acquired' colleagues.

The KMS was designed in a 'mass customization' perspective. For example, one of the meta-tags that contributors of 'knowledge' filled in when uploading a new opinion letter to the KMS was its production costs (i.e., the number of hours spent developing the letter). This meta-tag allowed future users of the letter to consider production costs when billing new clients. All production resources (including standardized contracts, memos, reports) that tax lawyers could download from the KMS and adapt to their specific client context had to be billed. This billing approach differed greatly from the one previously prevailing at CaseFirm: the only cost object that then mattered for billing was the number of hours lawyers spent working on an engagement. Introducing the KMS was a stepping stone for CaseFirm in emphasizing a bureaucratic logic.

KMS adoption was not immediate. Document uploads, few between mid-2000 and December 2004, rose significantly in 2005, which reportedly caused document downloads to also climb, to an average of 24 downloads per lawyer and month. KMS usage progressively slowed from 2005 onwards: average monthly downloads per lawyer stood at 15 by the end of 2010. According to the knowledge manager, the KMS core, which contained technical documents produced by lawyers in-house (as opposed to outside documents purchased from databases or general documents about clients and target industries) was moribund in 2011.

By the end of our sample period in April 2011, CaseFirm employed 287 accredited lawyers mostly specializing in tax law, including 40 partners and 74 salaried employees responsible for administrative tasks like secretarial work, accounting, information technology,

human resources, communication, public relations and knowledge management. The division of labour had been standardized: it was organized according to a matrix structure by lines of service and business identical across all local offices. Client contacts were no longer 'owned' by individual lawyers but shared between one lead partner and one or more engagement partners and centralized in a database to facilitate the distribution of monthly client newsletters.

5 Illustration of the theorization

Our illustration follows the chronology of the case: it starts with the organizational context before CaseFirm introduced a new logic and ends with the (partial) revocation of this logic a decade later. The various propositions from our model are illustrated along the way. At the start of our observation period, CaseFirm was hybrid: it harbored the professional and commercial logics. Its most powerful individuals were partners whose power had two primary bases: structure (their hierarchical position in CaseFirm) and expertise. Their expertise was built mainly around client relationships that generated revenues for CaseFirm, yet also involved judgment and autonomy. Partners thus blended commercial and professional logics: they had harmoniously integrated both of them into their identity.

Legal Partner: What is nice with this job is the unique client relationship that you have, like a family doctor with his patients. Your role is to find solutions to problems and that's stimulating. You are independent, you can say things… I mean you can say 'black' even if the client thinks 'white'.

Tax Partner: It is quite clear that what I like most about my job is the intellectual dimension of work. Thinking, writing, the satisfaction that your clients express at the end,

finding solutions to complex issues… That's the main source of gratification. Of course, finishing an assignment and billing it well is also very important. The financial aspect is very important.

CaseFirm had no central staffing function. Instead, managers informally offered their help to partners. A well-functioning manager-partner pair eventually became stable: partners who identified a few 'good' managers rarely risked working with unknown others unless they had to (e.g., their favorite manager was unavailable). Because of their long-term work relations with selected partners, managers often adopted – purposely, as in the quote below, or unconsciously – partners' behavior and interpretive schemes, including their commercial and professional logics. Partners, via their structural and expert power, thus spread meanings consistent with their professional identity.

> Senior legal consultant: I have learned to write in the same way as certain partners here. It is not disagreeable because the people I am talking about write well. (…) Because, when I hand them my work, it is useless for me to try and use another approach (…). But you know, it is a constraint because, fundamentally, in a profession like ours, we are supposed to develop our own analyses, our own opinions but I don't think that it is encouraged at [CaseFirm]. You are better off replicating someone else's style.

The quote below depicts how a manager absorbed the blended commercial and professional logic of the partner he most worked with. This blended logic stressed the importance of building, with each client, a long-term personal centered on trust.

> Researcher: How did you win this client engagement? (…)

Manager: He is an old client of [Name of partner] and he now always goes through [Name of partner]. The *intuitu personae* basis of trust is essential in our work.

We observed a similar adoption pattern among junior associates, dampened however by the high turnover rate typical of this social stratum in CaseFirm. Junior associates chose managers as much as they were selected by managers; they often formed durable pairs with managers and adopted their work habits, style and logics. In other words, juniors were shaped in their thinking by managers who, in turn, were influenced by partners.

Junior lawyer: I have only been here for two years and affinity groups have emerged very quickly. But that's kind of nice because you work with people you like. But sometimes I find that it can be quite trapping.

Our theorization implies that such 'affinity' groups took shape as organizational actors who internalized meanings spread by partners clustered around the blended commercial and professional logics underlying partners' expertise.

In contrast to partners, juniors and new recruits had only one source of power: expertise anchored in specialized technical knowledge. They knew the technical details of the specific legal field they specialized in during their studies and were acquainted with little else. Unlike partners, they lacked not only structural power but also relationship expertise, as they had not had the opportunity to build a network with clients or colleagues and were not used to much autonomy in their work. Accordingly, they were less able than partners to shape the meanings spread throughout CaseFirm via discourse reflective of their expertise. They could rally few

other organizational actors around the technical expertise underlying their budding professional identity, and some felt frustrated.

> Manager: I like having technical conversations with more experienced colleagues, or with a client, in fact I like learning. What I hate though is the type of political deviance that we can see all the time in this firm. I am absolutely staggered to see that people who are good politicians, good at public relations, speaking to clients and so forth but are terrible lawyers, I mean with bad technical skills, who manage to go up through the ranks faster than anyone else. To the detriment of everyone else. We are talking about clever guys here, who manage to get evaluated on criteria other than their competence. And it works! Very very bright strategy. But when you don't have this approach yourself, it is awfully irritating to see that there are complete idiots who manage to go up the ladder on the basis of criteria that aren't mine, or which, in my view, are not measuring one's true professional competence.

In sum, before most lawyers used the KMS on a daily basis, the status quo in CaseFirm was characterized by partners whose power rested on structure and expertise centered on relationships. They defined the meanings spread throughout CaseFirm, thereby promoting their expertise and reinforcing their professional identity. New recruits/juniors were seen as 'second-class' organizational actors; in spite of their technical expertise, they had less power than partners to shape organizational meanings (and to reinforce their own identity).

The institutionalization of the KMS in 2005 upset this status quo, as we will discuss below, and influenced power relations, organizational discourse and identities. These

repercussions allow us to illustrate our theorization. In proceeding with the illustration, we indicate which one of our four propositions in particular we depict.

The institutionalization of the KMS consolidated the layering of a bureaucratic logic onto a context so far characterized by professional and commercial logics. The bureaucratic logic permeating the KMS stressed specialized tasks and technical aspects of client issues, consistent with clients increasingly focusing on narrow legal questions:

> Tax Partner: (…) our contacts have changed. We rarely deal directly with CEOs; it's the heads of tax who call us sporadically for specific, complex questions that they or their internal team have not managed to sort out (…).

Clients were becoming more sophisticated in their requests and relied less on interpersonal trust when shopping for professional services. Instead, they were keen on finding the niche expert who would help their in-house tax and legal department solve the conundrums it was unable to decode.

> Managing Partner: We have moved away from a world of generalists, where lawyers were trained to deal with all kinds of topics, a world where the personal nature of the client relationship meant everything. Maintaining a good, long term, personal relationship with the client was the Alpha and the Omega of our job. […] From time to time, we would allow a colleague to intervene in our client's engagement, but always in a subaltern position. We would jealously ensure that the client relationship remained controlled by us. […] Today, the client's trust is acquired differently. It is based on our ability to show that we can mobilize different experts to meet the client's evolving needs.

We have to demonstrate that we can introduce the client to the right specialist at the right time.

The technical expertise characterizing new recruits/juniors progressively became more prized in CaseFirm. Although partners still relied on their relationship expertise for selling new contracts, they were more dependent on their highly specialized young colleagues for delivering the legal or tax optimization projects they sold. The KMS was predominantly used by these young lawyers, who saw themselves as technical experts, in line with the bureaucratic logic.

Director: Basically, we do the work of a technician. So the ability to codify problems exists, but difficulties arise when client situations are heavily contextualized. We need to be able to adapt things to each concrete situation (…) In fact; reusing things developed in prior jobs is what allows us to accept (…) small 20,000 euros types of missions. That's because we already have the knowledge and the method. (…) It is easy and quick.

The knowledge of technical experts came to be understood as a necessary asset to ensure CaseFirm's success: the power bases in CaseFirm shifted. Technical experts enjoyed, thanks to the KMS, rising visibility and heightened peer recognition. Their interactions with others (including relationship experts) were transformed to their advantage. Power relations involving technical experts were changing. Their evolution illustrates *Proposition 1* and depicts how a shift in the institutional logic of an organization can be accompanied by a shift in power relations.

At the same time, a new discourse emerged in CaseFirm, in line with our *Proposition 2*: many formal and informal rules, expectations and actions became anchored in technical rather than relationship expertise. Individuals were expected to participate in the monthly meetings of

their line of business (e.g., pharmaceutical companies), line of service (e.g., corporate tax law) and their working group (e.g., research tax credit) in order to share ideas and report on the progress of ongoing client projects. Contributing ideas required specialized knowledge and favored individuals with technical expertise. The latter increasingly helped shape organizational discourse. For instance, they helped write the weekly 'Tax and legal news flash' on technical topics of interest. Our observations also suggest that relationship experts, usually older partners socialized at the time when CaseFirm stressed relationships, contributed less to these meetings, which weakened their peer recognition. This is not to say that relationship expertise ceased to be viewed as a key resource: it was merely emphasized less than technical expertise for improving both service quality (and thus CaseFirm's reputation) and work productivity, as illustrated by the following interview excerpt:

> Managing Partner: Delivery time and price are increasingly imposed by the client in our job. So the only variable that we can play with is quality. If the technical solution to the client problem is available in the database [the KMS], quality becomes a known variable, which means that we can focus on meeting client time and cost conditions (…). I think, for example, that the due diligence toolkit created by [name of a lawyer] has allowed us to improve quality and productivity (…) [in tax due diligence projects].

The organizational discourse centered on the codified knowledge that technical experts contributed to the KMS bolstered their professional identity. It is then not surprising that technical experts self-reported little difficulty in reconciling their professional identity with the KMS and its bureaucratic values.

Researcher: When you use [the KMS], what do you use it for?

Senior Manager, specialized in banking and financial law: When I have a doubt, a question about certain things, not necessarily technical things; things like the structure of a memo, the presentation of a contract or the writing of a specific clause or paragraph in an opinion letter. (…). I now often have the [name of KMS] reflex of checking if certain things are available.

Technical experts saw themselves as 'owning' entire sections of the KMS taxonomy, which reflected CaseFirm's matrix organizational structure by lines of business and service. They viewed the KMS as a time-saving tool that allowed them to contact clients with 'ready to sell' quasi-products (e.g., tax or legal optimization strategies downloaded from the KMS).

Supervisor: The sale of ready-to-use products is a way to get a foot in the door… It's a way to acquire a new client and try to do more afterwards.

According to CaseFirm's knowledge manager, new documents that technical experts contributed to the KMS were widely downloaded and read by individuals without technical expertise. In fact, the KMS let technical experts verify who had used and sold their specialized tax or legal opinion letters. Relationship experts did not eagerly contribute to the KMS; many of them feared being looked down on by more technically savvy colleagues. This fear was justified, as illustrated by a junior professional who argued that non-experts did not correctly reuse their specialized work:

Junior lawyer: You know, I am specialized in banking and financial law. It is not a stress-free environment because our clients are not easy in what we call 'Capital Markets'. This

context requires, if you want to be a good lawyer, (…) it requires you to have technical knowledge, very technical knowledge. It is a prerequisite if you want to really understand what's going on. But there is a risk because some people are just opportunists. They think they can understand one little product that they find [in the KMS] but they forget that there is a whole world behind it.

Relationship experts continued to see themselves as 'true professionals' who intimately knew their clients and whose work could not be reduced to programmable tasks and required judgment, in line with the professional logic.

Tax Partner: Say you wish to offer one million euros worth of your company shares to your kids. How can you avoid paying tax on that transaction? I don't see what algorithm could help you sort this out. What you need is experience and knowing your client context thoroughly.

Over time, as the KMS and its bureaucratic logic increasingly defined the work environment, relationship experts saw their professional identity undermined: their self-image ceased to be in harmony with how they practiced their profession. They resented the KMS and the bureaucratization it embodied. They rallied around the difficulties occasioned by the KMS, including its functional limitations (e.g., the 'unfriendliness' of the search engine) and its content reliability discrepancies (e.g., the lack of guidance for selecting best practice documents or for flagging faulty content). They also vocalized what they viewed as faults of the KMS. For instance, they stressed that the KMS threatened the quality of work and used the image of 'counterfeiting a Vuitton bag'. They pointed out that using their colleagues' tailor-made opinion

letters and applying them to a different client context amounted to selling a degraded version of the original product.

> Tax Partner: If we wish to sell bad, poorly copied versions of a Vuitton bag, we can do it but we won't be able to sell them with the same warranties as the originals. (…) we put them on display to attract clients and all lawyers are familiar with how to make these copies. So, you see, knowledge sharing serves marketing purposes and nothing else.

Relationship experts further felt frustrated with administrative tasks that hindered progress with what they viewed as their 'real' job: working on client files.

> Senior Manager, about the KMS: I must have spent what, 25 hours this week writing these bloody stupid models of engagement letters that they've asked me to put on the knowledge base. That's all very nice but I really have other things to do!

In sum, in line with our *Proposition 3*, technical experts and relationship experts saw their identity shift as the discourse of CaseFirm changed and emphasized technical know-how. Relationship experts started to engage in strategies to protect their identity and resist their loss in power. Notably, they continued approaching their work with their blended commercial and professional logic while refusing to abide by the bureaucratic logic:

> Tax Partner: Only experience allows that and your deep knowledge of the client context. (…). (With disdain) Today, for certain types of operations, we have checklists to assist us in discerning the right question. I think it does not work, unless the question is a closed one, like: should I choose a joint-stock company structure or a limited liability company structure? But things are never as simple as that (…)

Relationship experts also tried to 'recruit' colleagues into viewing the KMS as faulty. They attempted to convince juniors that using the KMS would eventually erode professionalism and result in deskilling:

> Tax Partner: What happened before is that we did not have that [the KMS] so, first, people had to understand the question and then they had to write a paragraph from scratch. Now, the young are capable of copy-pasting a paragraph that they find [in the KMS] without understanding the environment in which it was produced in the first place.

Over time, juniors came to view the KMS with skepticism:

> Junior Lawyer: Yes, I use the KMS. But I'm being careful about it. [...] I used it a lot back when I was an intern but now I'm wary of it, I read existing consultations but I don't use them as a direct source of inspiration.

Relationship experts recreated a work environment that viewed relationship expertise as key for accessing knowledge. They refrained from uploading content to the KMS and, instead, distributed content only to members of their in-group:

> Tax Partner: I think that some people don't put anything into the database [the KMS]. In fact, I don't know. But all I know is that people like [Partner's name] you know; he would happily hand in stuff to you if you ask him, stuff that is clearly not in the database [the KMS]. (…). Me, when I tell someone: I already did this and that for such and such client, all he has to do is search the database for 'unpaid VAT' [Value Added Tax]and [name of client] and he'll find it.

Consistent with our *Proposition 4,* the ultimate aim of these strategies was to shift the power bases in CaseFirm and re-establish the primacy of relationship expertise, which underlies the professional identity of relationship experts. Doing so required acceptance from colleagues, which was challenging for relationship experts. CaseFirm had ceased to emphasize relationship expertise, which seemed to be taken for granted or viewed as the 'natural' outcome of experience. Relationship experts found, however, an unexpected ally in their opposition to the KMS: technical experts. Although the latter initially embraced the KMS as it boosted their power and nourished their identity, they started opposing it once they had become more familiar with it: they realized that KMS threatened the uniqueness of their expertise by making it readily accessible to colleagues. Technical experts feared that peers would appropriate this expertise, which would not remain unique to them.

> Partner, specialized in labor law: Stealing ideas from others is not a fantasy or a fear that we might have. As soon as you put something into the knowledge base, you have to resign yourself to that possibility (…).

Technical experts were no longer alone in owning the expertise associated with certain tasks; their expertise-based power declined which, as our theorization implies, robbed them of a means to nourish their identity. Eventually, they ended up resenting the KMS, thus joining relationship experts who disliked the KMS, although for a different reason. Relationship experts opposed *ex ante* the concept of a bureaucratic logic whereas technical experts opposed *ex post* the reality of this logic as borne out by the KMS. Relationship and technical experts engaged in numerous strategies to boycott the KMS: some only uploaded generic content a few days before

the annual performance evaluation and then stopped sharing knowledge until the next performance evaluation; others uploaded blank documents to pollute search results and thereby discourage KMS use or simply refrained from contributing content as explained below.

> Knowledge Manager: [about certain lawyers] What they do is knowledge retention and that defeats the whole knowledge management effort (…) They have everything on their computers' hard drives (…). So the latest trend, since the crisis [of 2007-2009] is to protect your knowledge to try and become indispensable to avoid being laid off. I have a recent example in the Research Tax Credit team. [Name of Senior Manager] built her own database. And when she went on maternity leave, nobody in the group could function because she was the one who had all the templates.

At the end of the observation period, the core of the KMS was moribund. Table 1 recapitulates our illustrative case study.

Proposition	Key theorization elements and cites	Illustration from case study
1: A shift in the institutional logic may be accompanied by a shift in organizational power relations.	Power relations (Courpasson, 2000; Finkelstein, 1992; Weber, 1978) Narrative contract between audience and storyteller (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004; Gabriel, 2004) Power bases (Finkelstein, 1992)	The KMS contributed to the institutionalization of a bureaucratic logic in CaseFirm. It was appropriated by technical experts whose power was boosted while that of relationship experts, who did not subscribe to this logic, declined.
2: A shift in organizational power relations may be accompanied by a shift in organizational discourse.	Nature of organizational discourse (Alvesson, 2004; Watson, 1994) Control over discourse (Fairhurst and Cooreen, 2004; Gabriel, 2004) Competition between organizational discourses (Kornberger and Brown, 2007; Thomas and Linstead, 2002)	Relationship expertise, once celebrated as a quintessential work ingredient, is discursively deemphasized in favor of technical expertise. Technical expertise is seen as key asset for meeting more sophisticated client needs: clients, whose contact person often changes, pay for talking to the right expert at the right time and no longer for maintaining an *intuitu personae* relation with one lawyer throughout their lives.

3: A shift in organizational discourse may be accompanied by a shift in the professional identities of organizational actors.	Identity construction (Alvesson et al., 2008; Svenningsson and Alvesson, 2003) Role of discourse in identity construction (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004; Humphreys and Brown, 2002; Schlenker, 1985; Whittle and Mueller, 2002) Role of peers in identity construction (Kärreman and Alvesson, 2001; Milton and Westphal, 2005; Rao et al., 2000; Scott and Lane, 2000)	The discourse centered on technical expertise threatens the professional identity of lawyers with relationship expertise, since it downplays client relations as if they were arising naturally from a lawyer's experience. Instead, the new discourse reinforces the professional identity of younger lawyers with technical expertise (who typically hold more university degrees than their older peers and were trained to specialize in specific areas of law) by creating a new aura of indispensability around their profile.
4: A shift in professional identities may be accompanied by a shift in institutional logics	Identities and discourse (Humphreys and Brown, 2002; Tajfel, 1981) Discourse and resistance (Ashcraft, 2005; Clegg, 1994; Holmer-Nadesan, 1996)	Relationship experts resist the KMS right from the start, as it threatened their previously undisputed power basis. Unexpectedly, they are joined in their resistance by technical experts: after initially endorsing the KMS because it reinforced their identity, technical experts realized that sharing their knowledge becomes a threat to the uniqueness of their power basis. In the end, the KMS becomes moribund for lack of sufficient support from powerful organizational actors.

Table 1: Illustrated theoretical propositions

6 Discussion

Our study started from the premise that introducing a new institutional logic in an organization can influence the identity construction of its members. Research has studied identity construction and how it is molded by powerful individuals (Brocklehurst, 2001; Glynn, 2000; Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003). This prior work has, however, left unexplored the link between powerful individuals and their *own* identity construction. We explore this link by theorizing how powerful individuals can rely on organizational discourse to shape their own identity. Our theorization suggests that when a new institutional logic shifts incumbent power

relations, the identities of (newly or formerly) powerful individuals can be affected, which, in turn, has implications for whether the new logic is supported or resisted.

We illustrate our theorization via a case study in a corporate law firm between 1999 and 2011. At the time, the firm became more hybrid and layered a bureaucratic logic onto its existing professional and commercial logics. Perhaps the most vivid manifestation of the bureaucratic logic was the knowledge management system (KMS). The KMS was meant to make legal research less labor intensive, more standardized, cheaper and quicker. It was created in response to client and competitor pressures, and at the insistence of the international legal network that our case firm belonged to. The core of the KMS, comprised of best practice documents prepared in-house during client projects, became moribund by 2011, after a six-year period of slowly declining usage.

Our qualitative data show that the KMS facilitated the ascension of a new class of lawyers, whose novel power arose from their unique technical expertise. After the KMS adoption, technical experts were better able to steer organizational discourse, which, as our theorization suggests, helped them bolster their identity. Concurrently, lawyers powerful before the KMS introduction became less influential thereafter. Their relationship expertise, the source of much of their former power, was comparatively less emphasized by organizational discourse than technical expertise. Our theorization implies that relationship experts could henceforth less steer organizational discourse and were less able to nourish their identity. To protect their identity and resist their loss of power, they resorted to various mechanisms. In an unexpected turn of events, they were eventually joined in this endeavor by the initial beneficiaries of the bureaucratic logic, technical experts. After a honeymoon period with the KMS, technical experts

discovered that it had an unanticipated effect: it threatened the uniqueness of their technical knowledge by making it readily accessible to other lawyers, thereby robbing technical experts of their power basis. The combined efforts of relationship and technical experts to protect their identity and resist their power loss ultimately jeopardized the longevity of CaseFirm's new hybridity.

Our case study provides selected snapshots of the thread of arguments put forth by our theorization without exhaustively speaking to its complete picture. While our data depict how power, discourse and identities in CaseFirm changed after the bureaucratic logic was introduced, they do not establish an unambiguous causality between these changes. We recognize that elements other than our theorized antecedents may be at work in generating changes in power, discourse and identities. Future work can step in by further exploring the links developed in our theorization and analyzing how the processes of organizational hybridization, power dynamics, and identity construction are empirically co-constitutive. For instance, other failed hybridization attempts could be analyzed. Doing so would not only complement our work but also cast light on how the longevity of institutional hybridity is shaped by factors other than those that we explore. We restrict our analysis of hybridity to analyzing how a shift in institutional logics affects power relations and, ultimately, identity construction. Future research is needed to better document the full spectrum of reactions that organizational actors display upon the introduction of a new logic. Professions other than law could be considered; we view our theorization, which draws on a rich literature from a variety of professions, as sufficiently general to be applicable to other contexts.

We recognize that logics can be viewed not only as whole indivisible structures but also as rich arrays of building blocks. Our case firm emphasizes the latter view, since its KMS was

only one specific, albeit crucial, component of the bureaucratic logic. While our data depict some of the logic's other building blocks, we acknowledge that our focus is the KMS. A broader analytical approach that embraces additional material elements (e.g., work procedures, control rules, performance indicators, promotion processes) and symbolic elements (e.g., justifications for the above material elements) of the bureaucratic logic could help redress this limitation. Future work, stepping in the path of Pache and Santos (2013), can seek to better separate the hybridization of various logics from the amalgamation of their specific components.

Our framework stresses the role of agency in organizational hybridization. Researchers have explored strategies that organizations use for managing competing institutional logics (Pache and Santos, 2013); they have shed light on institutions, their processes and effects (e.g., Greenwood and Hinings, 1996; Phillips et al., 2004). In these efforts, scholars have not much peeked into the 'world inside the processes', the individual agents (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2005: 11), a shortcoming recognized by Thornton et al. (2012:169). Recent work has turned its attention to these agents (Phillips et al., 2004). By focusing on how power relations tie into individual identity work, our theorization fits squarely into an approach centered on agents and has implications for institutional logics within an organization: it suggests that individual agents not only are defined by logics (i.e., logics are instrumental in providing them with power) but also define institutional logics (i.e., that an actor's quest to attain, maintain or reclaim power can affect the survival of logics). Alvesson et al. (2008: 7) remark that 'Identity in its various conceptualizations offers creative ways to understand a range of organizational settings and phenomena while bridging the levels from micro to macro', the macro referring to the larger context beyond organizations, such as society. Our theorization illustrates an important

intermediary step: the link between the micro (i.e., identity work at the individual level) and the meso (i.e., hybridity at the organizational level). We hope that our theorization provides a springboard for further work on the interaction between agency, power and institutional logics.

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[i] At one end of the spectrum are authors such as Foucault (1972) and Clegg (1989) who regard discourse as the fabric from which social and organizational reality is woven (and which includes elements directly or indirectly pertaining to communication, including speech, texts, structures, practices, and ways of thinking). At the other end are authors like Grant et al. (1998) and Holmer-Nadesan (1996) who see discourse as a means for depicting social and organizational reality and as encompassing elements more directly related to communication.

[ii] We view professional identities as actively chosen by individuals yet passively shaped by organizations, in line with authors like Brown and Coupland (2005) who suggest that organizational members not only absorb but also actively resist discourse (Storey et al., 2005; Symon and Clegg, 2005). Other scholars stress either activity or passivity. For example, some argue that individuals are passive subjects who endure, 'mere throughputs' (Thomas and Davis, 2005: 686) at the mercy of organizations that overwhelm and totalize their identity (Newton, 1998). At the other extreme are scholars who contend that individuals are active agents with a reflective self and a conscious identity (Brocklehurst, 2001; Giddens, 1991; Kornberger and Brown, 2007). Identity construction involving activity and passivity can be conceptualized as resulting from identity work (the active process reproducing the self) and identity regulation (the social environment shaping the view of the self) (Beech, 2008).