

Donnelly, P. (2008) 'Organizational Forming: Re(dis)covering Hybridization.' *2nd Latin American European Meeting on Organizational Studies*. Rio De Janeiro, Brazil (April).

ORGANIZATIONAL FORMING: RE(DIS)COVERING HYBRIDIZATION

PAUL F. DONNELLY
College of Business
Dublin Institute of Technology
Aungier Street (3-062)
Dublin 2
Ireland
Email: paul.donnelly@dit.ie

*This paper represents work in progress.
All constructive feedback is welcome.*

ABSTRACT

The topic of organizational form has gained increased attention in the scholarly literature over the past couple of decades or so. Scholars have identified the emergence and evolution of new organizational forms as a critical issue to be addressed. The increased interest and relevance of this topic is often portrayed as 'new times' driving the need for new forms, however, what is more evident in the literature is that the need for new ways of looking at organizational form has yet to be addressed. In general, it is my argument that the problem of "organizational form" cannot be addressed by following extant analytical approaches because such approaches focus on purification at the expense of translation and hybridization. Through the contributions of Latour's (1993) amodern thesis and actor-network theory, then, my paper demonstrates the possibilities to look beyond the limitations of modernist ways of thinking, while still addressing the concerns in the literature with regard to process, history and new ways of theorizing and studying organizational form(*ing*), in so doing maintaining an opening toward organizational form*ing* in organizational theorizing and research.

Keywords: actor-network theory; amodern; classification; history; organizational form; organizational theory; process.

ORGANIZATIONAL FORM – INCREASING ATTENTION

The topic of organizational form has gained increased attention in the scholarly literature over the past couple of decades or so. Scholars have identified the emergence and evolution of new organizational forms as a critical issue to be addressed and, though research on the topic is considered embryonic, it is attracting increasing attention (e.g., *Academy of Management Journal*, 2001; Aldrich & Mueller, 1982; Ashcraft, 2001, 2006; Astley, 1985; Child & McGrath, 2001; Contractor, Wasserman & Faust, 2006; Daft & Lewin, 1993; DiMaggio, 2001; Donnelly, 2007; Fombrum, 1988; Foss, 2002; Graetz & Smith, 2006; Hawley, 1988; Lewin & Volberda, 1999; McKendrick & Carroll, 2001; McSweeney, 2006; Meyer, 1990; *Organization Science*, 1999; Pettigrew & Fenton, 2000; Pettigrew, Whittington, Melin, Sanchez-Runde, van den Bosch, Ruigrok & Numagami, 2003; Romanelli, 1989, 1991; Tushman & Romanelli, 1985; Whitley, 2006). The increased interest and relevance of this topic is often portrayed as ‘new times’ driving the need for new forms, however, what is more evident in the literature is that the need for new ways of looking at organizational form has yet to be addressed.

There is a particular concern in the field of organization theory about being able to identify “new organizational forms” and it seems that the distinguishing dividing line between the “old” and the “new” is the possibility of the latter to be identifiable as beyond/different from bureaucracy. The Weberian “ideal type,” with its focus on the ontological possibility of identifying form, represents the inaugural moment in organization theory. Since that moment, and based on the need to say what is “organization” as the condition for having “organization theory,” it is a requirement of organization theories that they address “knowledge about organization” based on a boundary-making condition, no matter whether it is through contingencies, legitimization, evolution or cost-reduction. It is no surprise, then, that the call for identifying “new form” is similarly based on finding that “ideal type.”

Seen thusly, most “new” theories that have been put forward continue to view form as something already formed, as an essence, with the attention focused on what constitutes form. Said differently, all that most theoretical developments are able to do

is to address the “new” as it is distinguished from the “old,” which does nothing but to reiterate that the only way to think about “the new” is through ontological reification privileging the original classifying scheme.

Further, extant organizational theories, from the original Weberian ideal type through all other theories, be they in appearance ahistorical (i.e., contingency) or historical (i.e., ecological) and everything else in between, have taken recourse to history-as-process in order to create their classifications. However, in arriving at their classificatory schemes they have hidden the process-as-such, the process of “getting there,” the messiness of “forming,” as if everything else, thereafter, can be tidily encased in one of their “boxes.” History-as-process is never accounted for and once the classificatory scheme is operational no other boxes are possible thereafter; reification in the guise of universalization has happened and “process” has ended.

Seen thusly, a number of questions arise: does history end once we have classified?; does *forming* continue to happen once we have classified?; what about a way to theorize *forming*?; how to understand *forming* over form? More broadly, “can we think any other way” (Calás & Smircich, 2003: 49), such that we do not become enmeshed in, and continue to reproduce, the problems we encounter when thinking in a modern way? These questions lead me to begin outlining the contours to an alternative way of thinking and knowing, encapsulated in the thesis that ‘we have never been modern’ (Latour, 1993), and so arrive at processual knowing that might escape the modernist thirst for classification.

An integral facet of modernist thinking is that it makes “invisible, unthinkable, unrepresentable” the work of translation that constructs hybrids (Latour, 1993: 34). Modernity functions simultaneously on translation and on its denial, on permitting “*the expanded proliferation of the hybrids whose existence, whose very possibility, it denies*” (Latour, 1993: 34; emphasis in original). Thus, with the historical *forming* of Ireland’s Industrial Development Authority as empirical example, my paper seeks to demonstrate that working within an amodern framework allows for overcoming modernity’s deficiency in favoring purification, i.e., ‘organizational form,’ over translation and hybridization, i.e., ‘organizational *forming*.’ It also permits to reflexively understand how organizational *forming* works from an (a)modern perspective.

In general, thus, it is my argument that the problem of “organizational form” cannot be addressed by following extant analytical approaches because such approaches focus on purification at the expense of translation and hybridization. Through the contributions of Latour’s (1993) a modern thesis and actor-network theory, then, my paper demonstrates the possibilities to look beyond the limitations of modernist ways of thinking, while still addressing the concerns in the literature with regard to process, history and new ways of theorizing and studying organizational form(ing), in so doing maintaining an opening toward organizational forming in organizational theorizing and research.

HAVE WE EVER BEEN MODERN?

Latour (1993) offers an analysis of “the modern condition,” where, in his view, modernity involves the creation and maintenance of two distinct ontological zones (see Figure 1 below), with all that is nonhuman ascribed to nature and all that is human ascribed to culture/society. Accordingly, the work of scientists is focused on one zone or the other, treating the world according to either the authority of the natural sciences, on the one hand, or that of the social sciences, on the other. In either case, the work of scientists is to explain, to purify, the world they see in their terms. Those coming from the perspective of nature, the realists, seek to naturalize society by integrating it into nature, while those coming from the perspective of culture/society, the constructivists, seek to socialize nature through digestion by society (Latour, 1993).

Error! Bookmark not defined.

Figure 1: Modernity according to Latour (adapted from Latour, 1993: 11).

Hence, looked at through the lens of the natural sciences, all that has to do with organization is governed by natural laws. Looked at through the lens of the social sciences, it is we humans who create organization according to our own free will. Accordingly, organization is either transcendental, having an existence ‘out there,’ or it is immanent, having an existence ‘in here,’ and great effort is expended in ensuring that both views remain ontologically pure – e.g., paradigm “wars.” Nature deals with things-in-themselves, while culture deals with humans-amongst-themselves, such that people and things, humans and nonhumans are kept separate.

At the same time, and without apparent contradiction, modernity treats nature as immanent in the sense that its laws are mobilizable, humanizable and socializable, in essence, knowable, through manipulation by the modern knowledge-making apparatus (e.g., laboratories, questionnaires, experiments, statistical analyses, research organizations, scientific institutions). Accordingly, the laws of nature can now be discovered, such that organization can be known, albeit they still remain transcendent. Similarly, culture is simultaneously treated as transcendent in the sense that it has its own laws and outlasts us, with conventional ways of knowledge-making “stak[ing] out the limits to the freedom of social groups, and transform[ing] human relations into durable objects that no one has made” (Latour, 1993: 37). Hence, our freedom to create organization according to our own will is circumscribed by the laws of society, albeit these laws are our own creation.

Escaping Modernity?

Viewed from this perspective, modernity provides no means of escape from ‘old’ ways of thinking and knowing and so provides no useful avenue for articulating and studying the organizational differently, for modernity is part and parcel of the way organizations have been conceptualized and studied. Thus, how can we articulate and study the organizational differently? I argue that one way around this impasse is to imagine, as Latour (1993) has done, that we have never been modern. His amodern (or nonmodern) thesis rests on exposing, and then tying together, the practices that underpin modern ways of thinking and knowing. By making these operations visible, he provides a way to reconsider our understanding about the “organizational.”

Purification, Translation and Networks

As already discussed, having created two separate ontological zones, modernity’s focus remains on maintaining that separation. As such, to be modern is to be concerned with maintaining the established purity of nature on the one hand, and of society on the other: to be modern requires engaging in the practice of *purification*. Such practice, in turn, requires *categorization and classification*, with things-in-themselves assigned to nature and humans-in-themselves assigned to society.

Thus it is that through purifying *forms* can be identified. They can be classified and categorized according to an abstract set of features (e.g., environment, structure, authority-control, decision-making, workers, operations, core/non-core, communication, culture, etc.), such that they are rendered static, permanent, timeless, universal and, above all, knowable. In being purified, they become ideal-types against which to measure and verify that which pertains to them. But the question is, in order to purify, what has the knowledge-making enterprise left out? Thus, to focus on the practice of purification is only part of the story, for there is another practice, that of translation, on which modernity depends for its existence and yet which modernity denies at the same time.

Concurrent with purifying the messy world in which we live, modernity engages in translation (see Figure 2 overleaf). Here, far from separating humans from nonhumans, their contacts are amplified, mixing together humans and nonhumans, without bracketing anything and without excluding any combination, in the process creating hybrids of nature and culture in the form of networks of humans and nonhumans. Different from the practice of purification, which involves separation, the practice of translation involves the threading together of any or all of these actors into a network that makes sense. It entails interconnecting these heterogeneous elements and viewing them as performing relationally, as interacting to produce what we contingently call organizational form, with one actor seeking to redefine the meaning of the other actors, enrolling them into a position, such that its interests also become theirs.

Error! Bookmark not defined.

Figure 2: Latour's amodernity (adapted from Latour, 1993: 11).

What results from the practice of translation are hybrids, networks that are both contingent and emergent. They are contingent in that their relations are never fixed for all time, such that the actor-networks could come asunder should the interests of any actors diverge. Similarly, they are emergent in that they do not appear ready formed, as pure essences that always-already existed.

However, this very practice, the practice of translation, is denied any visibility or acknowledgement within modern thinking. While the flexibility and fluidity afforded by the modern way of thinking is facilitated by the work of translation, for it is here that

humans and nonhumans are threaded together to form a network that realizes the everyday, it is not until this network of associations achieves some degree of relative stability that it becomes amenable to purification, and thereby that it becomes visible for classification. Purification reclaims the network from the hybrid ontology of its formation, and renders translation invisible in the process. Thus, purification obtains in the case of organizational form when we no longer think of the diverse materials that go into its performance, but, instead, simply see it as a thing in and of itself. Purification is successful when the threads that bind these heterogeneous materials relationally fall out of view and are simply taken for granted.

Translation and Purification – Exposing Modernity’s Dichotomy

In summary, both practices, translation and purification, are vital to constituting the world we live in, with one dependent on the other. Without the practices of translation, those of purification would be without meaning, for we would be dealing with nothing but pure forms with no possibility of these forms being combined to arrive at some new form. Likewise, without the practices of purification, those of translation would be hindered, restricted or discarded, for without pure forms we would have nothing to thread together to create new forms.

However, with its emphasis on knowing through purification, modernity takes hybrid networks formed through translation and cuts them into “as many segments as there are pure disciplines” (Latour, 1993: 3), severing the ties that link nature and society. For example, in our case dealing with the organizational, we deal with the topic through the lenses of economics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, communication, computer science, business, and so on. We go even further within each discipline, segmenting further as, for example, in the case of business where we use the lenses of marketing, organization studies, finance, accounting, management science, and so on.

And we go yet further, as with organization studies, for example, with the focus breaking into strategy, organizational theory, organizational behavior, international management, human resource management, and so on. And we could go yet further again, if we were to look at the various theories within organizational theory, for example, as was done in the previous section. Thus, the network of threads and links that go into constructing the organizational become severed to form neat compartments

such that what we notice of the organizational is only behavior, only employees, only social context, only products, only consumers, only transactions, only contracts, only balance sheets, only technology, only computer modeling, and so on.

Through this separation, even though imbroglions of humans and nonhumans are multiplying and proliferating, the distinct ontological zones remain steadfastly separated and delimited from each other as if the world were divided into such neat categories, into which anything and everything could be easily slotted. Being truly modern, therefore, requires that we regard the practices of purification and translation as separate, while at the same time subscribing to the work of purification and denying that of translation. To do otherwise, to attend to both at the same time and to acknowledge the proliferation of hybrids, is to question our modernity and to make us “retrospectively aware that the two sets of practices have always already been at work in the historical period that is ending” (Latour, 1993: 11).

It is through recognizing the work of translation that Latour (1993) unveils modernity as but one half of a configuration that denies its other. It is through recognizing, and legitimizing, the practices of translation as necessary to those of purification, and through recognizing both, together, as a distinct, coherent and mutually reinforcing configuration, that it is possible to recognize that we have never been truly modern. As I discuss next, this argument has important implications for the study of “organizational forms.”

A DIFFERENT WAY OF THINKING

As we have seen, modernity initially emerges from the conjoined creation of humans-culture and nonhumans-nature, and then masks its own creation through treating each source separately. Meanwhile culture-nature hybrids, though denied, continue to proliferate. However, it is precisely this very ability to separate humans and nonhumans, while at the same time denying the creation of hybrids, that weakens modernity and bolsters Latour’s amodern thesis. In proposing such a thesis, Latour seeks to retain modernity’s ontological zones and its practices of purification and translation, only this time both practices are to be considered as operating simultaneously, and not separately.

For instance, if we look at how bureaucracy is talked about in the literature we see that it is comprised of various purifications: a stable environment; a hierarchical structure; authority that is centralized, command-and-control, directed by top-management; workers that are dependent, controlled, trained to follow orders, costs to be minimized; operations that are vertically integrated, employ standardization and has its own workforce; work that is organized according to task specialization; boundaries that are fixed and static; communication that is vertical, formally passing through the hierarchy; and so on. These various categories for classifying bureaucracy are themselves purifications. Centralization, for example, is premised on authority, decision-making and control residing in top management, with the latter comprising people, positions, titles, offices, subordinates, expertise, reports, and so on. But, what is missing from here? The assumption is that bureaucracy is always the same and never deviates from comprising all of the actors noted. However, this overlooks that the slightest change to the list of actors associating with bureaucracy translates the latter into a hybrid. For example, is a bureaucracy that outsources some of its tasks to a service provider in a low-cost country, using information and communications technologies to create a seamless operation, still a bureaucracy or is it something else? To all intents and purposes, while all else has remained the same, the bureaucracy's fixed and static boundaries have changed and it no longer does everything in-house employing its own workforce: the bureaucracy actor-network has been translated. As such, we are not dealing with a bureaucracy, as classified, but with a hybrid that is neither a bureaucracy nor a virtual organization. It is something other for which there is no name.

It is in this light that the “proliferation of hybrids thus denies the success of purification and, therefore the possibility of having ever been modern” (Calás & Smircich, 2003: 51). Hence, the double separation between humans and nonhumans, on the one hand, and between the work of purification and that of translation, on the other, needs to be reconstructed (Latour, 1993). In making visible the work of translation, therefore, any analysis would be rethreading the many bits and pieces that go into making the organizational, thereby regaining the complexity of the ties that bind the organizational together.

Following Latour, then, I adopt a metatheoretical position, my ontological starting point, that considers that the networks that weave the organizational together do exist and that our modern ways of knowing have provided us with but a partial, largely essentialized, and static understanding of what we currently conceive as organizational form. Actor-network theory (ANT) provides a good canvas on which to paint “the discriminations that are performed and the boundaries that are constructed in the activities it studies” (Lee & Hassard, 1999: 392). Through this approach, the analytical focus moves from the causality and structural prescriptions common to functionalist research to a relational and process-oriented approach, treating, for example, organizations as precarious, interactive effects, which are generated, heterogeneous, patterned, uncertain and contested in character (Law, 1992).

ACTOR-NETWORK THEORY

At the heart of ANT is the metaphor of heterogeneous networks (Law, 1992) where, for example, organizations are the product of networks of heterogeneous materials, both human and nonhuman. Organization is the result of much hard work in which various bits and pieces – buildings, logos, managers, employees, products, services, customers, suppliers, banks, money, transactions, phones, computers, e-mails, conversations, policies, strategies, organization charts, standard operating procedures, contracts, titles, skills, expertise, machines, ideas, and on and on – are juxtaposed into a network configuration which surmounts their individual resistances. Said another way, organization is both a material matter and a question of arranging and ordering those materials.

The practice of *purification* requires *categorization and classification* and it is through purifying that *forms* can be identified. They can be classified and categorized according to an abstract set of features (e.g., environment, structure, authority-control, decision-making, workers, operations, core/non-core, communication, culture, etc.), such that they are rendered static, permanent, timeless, universal and, above all, knowable. In being purified, they become ideal-types against which to measure and verify that which pertains to them. But the question is, in order to purify, what has the knowledge-making enterprise left out? Thus, to focus on the practice of purification is

only part of the story, for there is another practice, that of translation, on which modernity depends for its existence and yet which modernity denies at the same time.

Concurrent with purifying the messy world in which we live, modernity engages in translation. Here, far from separating humans from nonhumans, their contacts are amplified, mixing together humans and nonhumans, without bracketing anything and without excluding any combination, in the process creating hybrids of nature and culture in the form of networks of humans and nonhumans. Different from the practice of purification, which involves separation, the practice of translation involves the threading together of any or all of these actors into a network that makes sense. It entails interconnecting these heterogeneous elements and viewing them as performing relationally, as interacting to produce what we contingently call organizational form, with one actor seeking to redefine the meaning of the other actors, enrolling them into a position, such that its interests also become theirs. What results from the practice of translation are hybrids, networks that are both contingent and emergent. They are contingent in that their relations are never fixed for all time, such that the actor-networks could come asunder should the interests of any actors diverge. Similarly, they are emergent in that they do not appear ready formed, as pure essences that always-already existed.

In focusing more on “the *processes* through which discretion emerges” and less on “the problem of giving accurate descriptions of discrete elements” (Lee & Hassard, 1999: 398-399, emphasis in original), the empirical for ANT becomes the site of “active processing” where not only are the descriptions of the organizational being worked and reworked by organizational participants, both human and nonhuman, but so too is the organizational itself. In addressing the organizational, therefore, ANT focuses its efforts on investigating how the organizational is ‘performed.’

For ANT, all materials, human and nonhuman, have the characteristics they do as a consequence of their relations with other materials. ANT, therefore, is also understood in terms of relational materiality and performativity. In the case of the former, it employs a material semiotics whereby entities, human and nonhuman, assume their form and take on their characteristics as a consequence of their relations with other entities (Akrich & Latour, 1992; Law, 1999; Law & Hetherington, 1999).

Akrich and Latour's (1992: 259) redefinition of ANT as a semiotic theory of material assemblies reclaims a more general "nontextual and nonlinguistic interpretation" of semiotics as meaning "how one privileged trajectory is built, out of an indefinite number of possibilities." Thus, defining semiotics as the "study of order building or path building" (Akrich & Latour, 1992: 259) broadens its meaning to encompass the orderings of material things.

For Law and Hetherington (1999), a material semiotics has to do with materiality in the sense the organizational is created in circumstances that are materially heterogeneous, and it is a semiotics in that it assumes the organizational, along with what goes into producing the organizational, acquires its meaning and significance because of how everything interacts together, not because of its essential characteristics or qualities. Through seeking to understand how form is produced, therefore, a semiotics of materiality refuses the division between human and nonhuman, in addition to any prior judgment as to what counts as important or not, in favor of looking at the entire range of heterogeneous bits and pieces that go into the production of the organizational (Law & Hetherington, 1999).

It is here that the notion of performativity enters into play (Latour, 1986; Law, 1999; Law & Hetherington, 1999; Strum & Latour, 1987). In constituting the contingent, emergent phenomenon that we may come to call organizational form (if at all), materials of all sorts "are being disciplined, constituted, organized, and/or organizing themselves" (Law & Hetherington, 1999: ¶28). As a creation, an effect produced within heterogeneous relations, the material outcome that we (may come to) identify as organizational form does not exist outside its performance. Form is an achievement as a result of performing the relations in which it is situated; it is how such performance is achieved that is of interest to ANT. It is precisely because the organizational is nothing more than relational effects that it is important to study how it is produced (Law, 1999; Law & Hetherington, 1999).

FOLLOWING TRANSLATION, HYBRIDIZATION AND PURIFICATION

ANT's association/substitution mapping mechanism (Latour, 1991; Latour, 1999; Latour, Mauguin & Teil, 1992) is used to illustrate organizational forming. Through

following the succession of translations, hybrid production and purifications, we see the contingent and emergent character of forming, which questions the stability of the events, and the actants populating them, as essences.

I use an approach similar to that used by Latour (1991: see Figure 1 below) in the following example: Consider the hotel manager who wants clients to leave their room keys at the front desk before going out. From version (1) through to version (4), we see that actants are gradually added to the program of action 'leave your key at the front desk before going out.' We move from the manager wishing for the return of the keys (1) to most of the clients complying with the manager's wish (4). Through mobilizing and engaging more actants, the associations have been extended in a lasting manner (5), such that we are now dealing with most keys being returned and a few getting lost. The program has become (temporarily) purified, sufficient to be blackboxed, with the network comprising it falling out of view.

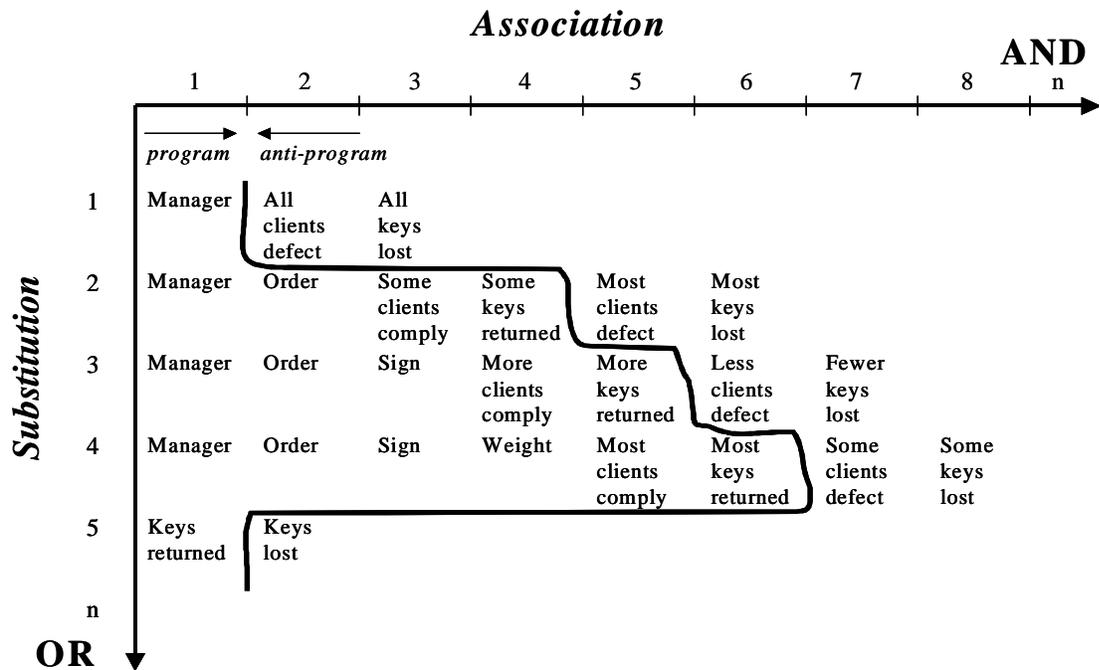


Figure 1 – Example of association-substitution diagram.

This purification has only been made possible through deepening the program of action by way of a series of subtle translations that create hybrids (versions 2, 3, 4). Version (2) sees an oral order appear, requesting clients to leave their keys at the front desk before going out, such that we see a shift of some clients and keys to the left of

the dividing line. The program now comprises the hybrid 'manager-order-some clients comply-some keys returned' and the anti-program hybrid 'most clients defect-most keys lost.' Version (3) sees the mobilization of a further actant, a written sign urging clients to leave their keys at the front desk before going out, with more clients and keys shifting to the left of the dividing line. Again, we are left with hybrids: a program hybrid of 'manager-order-sign-more clients comply-more keys returned' and an anti-program hybrid of 'less clients defect-fewer keys lost.' In version (4), the appearance of weights affixed to keys sees most clients now returning their keys. Yet again, we are left with hybrids: a program hybrid of 'manager-order-sign-weight-most clients comply-most keys returned' and an anti-program hybrid of 'some clients defect-some keys lost.' Through successive versions, the anti-program has been countered: most keys are now returned and the hotel is willing to accept the loss of a few keys. In becoming somewhat predictable, the program has become purified (5) and we no longer consider the actor-network supporting it.

Notice that the program of action 'leave your key at the front desk before going out' is not the same as we move through successive versions. Rather than being transmitted exactly as is through each successive version, the program has been subtly transformed or translated through its displacement from one version to the next. As Latour (1991: 105) notes:

Customers no longer leave their room keys: instead, they get rid of an unwieldy object that deforms their pockets. If they conform to the manager's wishes, it is not because they read the sign, nor because they are particularly well-mannered. It is because they cannot do otherwise. They don't even think about it. The statement is no longer the same, the customers are no longer the same, the key is no longer the same – even the hotel is no longer quite exactly the same.

In mapping processes as illustrated in Figure 1, ANT takes recourse to the two-dimensional mapping mechanism illustrated above: association, the AND dimension (along the x-axis); substitution, the OR dimension (along the y-axis). In this way, the mobilization and engagement of actants (human and non-human) can be traced both by their position on the AND-OR axes and by the recording of the AND and OR positions which have respectively defined them.

For the purposes of building the map, and to facilitate following the multiplicity of actors, I use the adapted mapping system employed by Latour (1991: see Table 2 below). This system is the same as that of Figure 1, only here a double dividing line is drawn between programs and anti-programs, with all programs placed to the left of that line and all anti-programs placed to the right of it, and the vertical axis is divided into segments for the purposes of enumerating the program/anti-program actants. The resulting diagram divides actants into programs and anti-programs, listing from one version to the next those that appear, that disappear and that move from one side of the dividing line to the other.

Ver	Program	Anti-Program
1	Manager -	- All clients defect / all keys lost
2	Manager / order / some clients comply / some keys returned -	- Most clients defect / most keys lost
3	Manager / order / sign / more clients comply / more keys returned -	- Less clients defect / fewer keys lost
4	Manager / order / sign / weight / most clients comply / most keys returned -	- Some clients defect / some keys lost
5	Keys returned -	- Keys lost

Table 2 – Example of adapted association-substitution mapping system.

Through mapping the associations and substitutions, the diagram facilitates keeping track of the successive changes undergone by the actants, recording how a displacement in the associations is paid for by a displacement in the substitutions. The interest is in chains or networks, comprising associations of humans and nonhumans, and in their transformation.

In following the action, we see that we never “work in a world filled with actors to which fixed contours may be granted” (Latour, 1991: 109). Further, we see that the transformations which actors undergo “reveal that the unified actor – in this case, the hotel-customer-who forgets-the-key – is itself an association made up of elements which can be redistributed” (Latour, 1991: 109). In addition, the success of any program of action, as measured by some semblance of stability, can only be achieved by continually sustaining the entire chain of accumulated actants: “It is only because the hotel manager continues to want his keys back, reminds customers aloud, puts up signs, and weighs down the keys that he can finally manage to discipline his customers.

It is this accumulation that gives the impression that we have gained some reality” (Latour, 1991: 109).

Telling an organizational *forming* story through an ANT lens, therefore, entails following associations and substitutions, where the focus is on the actors enrolled and mobilized, on material heterogeneity, on actors performing relationally, on the processes of translation and purification, and on the creation of hybrids.

My interest in using the association/substitution mapping process is to follow the succession of transformations undergone by the Ireland’s Industrial Development Authority (IDA) as an ‘organizational form’ throughout the process of organizational forming. Much work has gone into constructing this actor-network called ‘the IDA’ and part of the effort in sustaining it, in producing what Callon (1991; 1993; 1994; 2005) calls ‘irreversibility,’ is “through the multiplication of connections and alliances, and the accumulation of experience” (Callon, 1994: 417). Thus, as I seek to illustrate, producing ‘form’ entails enrolling actants to the IDA program, forging links and building associations, in the process translating the actants to produce a story of organizational form(ing). This facilitates telling an actor-network story of organizational *forming* where *forming* may be seen in the accumulation of relations amongst such actors as politicians, emigration, economy, economics, multinational corporations, employment, voters, consultants, civil servants, legislation, to name but some.

ORGANIZATIONAL FORM(ING)

As noted above, the empirical site is Ireland’s Industrial Development Authority (IDA), an agency established by the Irish Government in 1949 to foster the country’s indigenous industrial development. Over the years, the organization’s brief was changed to attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), then to being given complete operational autonomy as a semi-state body with national responsibility for both FDI and indigenous industrial development and, most recently, to being split into three separate organizations dealing with, respectively, industrial policy (Forfás), indigenous industry (Enterprise Ireland) and FDI (IDA-Ireland). The map and the discussion that follows provides but a partial treatment of the IDA organizational forming story (see Donnelly (2007) for a full treatment).

Through focusing on the shifting assemblies of associations and substitutions, a trajectory is built and this trajectory only appears in retrospect. It did not exist prior to its construction; rather it was emergent and contingent. Throughout the telling of the story, actor-networks are in constant flux, with hybrids abounding. To the degree that any of these hybrids achieve stability and become blackboxed it is provisional.

Vers	Program	Anti-program
12	1948 general election / Inter-Party Government / protectionist regime / short-term time horizon / extensive commitments / political capital / industrial development / Department of Industry and Commerce	Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments
13	1948 general election / Inter-Party Government / protectionist regime / short-term time horizon / extensive commitments / political capital / industrial development / Department of Industry and Commerce / IDA a 'new conception'	Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments
14	Seán MacBride, Minister for Foreign Affairs and leader of Clann na Poblachta / proposal / self-sufficiency / industrial development	Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments
15	Seán MacBride, Minister for Foreign Affairs and leader of Clann na Poblachta / proposal / self-sufficiency / industrial development / Government / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / six-month review of protection and industrial development	Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments
16	Seán MacBride, Minister for Foreign Affairs and leader of Clann na Poblachta / proposal / self-sufficiency / industrial development / Government / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / six-month review of protection and industrial development / proposal for an IDA	Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / Department of Finance / mastermind planners / Industrial Development Advisory Board / crackpot socialist planners / business community confidence
17	February 12 th , 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles	Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments
18	February 12 th , 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15 th , 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State	Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments
19	February 12 th , 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15 th , 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16 th , 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism	Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments
20	February 12 th , 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15 th , 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16 th , 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3 rd , 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale	Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments
21	February 12 th , 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15 th , 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16 th , 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3 rd , 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale / leading industrialists	Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments

Vers	Program	Anti-program
22	<p>February 12th, 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15th, 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16th, 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3rd, 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale / leading industrialists / October 1949 / improve balance of payments / provide employment / antiodote to emigration / industrialization</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p>
23	<p>February 12th, 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15th, 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16th, 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3rd, 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale / leading industrialists / October 1949 / improve balance of payments / provide employment / antiodote to emigration / industrialization / January 1950/ antiodote to emigration / industrialization</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p>
24	<p>February 12th, 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15th, 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16th, 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3rd, 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale / leading industrialists / October 1949 / improve balance of payments / provide employment / antiodote to emigration / industrialization / January 1950/ antiodote to emigration / industrialization / four member Authority / members well-qualified / freedom from Civil Service constraints</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland</p>
25	<p>February 12th, 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15th, 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16th, 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3rd, 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale / leading industrialists / October 1949 / improve balance of payments / provide employment / antiodote to emigration / industrialization / January 1950/ antiodote to emigration / industrialization / March 9th, 1950 / Dáil / IDA Bill / Second Stage debate / specialized autonomous organization / four member Authority / members well-qualified / freedom from Civil Service constraints / May 26th, 1949 / IDA established / nine months / evidence of its worth</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland</p>
26	<p>February 12th, 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15th, 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16th, 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3rd, 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale / leading industrialists / October 1949 / improve balance of payments / provide employment / antiodote to emigration / industrialization / January 1950/ antiodote to emigration / industrialization / March 9th, 1950 / Dáil / IDA Bill / Second Stage debate / specialized autonomous organization / four member Authority / members well-qualified / freedom from Civil Service constraints / May 26th, 1949 / IDA established / nine months / evidence of its worth / functions / initiate development of new industries / encourage expansion of existing industry / increase exports of industrial output / protectionist regime / encourage regional development</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland</p>

Vers	Program	Anti-program
27	<p>February 12th, 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15th, 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16th, 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3rd, 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale / leading industrialists / October 1949 / improve balance of payments / provide employment / antidote to emigration / industrialization / January 1950/ antidote to emigration / industrialization / March 9th, 1950 / Dáil / IDA Bill / Second Stage debate / specialized autonomous organization / four member Authority / members well-qualified / freedom from Civil Service constraints / May 26th, 1949 / IDA established / nine months / evidence of its worth / functions / initiate development of new industries / encourage expansion of existing industry / increase exports of industrial output / protectionist regime / encourage regional development / repository on all matters industrial</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland</p>
28	<p>February 12th, 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15th, 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16th, 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3rd, 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale / leading industrialists / October 1949 / improve balance of payments / provide employment / antidote to emigration / industrialization / January 1950/ antidote to emigration / industrialization / March 9th, 1950 / Dáil / IDA Bill / Second Stage debate / specialized autonomous organization / four member Authority / members well-qualified / freedom from Civil Service constraints / May 26th, 1949 / IDA established / nine months / evidence of its worth / functions / initiate development of new industries / encourage expansion of existing industry / increase exports of industrial output / protectionist regime / encourage regional development / repository on all matters industrial</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland / March 9th, 1950 / Sean Lemass, former Minister for Industry and Commerce 1932-1948 / Fianna Fáil / abolish IDA / toothless commission</p>
29	<p>February 12th, 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15th, 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16th, 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3rd, 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale / leading industrialists / October 1949 / improve balance of payments / provide employment / antidote to emigration / industrialization / January 1950/ antidote to emigration / industrialization / March 9th, 1950 / Dáil / IDA Bill / Second Stage debate / specialized autonomous organization / four member Authority / members well-qualified / freedom from Civil Service constraints / May 26th, 1949 / IDA established / nine months / evidence of its worth / functions / initiate development of new industries / encourage expansion of existing industry / increase exports of industrial output / protectionist regime / encourage regional development / repository on all matters industrial</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland / March 9th, 1950 / Sean Lemass, former Minister for Industry and Commerce 1932-1948 / Fianna Fáil / abolish IDA / toothless commission / March, 1950 / some 50 industrial and trade organizations / special conference / objection to Section 5 of IDA Bill / letter campaign</p>
30	<p>February 12th, 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15th, 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16th, 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3rd, 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale / leading industrialists / October 1949 / improve balance of payments / provide employment / antidote to emigration / industrialization / January 1950/ antidote to emigration / industrialization / March 9th, 1950 / Dáil / IDA Bill / Second Stage debate / specialized autonomous organization / four member Authority / members well-qualified / freedom from Civil Service constraints / May 26th, 1949 / IDA established / nine months / evidence of its worth / functions / initiate development of new industries / encourage expansion of existing industry / increase exports of industrial output / protectionist regime / encourage regional development / repository on all matters industrial / November, 1950 / Committee Stage / amendments / industrial and trade organizations</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland / March 9th, 1950 / Sean Lemass, former Minister for Industry and Commerce 1932-1948 / Fianna Fáil / abolish IDA / toothless commission</p>

Vers	Program	Anti-program
31	<p>March, 1949 / IDA Authority announcement / J.P. Beddy, Chairman / Luke Duffy / John J. Walsh / Kevin C. McCourt</p> <p>March, 1949 / IDA Authority announcement / J.P. Beddy, Chairman / Luke Duffy / John J. Walsh / Kevin C. McCourt / May 26th, 1949 / administrative body / civil service staff</p> <p>February 12th, 1949 / Department of Industry and Commerce statement announcing Government decision to establish an Industrial Development Authority and outlining its functions / William Norton, Táiniste and Labour Party leader / party meeting address / speeches by members of Government / interested bodies / newspaper articles / February 15th, 1949 / John A. Costello, Taoiseach / address to Federation of Irish Manufacturers / IDA the most important industrial development initiative since the foundation of the State / February 16th, 1949 / Daniel Morrissey, Minister for Industry and Commerce / main IDA function to manage protectionism / March 3rd, 1949 / Dáil / IDA rationale / leading industrialists / October 1949 / improve balance of payments / provide employment / antidote to emigration / industrialization / January 1950 / antidote to emigration / industrialization / March 9th, 1950 / Dáil / IDA Bill / Second Stage debate / specialized autonomous organization / four member Authority / members well-qualified / freedom from Civil Service constraints / May 26th, 1949 / IDA established / nine months / evidence of its worth / functions / initiate development of new industries / encourage expansion of existing industry / increase exports of industrial output / protectionist regime / encourage regional development / repository on all matters industrial / November, 1950 / Committee Stage / amendments / industrial and trade organizations / March, 1949 / IDA Authority announcement / J.P. Beddy, Chairman / Luke Duffy / John J. Walsh / Kevin C. McCourt / May 26th, 1949 / administrative body / civil service staff / legislative process / December 20th, 1950 / Industrial Development Authority Act, 1950</p> <p>1951 / IPG / protectionist regime / extensive commitments / industrial development / Department of Industry and Commerce / IDA</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p>
32	<p>Seán Lemass, Minister for Industry and Commerce / discussions / IDA [more focused brief / promotion/development of new industry / manage certain technical assistance projects / act as advisory committee under Trade and Loans Acts / undertake tariff review per 1938 trade agreement with UK / list of commodities / £20m imports 1951] / Department of Industry and Commerce [quotas / tariffs / export/import licenses, new proposals from private investors / develop existing industry]</p> <p>Seán Lemass, Minister for Industry and Commerce / IDA Chairman / discussions / IDA [more focused brief / promotion/development of new industry / manage certain technical assistance projects / act as advisory committee under Trade and Loans Acts / undertake tariff review per 1938 trade agreement with UK / list of commodities / £20m imports 1951] / Department of Industry and Commerce [quotas / tariffs / export/import licenses, new proposals from private investors / develop existing industry] / 1952 / Fianna Fáil / Government / protectionist machine / Undeveloped Areas Act, 1952 / An Foras Tionscal administrative body / financial assistance for development / disadvantaged areas / private enterprise</p> <p>Seán Lemass, Minister for Industry and Commerce / IDA Chairman / discussions / IDA [more focused brief / promotion/development of new industry / manage certain technical assistance projects / act as advisory committee under Trade and Loans Acts / undertake tariff review per 1938 trade agreement with UK / list of commodities / £20m imports 1951] / Department of Industry and Commerce [quotas / tariffs / export/import licenses, new proposals from private investors / develop existing industry] / 1952 / Fianna Fáil / Government / protectionist machine / Undeveloped Areas Act, 1952 / An Foras Tionscal administrative body / financial assistance for development / disadvantaged areas / private enterprise / life of An Foras Tionscal aggregate of grants / Industrial Grants Act, 1956 / IDA brief expanded to awarding grants and promoting regional industrial development</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland / March 9th, 1950 / Seán Lemass, former Minister for Industry and Commerce 1932-1948 / Fianna Fáil / abolish IDA / toothless commission / executive authority / long and cumbersome decision-making process / wide brief / large workload / cumbersome protection application procedure / lack of resources / lack of Government support</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland</p>
33	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p>
34	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland / March 9th, 1950 / Seán Lemass, former Minister for Industry and Commerce 1932-1948 / Fianna Fáil / abolish IDA / toothless commission / executive authority / long and cumbersome decision-making process / wide brief / large workload / cumbersome protection application procedure / lack of resources / lack of Government support / 1951 general election / Government / Seán Lemass, Minister for Industry and Commerce</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments / low level of industrialization / low proportion of population employed in industry / Irish capital invested abroad / under-investment in Ireland</p>
35	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p>
36	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p>
37	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p>	<p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p> <p>Free trade / foreign competition / European economic boom / industrial inefficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments</p>

In version (13) we see the actor 'IDA' enter an actor-network for the first time, but this actor is already blackboxed, one among nine actors. But what is this 'IDA'? Is it an organizational form? A name? An idea? A proposal? Arriving blackboxed, we have no sense of its contours, however contingent, no sense of the actor-network holding it together and giving it form. It is an effect and it is only in the course of successive versions of the story that the IDA blackbox is opened and that we see the associations and substitutions, the translations and hybrids, that are at play. All we know at this stage is that we are dealing with 'IDA a new conception,' an actor enrolled to strengthen the hybrid of version (12) and counter the challenge from the 'industrial efficiency / migration from the land / unemployment / emigration / balance of payments' hybrid.

From here onwards, we trace the accumulation of actors that by version (34) become blackboxed as the unified actor 'IDA.' The accumulation of associations from version (14) to version (16), which successfully challenge the anti-program hybrid of version (16), continues on through versions (17) through (33), with a hybrid created at each turn. The success of the translation is only possible by relentlessly sustaining the entire succession of accumulated actors, by the actors holding together and not defecting and by the actor-network enrolling sufficient actors to overcome challenges.

By version (34), 'the IDA' has gone from proposal (16), to decision to establish (17), to administrative body with members and staff (24 and 32), having functions (17 and 26) and becoming attached to the entire Irish legal system in the process (33). However, though we have arrived at what appears to be a stable definition of an organizational form, this end point is provisional and the reality that the form has gained remains open to further transformation, as we see. What we are already seeing is that organizational forming is a materially heterogeneous process, where actors perform relationally to produce an effect we provisionally call an organizational form such as 'IDA.'

Though we are dealing with a unified actor 'IDA' by version (34), we are also dealing with a hybrid challenging its unity. This hybrid emerged in version (28) and was extended in version (33), however it was never strong enough to challenge the IDA-creation program. The alignment of the actors '1951 general election' and 'Government' with the anti-program hybrid of version (33) witnessed a reversal of forces. The unified

'IDA' actor of version (34) was opened and renegotiated in version (35) and actors were redistributed. While the actor 'threat to abolish IDA' disappeared from view, 'Department of Industry and Commerce' entered to align itself with 'quotas / tariffs / export/import licenses / new proposals from private investors / develop existing industry,' all of which actors defected from the IDA actor-network blackboxed in version (34). The scale of the IDA actor-network is reduced to the extent of the defections, such that the IDA now comprises 'more focused brief / promotion/development of new industry / manage certain technical assistance projects / act as advisory committee under Trade and Loans Acts-undertake tariff review per 1938 trade agreement with UK / list of commodities / £20m imports 1951.' We are dealing with a different IDA by version (35) than we were in version (34), and a different IDA again by version (37).

As the ANT analysis illustrates, the IDA actor-network that emerges is both contingent and emergent. It is contingent in the sense that it is never fixed for all time, for the actor-network could come asunder should any of the actors defect. And it is emergent in the sense that the actor-network does not appear ready formed, as a pure essence that always-already existed.

The only essence of organizational form is its total existence (Latour, 1991). Looking through the lens provided by actor-network theory shows that the IDA is never quite a static form, never quite an essence; rather the IDA blackbox is opened and re-negotiated throughout the story, albeit the opening and re-negotiating often entailed the enrolling and mobilizing of yet more actors to the IDA actor-network. As such, no one particular part of the actor-networks being constructed from version to version is the essence of the IDA, with all the other parts being merely context or packaging or history. Also, in moving from version to version, should even one actor differ, then we are no longer dealing with the same thing from version to version, such movement underpinning both the emergent and contingent aspects of organizational forming.

Over the successive versions of associations and substitutions, the list of actions has grown longer and has contributed to defining the IDA's historicity. It appears as being composed of increasingly longer chains of associations, with mostly small variations in the network of actors, from version to version. At points, it becomes increasingly predictable through blackboxing these chains of associations as to suggest

an increasingly stabilized, coherent essence. However, this is not to say that the blackbox cannot be reopened and the chains of associations renegotiated, much as happened between versions (34) and (35). Thus, as noted by Latour (1991: 123), “An essence emerges from the actor’s very existence – an essence which could dissolve later.” Following the activity of an actor serves to highlight the continual variation in its isotopy, in other words, in its stability through time and space. The work of purification does not negate the work of translation or hybrid-creation, nor does it negate that beneath an actor lies a network of heterogeneous actors performing in relation to one another.

What we see through following the actors as we move through versions of the story is the work of translation and hybrid-creation, which goes unacknowledged in the more traditional renderings of organizational form. Through following such work, we see that organizational forming is an ongoing process and that, in this case, it was rare that we arrived at a unified, blackboxed actor. Even then, the actor so purified was contingent and open to further translation. What we see is that organizational forming, as translation, hybrid-creation and purification, is a process of building associations, of materially heterogeneous actors performing relationally. Arriving at a (contingently) stable actor is to arrive at such a materially heterogeneous actor-network holding together such that it can be blackboxed and named.

Taking an ANT approach, we can also seek to define organizational form by the successive versions in which it appears, so producing a list where organizational form is made the origin of actions. As such, the IDA, as organizational form, is made up of pieces of legislation, policies, staff, senior managers, programs, grants, budgets, offices, etc. It has a name. It has a relationship with Government. It markets Ireland to foreign investors and it creates jobs for Irish people. It has had success and it has had failure. It talks with the media and it influences policy. It has grown in size and scale and it has experienced restructuring. It has changed from an autonomous body to a semi-state organization. It has changed name from the Industrial Development Authority to the Industrial Development Agency-Ireland. And much else.

CONCLUSION

Thus, “Can we think any other way” (Calás & Smircich, 2003: 49), such that we do not become enmeshed in, and continue to reproduce, the problems we encounter when thinking in a modern way? This question led me to begin outlining the contours to an alternative way of thinking and knowing, encapsulated in the thesis that ‘we have never been modern’ (Latour, 1993), moving on to explore a possible approach for studying organizational forming that would take into account both the difficulties of leaving the modernist way of thinking and researching this topic and, at the same time, permit to reflexively understand how this works from an (a)modern perspective. In so doing, I have sought to demonstrate the inner workings of modernity when it comes to studying the organizational. It is in the demonstration of these “inner workings” that an amodern studying of organizational forming becomes possible. The contributions of Latour’s (1993) amodern thesis and actor-network theory demonstrate the possibilities to look beyond the limitations of extant theory, while still addressing the concerns in the literature with regard to process, history and new ways of theorizing and studying organizational form(ing).

I posit that ANT, as a theoretical and analytical approach, holds promise in addressing the drawbacks of existent processual approaches, maintaining an opening toward organizational forming in organizational theorizing and research. Of particular interest to this discussion is the re-articulation of organizational forming as a constructivist endeavor (Latour, 2002) and the intellectual contribution an actor-network approach offers by way of viewing organizational form(ing) as a materially heterogeneous relational performance. From an ANT perspective, which always approaches its task empirically, “organisation is an achievement, a process, a consequence, a set of resistances overcome, a precarious effect. Its components – the hierarchies, organisational arrangements, power relations, and flows of information – are the uncertain consequences of the ordering of heterogeneous materials” (Law, 1992: ¶39).

An integral facet of modernist thinking is that it makes “invisible, unthinkable, unrepresentable” (Latour, 1993: 34) the work of translation that constructs hybrids. Modernity functions simultaneously on translation and on its denial, on permitting “*the*

expanded proliferation of the hybrids whose existence, whose very possibility, it denies” (Latour, 1993: 34; emphasis in original). As such, working within an amodern framework allows for overcoming modernity’s deficiency in favoring essence and purification, i.e., ‘organizational form,’ over relational materiality, performativity, translation and hybridization, i.e., ‘organizational forming,’ and this paper has sought to outline such possibility.

REFERENCES

- Academy of Management Journal**. 2001. Special research forum on new and evolving organizational forms. 44(6).
- Akrich, M. & Latour, B. 1992. A summary of convenient vocabulary for the semiotics of human and non-human assemblages. In W. Bijker & J. Law (Eds.), **Shaping technology, building society: Studies in sociotechnical change**: 259-264. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Aldrich, H.E. & Mueller, S. 1982. The evolution of organizational forms: Technology, coordination and control. In B.M. Staw & L.L. Cummings (Eds.), **Research in Organizational Behavior**: 4: 33-87. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Ashcraft, K.L. 2001. Organized dissonance: Feminist bureaucracy as hybrid form. **Academy of Management Journal**, 44(6): 1301-1322.
- Ashcraft, K.L. 2006. Feminist-bureaucratic control and other adversarial allies: Extending organized dissonance to the practice of "new" forms. **Communication Monographs**, 73(1): 55-86.
- Astley, W.G. 1985. The two ecologies: Population and community perspectives on organizational evolution. **Administrative Science Quarterly**, 30(2): 224-241.
- Calás, M.B. & Smircich, L. 2003. To be done with progress and other heretical thoughts for organization and management studies. **Research in the Sociology of Organizations**, 21: 29-56.
- Callon, M. 1991. Techno-economic networks and irreversibility. In J. Law (Ed.), **A sociology of monsters: Essays on power, technology and domination**: 132-161. London: Routledge.
- Callon, M. 1993. Variety and irreversibility in networks of technique conception and adoption. In D. Foray & C. Freeman (Eds.), **Technology and the wealth of nations: The dynamics of constructed advantage**: 232-268. London: Pinter Publishers.
- Callon, M. 1994. Is science a public good? **Science, Technology & Human Values**, 19(4): 395-424.
- Callon, M. 2005. Why virtualism paves the way to political impotence: A reply to Daniel Miller's critique of the laws of the markets. **Economic Sociology**, 6(2). Site: <http://econsoc.mpifg.de/current/6-2art1.html>
- Child, J. & McGrath, R.G. 2001. Organizations unfettered: Organizational form in an information-intensive economy. **Academy of Management Journal**, 44(6): 1135-1148.
- Contractor, N.S., Wasserman, S. & Faust, K. 2006. Testing multitheoretical, multilevel hypotheses about organizational networks: An analytic framework and empirical example. **Academy of Management Review**, 31(3): 681-703.
- Daft, R.L. & Lewin, A.Y. 1993. Where are the theories for the "new" organizational forms? An editorial essay. **Organization Science**, 4(4): i-vi.

- DiMaggio, P. (Ed.). 2001. *The twenty-first century firm*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Donnelly, P. 2007. *Organizational forming in amodern times: Path dependence, actor-network theory and Ireland's Industrial Development Authority*. PhD dissertation, University of Massachusetts at Amherst.
- Fombrum, C.J. 1988. Crafting an institutionally informed ecology of organizations. In G.R. Carroll (Ed.) *Ecological models of organizations*: 223-239. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.
- Foss, N.J. 2002. Introduction: New organizational forms – Critical perspectives. *International Journal of the Economics of Business*, 9(1): 1-8.
- Graetz, F. & Smith, A. 2006. Critical perspectives on the evolution of new forms. *International Journal of Strategic Change Management*, 1(1-2): 127-142.
- Hawley, A.H. 1988. Forward. In G.R. Carroll (Ed.), *Ecological models of organizations*: xiii-xvi. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.
- Latour, B. 1986. The powers of association. In J. Law (Ed.), *Power, action and belief: A new sociology of knowledge?*: 264-280. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Latour, B. 1991. Technology is society made durable. In J. Law (Ed.), *Sociological Review Monograph (38) – A sociology of monsters? Essays on power, technology and domination*: 103-131. London: Routledge.
- Latour, B. 1993. *We have never been modern*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Latour, B. 1999. *Pandora's hope: Essays on the reality of science studies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Latour, B. 2002. *The promises of constructivism*. Site: <http://www.ensmp.fr/~latour/articles/article/087.html>
- Latour, B., Mauguin, P. & Teil, G. 1992. A note on socio-technical graphs. *Social Studies of Science*, 22(1): 33-57.
- Law, J. 1992. Notes on the theory of the actor-network: Ordering, strategy, heterogeneity. *Systems Practice*, 5(4): 379-393. Site: <http://www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/sociology/soc054jl.html>
- Law, J. 1999. After ANT: Complexity, naming and topology. In J. Law & J. Hassard (Eds.), *Actor-network theory and after*: 1-14. Keele: Blackwell Publishers/The Sociological Review.
- Law, J. & Hetherington, K. 1999. *Materialities, spacialities, globalities*. Department of Sociology, Lancaster University. Site: <http://www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/sociology/soc029jl.html>
- Lee, N. & Hassard, J. 1999. Organization unbound: Actor-network theory, research strategy and institutional flexibility. *Organization*, 6(3): 391-404.
- Lewin, A.Y., Long, C.P. & Carroll, T.N. 1999. The coevolution of new organizational forms. *Organization Science*, 10(5): 535-550.

- McKendrick, D.G. & Carroll, G.R. 2001. On the genesis of organizational forms: Evidence from the market for disk arrays. **Organization Science**, 12(6): 661-682.
- McSweeney, B. 2006. Are we living in a post-bureaucratic epoch? **Journal of Organizational Change Management**, 19(1): 22-37.
- Meyer, M.W. 1990. Notes of a skeptic: From organizational ecology to organizational evolution. In J.V. Singh (Ed.), **Organizational evolution: New directions**: 298-314. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Organization Science**. 1999. Focused issue on coevolution of strategy and new organizational forms. 10(5).
- Pettigrew, A.M. & Fenton, E.M. (Eds.). 2000. **The innovating organization**. London: Sage Publications.
- Pettigrew, A.M., Whittington, R., Melin, L., Sanchez-Runde, C., van den Bosch, F. A.J., Ruigrok, W. & Numagami, T. 2003. **Innovative forms of organizing**. London: Sage Publications.
- Romanelli, E. 1989. Environments and strategies of organizational start-up: Effects on early survival. **Administrative Science Quarterly**, 34(3): 369-387.
- Romanelli E. 1991. The evolution of new organizational forms. **Annual Review of Sociology**, 17: 79-103.
- Strum, S. & Latour, B. 1987. The meanings of the social: From baboons to humans. **Social Science Information**, 26: 783-802.
- Tushman, M.L. & Romanelli, E. 1985. Organizational evolution: A metamorphosis model of convergence and reorientation. In B.M. Staw & L.L. Cummings (Eds.), **Research in Organizational Behavior**, 7: 171-222. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Whitley, R. 2006. Project-based firms: new organizational form or variations on a theme? **Industrial and Corporate Change**, 15(1): 77-99.