

# **Radical Institutional Innovation: A Multilevel Framework**

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## ABSTRACT

Prior research explores how knowledge brokers can bring about technological innovation and the structural and network features of brokers, yet little attention focuses on how these micro-level broker relations and processes can have significant macro-level consequences. This dissertation begins to fill this gap by examining the role of brokers in creating radical institutional innovation. Drawing on research in innovation and institutional field emergence, I explore how entrepreneurs create institutional building blocks through brokering and diffusing knowledge, resources and capabilities in an emerging field.

More specifically, I employ an ethnographic approach that uses semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and archival data over a 2-year period to examine Libya's rapid emergence of civil society after the fall of a dictator regime. A multi-level process framework emerging from the findings highlights the important role institutional brokers, actors embedded in both established institutions and in the emerging institutional field, play in bringing about radical institutional innovation. These institutional brokers do more than link organizations and individuals; they also transform ideas as they are ideally positioned to receive new and previously uncombined ideas. The framework developed illustrates the dynamics and mechanisms by which these institutional brokers bring about innovation and how their social position mediates their relation to the environment in which they are embedded, and drives their access to the resources and capabilities that support innovation.

The findings supplement the rather static portrait of the role of knowledge brokers with a more in-depth understanding of the innovation process these individuals and organizations participate in as they create radical institutional innovation. The framework also extends current

views of institutional field emergence by revealing the important, but often missed dynamics of bottom-up strategic action and institutional brokerage as critical drivers of institutional emergence.

## **DEDICATION**

To Mama and Baba, who took the training wheels off, gave a big push, and never let go.

And to my beloved Bashar. My greatest fortune is you.

*In memory of Dr. Brenda Zimmerman Ellis.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From the moment I started my PhD I have always looked forward to writing this part of the dissertation. In writing these acknowledgements I cannot help but be moved with emotion. This dissertation is the result of an incredible amount of collective energy and support. It has been a privilege to work on this project and to learn and grow with a range of different people who have made this process a rewarding and productive experience. Whatever has come out of this work, I owe to my mentors, colleagues, friends and family - thank you.

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A dissertation is a long, and many times tiring process. It requires inspiration. My inspiration came from the people I met in Libya. Many who became my friends. Their work inspired this research and inspired me.

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All praise to God, the most merciful, the most gracious.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This dissertation was motivated by a phenomenon. A phenomenon I saw. One I felt. A phenomenon that changed my life and continues to do so.

February 15, 2011. Fueled by the recent success of Tunisia and Egypt overthrowing their own dictators, protests against the Gaddafi regime emerged across Libya. By February 20, 233 deaths in Benghazi alone were reported by Human Rights Watch and videos had started to emerge showing Gaddafi forces and non-Libyan mercenaries using heavy artillery against civilians. War had broken out in Libya. By September 21, 2011, after seven months of fighting, Tripoli, the final city under regime control, was liberated. But the revolution had a heavy price. In the span of eight months over 30,000 Libyans had been killed, 20,000 injured, hundreds raped and thousands missing. During the war, over 400,000 civilians became displaced, including 55,000 left as refugees (UNHCR, 2011). A humanitarian disaster had unfolded.

Unlike other ‘Arab spring’ countries, such as Tunisia and Egypt, where even though there was authoritarian rule, opposition parties, civil society groups, and independent press existed, Libya was absent of such freedoms. Under the forty-two year authoritarian rule of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, all institutions were government controlled, including all media, and non-government organizations. Civil society was non-existent. Gaddafi saw civil society as “a bourgeois culture and an imitation of the West that has no place here [in Libya]”<sup>1</sup>. But as the events of the revolution were unfolding, individuals, inside and outside Libya, were forming organizations, media channels, and setting up quasi-governments to deal with the crisis at hand. The first impromptu civil organizations had begun to appear, paving the way to the emergence of

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<sup>1</sup> Thursday 28, January 2010, televised address to the General People’s Congress.

civil society.

The unprecedented events following the start of the Libyan uprising provide a unique opportunity for research on organizational and institutional formation. The context represents an extreme case of institutional voids and the rapid creation of civil institutions, an extreme case of radical institutional innovation.

### **1.1 Theoretical Lens and Research Gap**

Innovation, the “generation, development, and implementation of new ideas or behaviors” (Damanpour, 1991, p. 556) continues to be an important driver of competitive advantage, renewal, and social progress. Innovation ranges from minor changes to what already exists to breakthroughs in products, processes, business models, services or organizations, with unprecedented features or performance. It is a process for introducing the new, from ideation to dissemination. Research in this area continues to build our understanding of the various steps in this process. Most of the studies exploring innovation break down the process into two parts, generation, and outcomes. Innovation type, speed, radicalness and frequency are among dimensions of innovation outcome that are examined by innovation researchers, with type receiving the most attention. These include product innovation, service innovation, process innovation and business model innovation (Chesbrough, 2010; Daft 2001; Damanpour, 1991; Salunke, Weerawardena, McColl-Kennedy, 2013; Van de Ven, 1986). These outcomes are usually looked at from an organizational level of analysis with little research exploring macro level outcomes.

Additionally, innovation involves first an actor(s), either an individual, a team, or an organization, and second, the broader environment within which the actor(s) is embedded. The

actors and the environment they are embedded in, interact and affect one another continuously. Yet, innovation researchers tend to focus on one level of analysis, with little understanding of how variables at different levels of analysis influence each other (Anderson, Potocnik, & Zhou, 2014; Gupta, Tesluk, and Taylor, 2007). Innovation researchers are beginning to extend their work in search for a deeper understanding of these multilevel dynamics of innovation (Anderson et al., 2014; Chen, Farh, Campbell-Bush, Wu, & Wu, 2013). Institutions are a nested system with various societal, field, organizational, and individual systems (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton, 2002). Thus, multi-level processes are especially important for understanding institutional innovation. Although the outcomes are seen at the field level, the process to get there requires work at various levels. It is individuals or groups of individuals that see the need for innovation and champion the push to bring about change (Beckert, 1999).

If institutions are the level of analysis for institutional innovation, then we must have an understanding of institutions before we begin to conceptualize institutional innovation. However, there has been little connection between the innovation literature and institutional theory (Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006; Munir & Phillips, 2005; Raffaelli & Glynn, 2015).

To deepen our understanding of institutional innovation, I bridge the innovation literature with the research in institutional theory and field emergence, a body of work that provides a more developed macro approach relevant to innovation at the institutional level.

Institutions emerge and evolve as products of social interaction. At times, they are the product of deliberate actions. Other times they arise by accident, as unintended byproducts of behaviours and logics that become routinized over time. Although researchers agree that institutions matter, there is still disagreement on how institutions are created and who are the critical actors involved. Research in the area of institutional field emergence tends to investigate

how fields are created, focusing on the role of institutional entrepreneurs in this process (David, Sine, & Haveman, 2013; Maguire, Hardy & Lawrence, 2004; Powell, White, Koput & Owen-Smith, 2005). However, much of the focus centers on the legitimization of new organizational forms, practices, and the conditions that create institutional entrepreneurs. This research primarily focuses on elaborating the characteristics of, and the conditions that, produce these actors. It is relatively silent about how they differ in various contexts (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Maguire et al., 2004; Pacheco, York, Dean, & Sarasvathy, 2010). Less is known about the actions of those actors involved in field emergence (David et al., 2013). Thus, researchers have called for more empirical research into the relationship between field position and institutional entrepreneurship (Battilana, 2006; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Wright & Zammuto, 2013). In addition, little work examines what types of resources are needed for these entrepreneurs to do their work, and how they gain access to these resources.

Also, notwithstanding the important recognition of previous work in this area, the literature has yet to give explicit and sufficient consideration to the emergence of institutions, especially in the context of institutional voids. More specifically, although a significant, and growing, stream of research focuses on how actors create, maintain, and disrupt institutions (e.g., DiMaggio, 1988; Oliver, 1991, 1992, Dacin, Goodstein & Scott, 2002; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Greenwood, Oliver, Sahlin, & Suddaby, 2008; Wright & Zammuto, 2013), this research tends to elucidate micro fields, such as management consulting (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006) and HIV treatment advocacy (Maguire et al., 2004) versus more macro or societal level innovation. A review on the work looking at institutional entrepreneurship by Pacheco, York, Dean, and Sarasvathy (2010) suggests that there needs to be an expansion of the types of institutions that are typically studied and the evolution of these institutions.

Finally, organizations typically existed before field emergence, thus much of the focus in the field emergence literature is on institutionalization of a field (Philips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2000; Lawrence, Hardy, & Phillips, 2002; Dorado, 2013), and not particularly in the birth of new fields and the process to get to institutionalization. Consequently, significant questions regarding the origin and evolution of institutions are left partially unaddressed.

Furthermore, few empirical studies examine the interplay between more than two levels of analysis [see Wright and Zammuto (2013) for a recent exception]. Research looking at innovation at the institutional level has typically been seen as a macro process with change being initiated at the field-level. There is a neglect of bottom-up change with repeated appeals for scholars to give greater attention to the micro-processes of institutionalization (Smets, Morris, & Greenwood, 2012).

Finally, even when research does examine more than one level of analysis, the contexts chosen are typically more stable institutional fields (Purdy & Gray, 2009; Tracey, Phillips & Jarvis, 2011; Wright & Zammuto, 2013). Institutional innovation is a context dependent social process and therefore radical upheaval and transformation differs from changes in more developed and established institutional fields. Radical institutional innovation is the development of new institutions that transform the institutional field they are embedded in. In some contexts, like what was observed in Libya, radical institutional innovation creates a new institutional field. To understand how radical institutional innovation emerges, attention must also shift to the actors in the process. While some studies emphasize processes, there is little research on the detailed activities of institutional entrepreneurs and how these actors perform activities that lead to the rise and shift of institutions. Although there have been efforts to incorporate an increasing demand for strategic insight in neo-institutional theory (Beckert, 1999; David et al., 2013;

Fligstein, 1997), the focus has been mostly on power dynamics, and less so on the strategic actions these actors take. What is missing in the dialogue of institutional theory and entrepreneurship is the underlying phenomenon of strategic action in field emergence. Little is known about how individuals and organizations make strategic choices when confronting major institutional upheaval or large-scale institutional transitions. Finally, there is growing recognition that spatial systems connecting people and other institutions allow for positive interactions that result in successful knowledge transfer, creativity, and ultimately innovation outcomes (Fleming, Mingo & Chen, 2007; Hsu & Lim, 2013; Wang, 2014). Although these studies are not at the institutional level of analysis, they underscore the imperative role brokerage can play in innovation. A brokerage lens can bring valuable insight into the underlying processes of emergence in radical institutional innovation.

The assumption that innovation has many dimensions and cannot be treated equally in studies that treat innovation as a dependent variable, has fueled a great deal of research that explicitly defines the type of innovation within the innovation literature. However, little work has looked at innovation at the institutional level or taken a multi-level approach. Within institutional research, attention to institutional fields and their emergence has offered a better understanding of how fields evolve and the actors involved. However, a deeper understanding of strategic action, and how the processes and actors involve differ in various contexts is still required.

This dissertation begins to fill these gaps and heeds the call for “research on the different processes, antecedents, and micro and macro structures that generate collective action through which institutions are created and the causal mechanisms behind them” (Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006, p. 866). More specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

- Who are the key actors that bring about radical institutional innovation?
- What characteristics do they hold that enables them to innovate in an institutional void?
- How do they create radical institutional innovation?

## **1.2. Overview of the Methodology**

I chose a grounded theory approach as an appropriate methodology for this study. This approach involves understanding prior research on the phenomenon under investigation and relevant concepts. Themes are abstracted and emerged from the data by making empirical observations in the field, and iteratively moving between data generation and data analysis. The ultimate goal of this type of approach is to organize and communicate the data through categories, typologies, or ultimately, new theory. This is appropriate as it allowed me to take note of existent themes and their limitations, to acknowledge recent developments in the field but also remain in close contact with the empirical phenomena while being theoretically flexible.

I employ qualitative research, as it is useful for building process theories because it is highly sensitive to the context and sequence of organizational events and actions with the ability to offer insight into complex social processes that quantitative data cannot easily reveal. More specifically, I use ethnographic methods and approaches to data collection and analysis by submerging myself in the field from the beginning of the phenomenon. I collected data using semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and archival data over a 2-year period to examine Libya's rapid emergence of civil society after the fall of a dictator regime. This approach emphasizes the experiential, with an approach to knowledge that is both contextual and interpersonal thus allowing for data collection that takes into account the various forces and history surrounding the innovation.

### **1.3. Organization of the Dissertation**

In chapter 2, I present a review of the relevant literature in innovation and institutional field emergence. I then present my conceptualization of institutional innovation by bridging work on technological innovation with institutional theory. Here I introduce and elaborate on the concept of radical institutional innovation. I then present my multi-level framework of radical institutional innovation that I developed to guide my research going into the field. Following this, chapter 3 details the ethnographic methodology used. I articulate the rationale for the choice of methodology and case study site. In Chapter 4, I introduce the resulting framework and explicate the antecedents of radical institutional innovation and the characteristics of the actors that were found to instigate the process. As a result of my data collection, the focus of this dissertation became a specific type of actors, whom I label institutional brokers. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 describe the three dynamics uncovered in the process – creative translation, network cultivation and collaborative transmission. Next, Chapter 8 integrates these three dynamics in a multilevel process framework. Finally, Chapter 9 offers a discussion of the findings and their implication for research in the area of innovation and institutional theory, and practice. I conclude with limitations and directions for future research.

## **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL MOTIVATION AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

This dissertation is grounded in two different streams of research; innovation and institutional theory. Since this study follows a grounded theory approach, I entered into the field with a general research question asking, “How does radical institutional innovation emerge?”

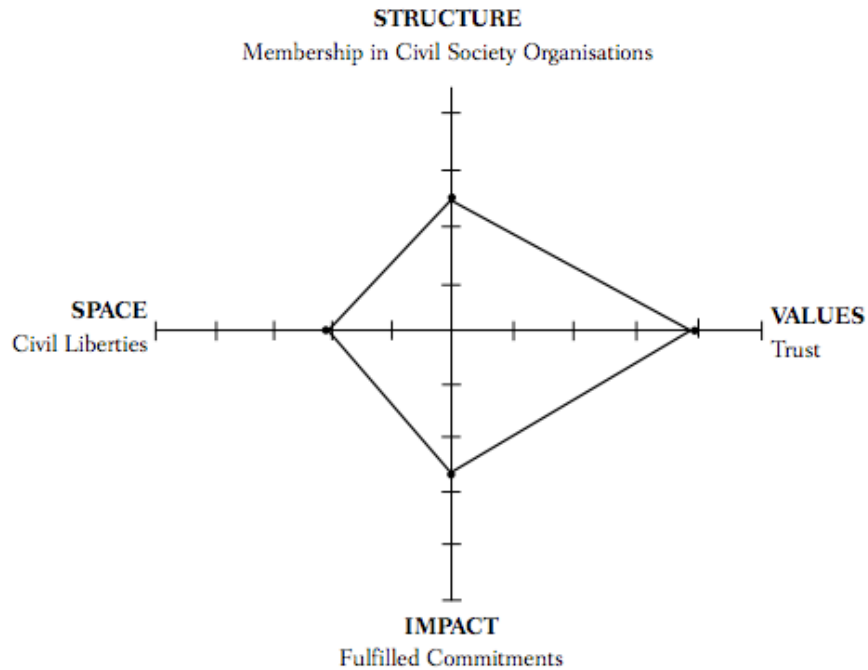
I start my literature review with a brief overview of civil society, how it is defined and its relationship to institutional innovation elucidating key elements that make up the civil society field. Following this, my literature review reflects my grounded theory approach examining institutional theory and innovation broadly first. I then bridge these two streams to develop the concept of institutional innovation. My underlying premise is that both the innovation and institutional theory literature are speaking past each other, however there is much that can be learned by bridging these two areas of work together. Finally, I present the process framework going into this research based on the extant research.

### **2.1. Civil Society**

Civil society can be defined in many ways. I utilize the commonly used and broad definition proposed by Helmut Anheier; “civil society is the arena outside family, government, and market where people voluntarily associate to advance common interests based on civility” (Anheier, 2008). This definition encompasses a vast array of organizations, both formal and informal, and includes; interest groups, cultural organizations, civic and developmental associations, issue-oriented movements, media organizations, and the social relations of mutual respect. Sievers (2010) proposes seven core concepts as the constitutive elements of a definition of civil society. These concepts frequently appear in the large body of civil society literature, and

incorporate the essential institutional and normative factors present that create the social framework needed for civil society to flourish (Sievers, 2010). Philanthropic organizations, legal frameworks, nonprofit and voluntary organizations, and a system of free expression reflect institutional structures. The other three, commitments to the common good, to individual rights, and to tolerance, reflect social norms. The elements that constitute the structure of civil society are the primary vehicles outside the state through which citizens interact and collaborate to achieve common purposes. The three normative elements are the values animating these institutions. Sievers (2010) argues that these elements are “constitutive and interactive components that together create the necessary and sufficient conditions for the successful functioning of modern civil society. They are mutually supportive and interdependent” (Sievers, 2010; 7). More recently, Anheier (2013) introduced a Civil Society Diamond (CSD) as a basic system to present and analyze the major contours of civil society in a systematic way. The framework is based on four dimensions, and when relative indicators are generated for each scale of the dimensions, a diamond is formed. Figure 1 provides an illustration of the CSD.

**FIGURE 1: Illustration of Civil Society Diamond**



The four dimensions include: *structure*, which describes the make-up of civil society, *space*, which looks at what legal and cultural climate civil society operates in, the *values* dimension refers to what values civil society represents and advocates, and finally, the *impact* dimension looks at what are the contributions of civil society. Table 1 provides an overview of these four dimensions incorporating the seven elements put forward by Sievers. This framework provides a backbone that facilitates understanding the context of this study and the outcomes of institutional innovation in the Libya context.

**TABLE 1: Civil Society Diamond Overview<sup>2</sup>**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Key Question</b>	<b>Elements</b>	<b>Example Indicators</b>
<b>Structure</b>	How large is civil society in terms of institutions, organizations, networks and individuals; what are its component parts; and what resources does it command?	Philanthropic organizations, nonprofit and voluntary organizations, and a system of free expression	Number of organizations, memberships, share of philanthropic giving,
<b>Space</b>	What is the legal and political space within the larger regulatory environment in which civil society operates; and what laws and policies enable or inhibit its development?	Governance and regulatory systems, legal frameworks	Degree of enablement provided by regulatory environment
<b>Values</b>	What values underlie civil society; what values, norms and attitudes does it represent and propagate; how inclusive and exclusive are they; and what areas of consensus and dissent emerge?	Commitments to the common good, to individual rights, and to tolerance	Democratic inclusion (e.g. human rights values; democratic attitudes
<b>Impact</b>	What is the contribution of civil society to specific social, economic and political problems?	Development and achievements	Efficiency and effectiveness of the operations of civil society organizations, and

Although the CSD has its own major conceptual and methodological issues<sup>3</sup>, it provides a core set of characteristics and dimensions to describe the state of civil society in a given context.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Anheier and Carlson, 2001.

Furthermore, these dimensions do not operate in isolation. Although civil society is referred to as the third sector, acting autonomously from the state and private businesses, there is an inherent tension present between the relationships of civil society and these other sectors. For example, even though civil society is considered to be separate from the state, it is regulated by it. The state is involved in shaping civil society organizations by means of financial instruments, accountability procedures, and performance management. Accordingly, civil society provides an enabling framework for democracy and state building. Similarly, the private sector is many times financiers of civil society organizations, while at the same time, civil society can shape the business landscape. One only needs to look at the sustainability movement and its affect on private businesses to see how important this relationship is. Sievers (2010; 2) writes:

“While civil society provides an enabling framework for democracy, at the same time it contains an intrinsic tension, a fragile balance between private and public interests. Maintaining this balance is essential to finding solutions to vital challenges in modern democracies that demand public resolution, challenges such as environmental degradation, deficient educational systems, ethnic and religious strife, and deterioration of public decision-making processes”.

This brief overview of civil society provides a context for this study and consequently, a springboard for the literature review. The rapid emergence of civil society institutions in Libya is a form of radical institutional innovation. In the following sections, I conceptualize institutional innovation. I begin by exploring previous thinking on the concept and then discuss two separate areas of very relevant research; innovation and institutional theory that provide the necessary basis for an understanding of institutional innovation.

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<sup>3</sup> Some of these challenges include applicability across countries that may differ in terms of culture, economy, and politics. And technical challenges in terms of data coverage, availability and measurement. Thus, the CSD should be considered a basic framework that continues to evolve and develop. However, it serves a vital starting point in conceptualizing civil society for research and policy.

## **2.2 Innovation and Institutions**

It is hard to imagine any issue more central to society than innovation (Drucker, 2006; Gupta et al., 2007; Schumpeter, 1942; Van de Ven, 1986). It is essential for society as a whole, and for all the subsystems that compromise it, including individuals, organizations, industries, institutions, and countries. It is the primary determinant of success, consumer welfare, and vital for evolutionary and revolutionary adaptation. For the purpose of this dissertation research, I view innovation consistent with Van de Ven (1986: 592) that “as long as the idea is perceived as new to the people involved, it is an innovation, even though it may appear to others to be an imitation of something that exists elsewhere”.

The rapid growth of research in this area has led to an abundance of findings regarding the facilitators, inhibitors, and the process of innovation. Despite the magnitude of research in this area and the importance of the topic, no dominant theoretical perspective has emerged to integrate these multiple streams of innovation research (Drazin & Schoonhoven, 1996; Greve, 2003). What can be agreed on is that innovation is a multi-level phenomenon that involves actors at the individual, team, and organizational level, and an environment within which the actors are embedded in.

Institutional theory provides an anchoring theory and a useful lens to begin to understand and conceptualize how those levels interact and the role of context in the process when outcomes are seen at the institutional level. I first present an overview of institutional theory and relevant concepts before introducing the current conceptualizations of institutional innovation. Finally, I return to the innovation literature to discuss two premises of that work that are important in building a better understanding of radical institutional innovation. I then present the framework developed before going into the field.

### ***2.2.1 Institutional Theory***

There is a vast array of research stemming from institutional theory. These include studies on institutional change, institutional entrepreneurship, institutional fields, and institutional work amongst others. For the purpose of this dissertation, I present a brief overview of institutional theory and its evolution and then focus on institutional fields and institutional work.

#### *Evolution of Institutional Theory*

The literature on institutionalism suggests that the definition of an institution differs significantly depending on the author, the area of research, and sometimes even the context. The concept lacks coherence due to many approaches to institutionalism that are “united by little but a common skepticism toward atomistic accounts of social processes and a convention that institutional arrangements and social processes matter” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991:3). In this thesis I follow North’s (1990) description, describing institutions as consisting of both informal constraints (e.g. norms of behavior, conventions, and self-imposed codes of conduct) and formal constraints (e.g. rules, laws, constitutions) and their enforcement properties. Based on this definition, institutions possess a number of features. First, they are “constructs of human mind” (North, 1994) and “products of human interaction” (Scott, 2001). Institutions in this view are evolving, stemming from human beings as the agents of a collective and evolutionary dimension of action. Second, institutions guide and govern human behavior in decision-making and interactions within society (North, 1990). Institutions create expectations that determine appropriate behavior (Meyer & Rowan, 1991) by defining what is appropriate and rendering other actions unacceptable (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991).

Scott (2001) formulates three forces that shape these behaviors; regulatory, cognitive and normative. Regulatory forces represent the laws and regulations that individuals and organizations must comply with. These are the conscious aspect of institutions. Cognitive forces stem from individual underlying beliefs, knowledge and skills. Normative forces are based on social obligations to comply that are rooted in social, professional and organizational interactions.

North (1993) describes institutions as “rules of the game” and organizations as “the players”. Organizations exist to secure and advance the interests of their members within the existing institutional framework, while constantly seeking to influence that framework so that they may achieve greater advantages and benefits (Scott, 2001). Thus, the intimate and dynamic relationship and interaction between institutions and organizations determines the terms of exchange and access to resources in a market, sector, and society as a whole.

The interplay of actors, agency, and institutions plays a dominant role in institutional research. Studies in this area began with neo-institutional writing focusing on cultural processes through which institutions affected organizational practices and structures (Hinings & Greenwood, 1988; Meyer & Rowan, 1977), which led to looking at patterns of isomorphism within fields of activity (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). This early work was subsequently criticized for the lack of incorporations of agency into institutional theory and how actors can pursue their interests in the face of institutions, also referred to as the paradox of embedded agency (Holm, 1995; Seo & Creed, 2002). Oliver’s seminal work (1991) offers an approach to this problem by combining strategic approaches with new institutionalism to analyze how actors develop specific strategies depending on their institutional environment. Others called for the incorporation of agency into institutional theory (Beckert, 1999; Hirsch, 1997; Hirsch & Lounsbury, 1997). Subsequent research started to focus on how actors affect institutional

arrangements (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). This work centers on institutional entrepreneurs, actors who have an interest in particular institutional arrangements and who mobilize resources to create new institutions or transform existing ones (DiMaggio, 1988; Lounsbury, Ventresca, & Hirsch, 2003; Rao, Morrill, & Zald, 2000; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). These agents can be either organizations or groups of organizations (e.g. Garud, Jain & Kumaraswamy, 2002; Greenwood, Suddaby, & Hinings, 2002) or individuals or groups of individuals (e.g. Fligstein, 1997; Maguire et al., 2004) or institutions (Zilber, 2007). Much of the focus of these studies is on how these actors legitimate the formation of new organizations, industry sectors, and institutional fields (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001).

### *Institutional Fields*

Institutional fields are “a recognized area of institutional life” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983: 148) in which “participants interact with one another more frequently and fatefully than with actors outside the field” (Scott, 2001: 56). More recently, scholars have expanded to a broader definition of a field, defining it as: “two constitutive elements: a set of institutions, including practices, understandings, and rules; and, a network of organizations” (Lawrence & Phillips, 2004: 692). They are comprised of three key components: structured positions that are occupied by actors that make up the field (Maguire et al., 2004), understandings and meaning systems (Scott, 2001), and formal rules such as laws or professional standards that organizations must conform to (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Maguire & Hardy, 2009).

The conceptualization of civil society embodies these institutional elements and forces. There are networks of non-profit and philanthropic organizations and individuals actively participating in this sector. There are meaning systems and understandings that encompass individual rights, the common good, and tolerance. Finally, there are also regulatory frameworks

governing civil society organizations including laws associated with the rules of funding, lobbying, and assembly. Therefore, the creation of fields is of particular importance for this research.

Researchers continue to explore how new fields are created. Prior research suggests that field emergence occurs through a process of isomorphism that is a result of interconnected and interdependent organizations (Dacin, 1997; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Greenwood & Hinings, 1988; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). Fields are said to arise from structures of existing fields and are legitimized through the actions of actors in the field (Baron, Dobbin & Jennings, 1986; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). Fligstein (2001) argued that external environmental shocks give rise to significant institutional changes that are the main driver of field creation. Fields develop through network relationships (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989, Lawrence & Phillips, 2004), conflict (Purdy & Gray, 2009), and the diffusion of shared understandings, beliefs and norms. These patterns of social action produce, reproduce, and transform the institutions and networks that constitute it (Lawrence & Phillips, 2004; Maguire et al., 2004). This process can be strategic as various groups seek to establish new fields (Beckert, 1999; Maguire et al., 2004; Perkmann & Spicer, 2007). Social movement theory emphasizes how new fields are created by mobilizing resources (e.g. McCarthy & Zald, 1987) and framing issues strategically to motivate and legitimate activities (Creed, Scully & Austin, 2002; Lounsbury et al., 2003). However, although these studies have provided explanations of how new fields are established, they do not provide a complete understanding of how fields actually form (Levy & Scully, 2007; van Bommel & Spicer, 2011).

### **2.3. Institutional Innovation**

Where institutional theory explains homogeneity, innovation is a means of introducing heterogeneity. Attempts to develop an understanding of institutional innovation are limited. The concept has been used in some prior work on institutional change (for example Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006; Rao & Giorgi, 2006), however there has been little connection between the innovation literature and institutional theory and scant conceptualization of the term (Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006; Munir & Phillips, 2005). While some studies use the term institutional innovation interchangeably with institutional change (for example, Ruttan, 1984), Hargrave and Van de Ven (2006) offer a definition that distinguishes institutional innovation from institutional change. However, they do not elaborating on the actual dimensions that separate the two descriptions, arguing that change versus innovation is based on magnitude of divergence in a period of time;

We define institutional change as a difference in form, quality, or state over time in an institution. Change in an institutional arrangement can be determined by observing the arrangement at two or more points in time on a set of dimensions (e.g., frames, norms, or rules) and then calculating the differences over time in these dimensions. If there is a noticeable difference, we can say that the institution has changed. If the change is a novel or unprecedented departure from the past, then it represents an institutional innovation (Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006: 866).

Recently, Raffaelli and Glynn (2015) argue that institutional innovation is located at the intersection of three dimensions: novelty, usefulness, and legitimacy. This is similar to other types of innovation in that innovation is typically conceptualized as new and useful. However, it differs in that they argue that legitimacy is essential to institutional innovation. They also broaden the concept to the field level. More specifically, Raffaelli and Glynn (2015) suggest that

institutional innovation is the “novel, useful and legitimate change that disrupts the cognitive, normative or regulative mainstays of an institutional field” (pp. 408).

Legitimacy is an important dimension in institutional innovation as “the creation, transformation, and diffusion of institutions require legitimacy, a condition whereby other alternatives are seen as less appropriate, desirable, or viable” (Dacin et al., 2002: 47). This is seen in Hargadon and Douglas’ (2001) study of Edison’s innovation factory where the authors illustrate how Edison’s innovation of electricity succeeded, in part, because he embedded it in familiar and legitimate systems. Other work in the entrepreneurship literature (for example Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001; Navis, & Glynn, 2010) recognizes how the institutional context binds entrepreneurial innovations as they cast them as being legitimate. A further contribution of Raffaelli and Glynn’s (2015) work is that it bridges institutional and innovation constructs. Raffaelli and Glynn’s work is useful for conceptualizing institutional innovation. Yet, how institutional innovation emerges and is legitimized has yet to be explored. Furthermore, there is the assumption that there are cognitive, normative and regulative forces already present for this process to take place. This overlooks contexts where institutional innovation is arising and being formed. There is still much to learn about how institutional innovation happens. Research stemming from past innovation research can help inform our understanding of institutional innovation.

### 2.3.1 Innovation – Process and Outcome

The fundamental outcome of innovation is the creation of something new. However, it is also a process. Decades of work have focused on building a better understanding of the process and outcomes of innovation. From this research, there are two key insights that are especially

relevant in understanding institutional innovation and help shed light on how radical institutional innovation emerges and evolves. The first insight comes from understanding the process of innovation. Although there is no definitive process of innovation, recombination is typically at the heart of innovation. Essentially, innovation is a process of recombining resources, whether that is technologies, business units, ideas, or business model with new things emerging by recombining what already exists in novel and unique ways. The second premise is based on the outcome of the innovation. Here, two broad forms of innovation, incremental and radical innovation, are generally recognized and used in innovation studies with researchers arguing that the processes, antecedents, and capabilities required differ depending on the type of innovation outcome (Damanpour, 1991; van Dijk, Berends, Jelinek, Romme & Weggeman, 2011). I now review these two insights and how they can inform our understanding of institutional innovation.

### *Types of Innovation*

Innovation scholars tend to distinguish between incremental and radical innovation (Gopalakrishnan & Damanpour, 1997). Incremental innovations are typically extensions to current product offerings or logical and relatively minor extensions to existing processes (Benner and Tushman, 2003; Gatignon, Tushman, Smith, & Anderson 2002; Jansen, Bosch, & Volberda, 2006). They have minor impacts on existing products and services in the market. The strategic focus in incremental innovation rests on improving and expanding current products and services in a market within a short time (Abernathy & Clark, 1993; Ettlie, Bridges, & O'Keefe, 1984; Taylor & Greve, 2006). It requires the ability to reinforce and take advantage of existing knowledge resources (Danneels, 2002; Subramaniam & Youndt, 2005). Outputs of incremental innovations are slight variations of existing products, services, practices or approaches (Damanpour, 1991).

Radical innovation is referred to as ‘revolutionary’, ‘disruptive’, ‘discontinuous’, or ‘break-through’ (Freeman, 1974; Garcia & Calantone, 2002; Tushman & Anderson, 1986). Radical innovation differs in that it seeks to meet the needs of emerging customers or markets (Benner & Tushman, 2003; Jansen et al., 2006) and involves the development or application of significantly new technologies or ideas into new markets or require dramatic behavioral changes to existing markets. These technologies then provide the foundation upon which future generations of products are manufactured. The magnitude of change for radical innovations is larger than incremental innovations and is based more on long-term strategy, where organizations attempt to disrupt the prevailing technological trajectory and create new designs, technologies, and distribution channels for new markets (Abernathy & Clark, 1993; Ettlie et al., 1984; Gatignon et al., 2002). Thus, radical innovation builds on knowledge resources that a firm does not yet have or that differs from existing resources (Danneels, 2002). It is more strategic in nature. In this case, exploratory learning becomes critical in that the firm needs to search a wide range of available knowledge to expand existing knowledge domains to novel or unfamiliar areas (Kang & Snell, 2009; Katila & Ahuja, 2002). These innovations have the ability to make prevailing technologies obsolete by transforming the old knowledge into new knowledge, thereby producing fundamental changes in an organization (Damanpour, 1991; Subramamiam & Youndt, 2005).

If we extend the idea of radical innovation to the institutional level, radical institutional innovation would involve the creation and design of institutions in a field where little or no institutions exist. It most likely occurs when new problems arise and there is no ‘focal’ institution readily available for selection or modification (Rittberger, 2012). A profound crisis or ‘substantial gap in the institutional status quo’ has likely occurred. The process is typically risky

and costly for the actors involved with the implications of the process often unclear. From a normative perspective, actors involved in radical institutional innovation tend to engage in deliberative and argumentative processes over the right and legitimate institutional order to govern a problem or solve a particular crisis (Blyth, 2002). Thus this process is highly creative.

If we extend this dichotomy of types of innovation and the use of ‘radical’ and ‘incremental’ to the institutional level, we can define incremental institutional innovation as occurring when and where there are existing institutions that do not satisfactorily address problems at hand due to them being ineffective or inappropriate in carrying out the designated actions. This process is situated in a more stable normative environment where standards of legitimacy already exist (Rittberger, 2012). In contrast, radical institutional innovation is defined as the development of new institutions that transform the institutional field they are embedded in or create new institutional fields.

### *Innovation as Recombination*

Research on innovation has long sought to determine the sources of innovative breakthroughs. This concept dates back to Schumpeter’s (1942) perspective on innovation and creativity and was further emphasized by evolutionary economics (Nelson & Winter, 1982) and the knowledge-based view of the firm (Grant, 1996; Kogut & Zander, 1992). In much of this work the process of recombination is a primary driver of innovation (Henderson & Clark, 1990; Kogut & Zander, 1992; Nelson & Winter, 1982; Schumpeter, 1934). As Nelson and Winter (1982: 130) state: “the creation of any sort of novelty in art, science, or practical life-consists to a substantial extent of a recombination of conceptual and physical materials that were previously in existence”.

Research examining various new innovations, such as the making of the PCR technology (Rabinow, 1996), Henry Ford's production line (Hounshell, 1984), much of Edison's work (Hargadon, 2003), and the success of the product design company IDEO (Hargadon & Sutton, 1997) demonstrate that the processes of recombining existing elements are fundamental to explaining many successful innovative outcomes (Senyard et al., 2014). Much of this research draws from a 'tension' view of the relationship between knowledge and creativity (Weisberg, 1999). Here, deep knowledge in one domain is said to dampen creativity by entrenching individuals into one way of thinking. Recombination of different kinds of knowledge breaks these bonds to produce novel solutions (Ahuja & Lampert, 2001). On the other hand, a less tested theory of creativity comes from the 'foundational view' (Weisberg, 1999; Taylor & Greve, 2006). This view suggests that in order to break out of existing constraints and advance a field beyond its current state, one needs to have a deep understanding of a particular area first. Therefore, recombination can be detrimental as the recombiner is combining elements without full understanding of what is being recombined (Kaplan & Vakili, 2014).

Regardless, recombination is inarguably at the heart of creativity, organizational success and economic growth (Hargadon, 2003; Hargadon & Sutton, 1997; Murray & O'Mahony, 2007). Although the importance of cumulative innovation is clear, we still do not fully understand the conditions that shape an innovator's ability to build on the work of others. Furthermore, attempts to understand the sources of innovation have been frustrated by a lack of understanding of the process by which inventors create new innovations (Fleming, 2001, Kaplan & Vakili, 2014).

The process of radical institutional innovation versus incremental institutional innovation highlights different implications for the normative component of institutions. In radical institutional innovation, actors tend to engage in deliberative and argumentative processes over

the ‘right’ and ‘legitimate’ institutional order to govern a problem or solve a particular crisis (Blyth, 2002)<sup>4</sup>. Therefore this process is more creative and deliberate as actors attempt to define what constitutes as legitimate solutions to the problem(s) at hand. This requires a great deal of resources and creativity in recombination as actors struggle to make dramatic changes to institutional logics. Institutional logics are the organizing templates that govern institutional fields, defining appropriate means and ends, providing motivation and identity to individuals (Battilana, Leca, & Boxenbaum, 2009; Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton, 2002). This radical innovation process likely requires various actors from proximate fields to help bridge the gap in knowledge and to recombine this knowledge creatively to address the void that is present.

This section integrates and bridges literature on institutions and innovation to develop the concept of institutional innovation, both radical and incremental. In the next section, based on this foundation, a framework delineating the dynamics of radical institutional innovation is offered.

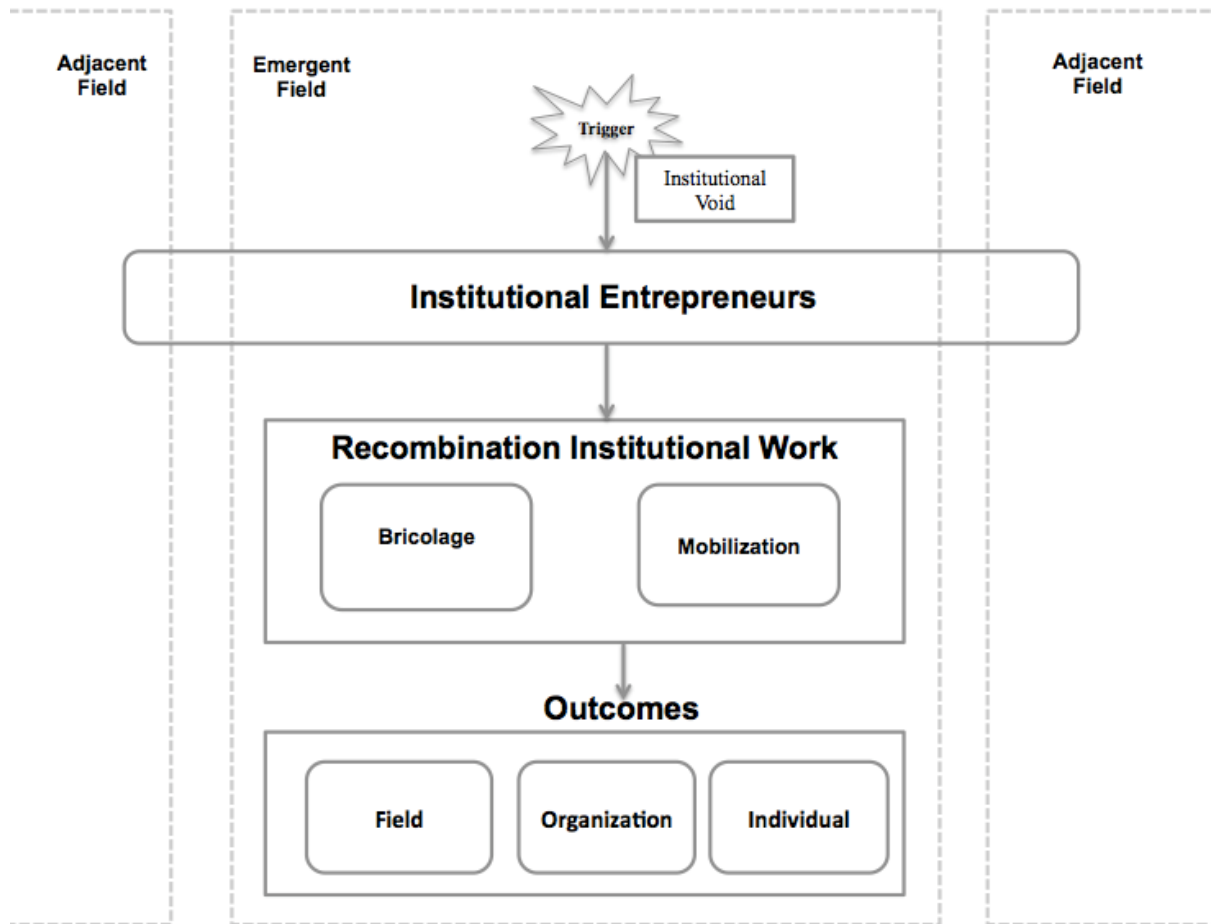
#### **2.4. The Dynamics of Radical Institutional Innovation**

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 2 delineates the dynamics of radical institutional innovation developed based on the literature review before entering the field and collecting data. This framework weaves together the foundation established earlier in this chapter and provided a conceptual backdrop and springboard for the dissertation research.

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<sup>4</sup> Blyth uses the term institutional creation.

**Figure 2: Radical Institutional Innovation: A Multi-level Process Framework**



#### ***2.4.1. Triggers of Radical Institutional Innovation***

What leads to radical institutional innovation? Why does it happen? Simply stated, this dissertation proposes that radical institutional innovation occurs in response to a major environmental change or exogenous shock (Fligstein, 1997; Hoffman, 1999), and can be exaggerated in the presence of institutional voids.

I propose that field level conditions initiate the institutional innovation process. Field level conditions include jolts and crises that occur from social upheaval, technological disruption,

competitive discontinuity and regulatory changes that disrupt current logics in the field and introduce new ideas (Child & Tsai, 2005; Fligstein, 1997, 2001; Greenwood et al., 2002; Holm, 1995). When actors decide to engage in radical institutional innovation it often reflects a profound crisis or substantial gap in the institutional status quo, where any existing or relevant institutions are not adequate to deal with the crisis event at hand.

One possible field-level condition that enables radical innovation as shown in Figure 2 is the presence of institutional voids, a term originally coined by Khanna and Palepu (1997) to account for the macro-level “absence of specialized intermediaries, regulatory systems, and contract-enforcing mechanisms” (Palepu, Khanna & Sinha, 2005: 63). The term institutional void is used by scholars from different streams of research, particularly in the political sciences and sociology literature, which focus on how institutional voids hamper market development (Polanyi, 1944; Woodruff, 1999), in economics where researchers elaborate on how institutional voids prevent the efficient functioning of markets (Khanna & Palepu, 2000), and in entrepreneurship where researchers explore how actors maneuver around voids to develop their ventures (Luo & Chung, 2013; Marti & Mair, 2009). Marti and Mair (2009) examine the role of institutional entrepreneurs in the context of institutional voids and described institutional voids as “situations where institutional arrangements that support markets are absent, weak, or fail to accomplish the role expected by them (Mair & Marti, 2009: 419). The presence of voids can exaggerate shocks in the institutional environment as the lack of institutions to deal with problems and situations that come about due to these shocks creates a sudden demand for institutional innovation.

#### ***2.4.2. Institutional Entrepreneurs and their Social Position***

Institutional innovation can be seen as a collective action process (Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006). In this vein, the actors involved can include individuals or groups of individuals (Fligstein, 1997; Maguire et al., 2004), organizations or groups of organizations (Garud et al., 2002; Greenwood et al., 2002), or other institutions (Zilber, 2002). Their social position mediates their relation to the environment in which they are embedded (Emirbayer, 1997; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998) as it affects the perception of a field (Bourdieu, 1977) and their access to the resources needed to engage in institutional innovation (Battilana et al., 2009). Literature exploring the role of social positions in changing institutional arrangements finds conflicting results, where some studies suggest that organizations and individuals located in the periphery of a field, as shown in Figure 2, are more likely to act as institutional entrepreneurs (e.g. Garud et al., 2002; Kraatz & Zajac, 1996; Leblebici, Salancik, Copay & King, 1991; Wright & Zammuto, 2013), other studies find that those in the center of a field are more likely to act as institutional entrepreneurs (e.g. Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Greenwood et al., 2002). Battilana, Leca, and Boxenbaum (2009) argue that the observed variance seen may be due to differences in field characteristics such as the level of heterogeneity and institutionalization or due to differences in the type of change.

Building on this, I argue that an institutional entrepreneur's position, or the type of institutional entrepreneur involved in the innovation process, also depends on whether it is incremental or radical institutional innovation that is taking place. More specifically, radical institutional innovation requires actors within the institutional field and those outside the institutional field. This allows for more unique combinations of resources that can be used to build the institutional field.

Research also indicates that the ability of institutional entrepreneurs to act is dependent on their willingness to act and their access to enough resources to do so. According to Bourdieu (1990), the social position of an actor determines their perception of the field, their views about the field, and the stand they take to maintain the status quo of the field. Therefore, the willingness of an agent to transform a field is dependent on their social position within that field. Recent work has explored how an individuals' or organizations' social position affects the likelihood for them to act as institutional entrepreneurs. For example, Dorado (2005) argues that the likelihood of an actor to behave as an institutional entrepreneur is dependent on the actors perception of the field, which is affected by the their social position in their social network. Similarly, Maguire, Hardy and Lawrence's (2004) study on HIV/AIDS treatment advocacy in Canada suggests that the formal position of actors provides them with legitimacy in the eyes of stakeholders, and enables them to access various resources. Wright and Zammuto (2013) look at how actors situated in mature fields use their field positions to create opportunities for institutional entrepreneurship. They find that these actors leverage the resources (knowledge corridors, formal authority, social ties, and discursive resources) that accompany their position, and tactics to deploy these resources. These tactics include agenda setting, construction of narratives, empirical verification and entrepreneurial bricolage.

Just as technological innovation requires the recombining of previous innovations, institutional innovation can be seen as a combination of prior, or already present, institutions and institutional elements (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988; Rojas, 2010). In a context of institutional voids these elements of recombining need to come from outside that field. To do this, institutional entrepreneurs located outside the field periphery must be involved. However, these actors lack legitimacy in the field. Thus, actors already in the field play a

bridging role to work with external actors to introduce innovation (Westley & Vredenburg, 1991). Both these groups are connected to already existing institutions and institutional frameworks that interact with both individuals and organizations (North, 1990; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991; Scott, 2001). Actors involved in any institutional innovation process are inherently affected by the formal and informal constraints of institutional frameworks they already belong to (North, 1990; Oliver, 1991; Peng & Heath, 1996). Organization members become institutional carriers by constructing social structures, enacting routines, and interpreting norms (Zilber, 2002). Due to the presence of institutional voids, these structures, routines, and norms are some of the possible elements actors may bring in to the emerging field.

#### ***2.4.3. Recombination Institutional Work***

Institutional work describes “the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006: 215). Institutional work shifts the focus to understanding how action affects institutions and connects, bridges, and extends work on institutional entrepreneurship, institutional change and innovation (Lawrence et al., 2009). I incorporate institutional work into my framework because it highlights the more intentional and strategic actions taken by actors and thus avoids “depicting actors as ‘cultural dopes’ trapped by institutional arrangements, or as hyper-muscular institutional entrepreneurs” (Lawrence et al., 2009: 1). It provides a bottom-up approach to the creation of institutions (Zilber, 2013). Based on a comprehensive review of the literature, Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) present a description of nine forms of institutional work, they include; advocacy, defining, vesting, constructing identities, changing normative associations, constructing normative networks, mimicry, theorizing, and educating. Since then, a number of studies have produced other types of institutional work. For example, standardization work (Slager, Gond, &

Moon, 2012), political work (Perkmann & Spicer, 2008), practice and boundary work (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010) and rhetorical work (Symon, Buehring, Johnson & Cassell, 2008). Tracey, Phillips and Jarvis (2011) present a multi-level approach to institutional work by looking at the formation of a new organizational form in the social enterprise space. They find that for institutional entrepreneurs to create a new organizational form, they require institutional work to be done at the multiple levels. This includes micro-institutional work (opportunity recognition), meso-institutional work (design of the new organizational forms), and finally macro-institutional work (legitimization of the new organizational forms). Similarly, in radical institutional innovation, recombination institutional work happens at multiple levels, and the outcomes of this work can be seen at the individual, meso, and field level as shown in Figure 2. Mechanisms of recombination work are described below.

*Bricolage.* Although the notion of bricolage is more familiar to social movement theorists than to organization theorists, a stream of research has emerged in the management literature that explores bricolage as an important component of institutional work and entrepreneurship in resource-constrained environments (Baker, 2007; Baker, Miner, & Eesley, 2003; Baker & Nelson, 2005; Boxenbaum & Rouleau, 2011; Di Domenico, Haugh, & Tracey, 2010; Mair & Marti, 2009; Perkman & Spicer, 2014). The French anthropologist Levi-Strauss (1967) first coined the term, however offered no specific definition of bricolage. It has been used to describe a range of phenomena based on the notion that it is ‘making do by applying combinations of the resources at hand to new problems and opportunities’ (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Douglas (1986) conceptualizes ‘intellectual bricolage’ by extending the concept of bricolage to institutional thinking. He argues that the construction of institutions and decisions to act are rarely made on the basis of individual rational choice. Instead institutions are constructed through a process of

bricolage by gathering and applying analogies and styles of thought that are present in existing institutions.

This capability is also used to build networks as individuals rely on their networks to gather financial and symbolic resources needed to create the rules and organizations that will govern a new field (Rojas, 2010). This method of recombining is critical in this context as institutional voids present new challenges, as resources for organization and capability building are scarce. Just as innovation requires the recombining of previous innovations, institutional innovation can be seen as a combination of prior, or already present, institutions and institutional elements (Desa, 2012; Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988; Rojas, 2010). Institutional innovation requires concessions to rival logics and interests as actors try to incorporate competing belief systems that shape their behaviors and practices. Thus, recombinant institutions result as actors combine these rival logics and external actors intervene in response and embed their practices and beliefs (Rojas, 2010). A good example of this form of work is described in Lawrence, Hardy and Phillips' (2002) study of how a 'proto-institution' emerged in the field of child nutrition in Palestine, through a network that included an NGO, the University of Oslo, the Australian embassy, a government agency, and others. The institution emerged through each actor's pre-existing institutionalized practices for addressing issues of malnutrition even though these actors all had different motivations and interests going into the field. Desa (2012) looked at institutional bricolage as a form of resource mobilization in the absence of supportive institutional environments, and found that the survival of ventures depends, to a large extent, on bricolage. Thus, bricolage is a critical form of recombination institutional work through which institutional entrepreneurs create radical institutional innovation.

*Mobilization through collective institutional entrepreneurship.* Institutional scholars have leveraged social movement theory (SMT) to explain institutional processes of change. SMT provides insight to institutional innovation in terms of a collective model of institutional entrepreneurship (Hargrave & Van de Ven 2006). This approach stresses the need for institutional entrepreneurs to gain support from a wide array of actors so that they may achieve their goals. One way this is done is through the idea of *collective institutional entrepreneurship* (Mollering, 2007; Wijen & Ansari, 2007), “the process of overcoming collective inaction and achieving sustained collaboration among numerous dispersed actors to create new institutions or transform existing ones” (Wijen & Ansari, 2007: 1079).

Radical institutional innovation is a social process too complex for individual institutional entrepreneurs to spearhead change unilaterally. It requires institutional work from a broad spectrum of actors including institutional entrepreneurs and the mobilization of the various actors and stakeholders across the field. Radical institutional innovation requires support, and therefore actors must mobilize allies (Fligstein, 1997; Greenwood et al., 2002) and build alliances and encourage cooperation within their network (Fligstein, 2001; Lawrence et al., 2002). Building a sustainable coalition to accomplish innovation requires strategic skills so that actors can mobilize political and regulatory support, which is crucial for the process. This also helps actors acquire resources. An important strategy used by actors involves educating other actors in skills and knowledge necessary to support new institutions. This type of capability is illustrated in Lounsbury’s (2001) study that investigated the institutionalization of recycling programs in American universities. This required new skill sets to be developed by a large population. Consequently, the SEAC (Student Environmental Action Coalition) became a key player in the change by acting as an educator. A key strategy the SEAC used to educate a large

population was to sponsor annual student conferences, maintain an elaborate network of experienced student organizers who travel to campuses and hold workshops and provide training, and to create templates that provide other actors with an outline for action (Lounsbury, 2001). Educating is a critical capability as radical institutional innovation involves the development of novel practices, organizational forms, and mechanisms of doing day-to-day work. Therefore, as presented in Figure 2, mobilization of collective institutional entrepreneurship is another means through which institutional entrepreneurs create radical institutional innovation.

#### ***2.4.4. Outcomes***

Radical institutional innovation ultimately leads to the creation of new institutional fields, however, innovation happens at the individual, organization and the institutional field level as Figure 2 displays. It is the micro level changes that ultimately lead to macro level changes, and macro level outcomes continue to influence micro level elements. Fields are eventually created via isomorphism from the interconnections shared by organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Greenwood & Hinings, 1988; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983), as a function of network relationships (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989), and shared understandings, beliefs and norms (Scott, 2001). It is these elements that create normative, cognitive and regulative orders in the field. These new orders have far reaching consequences as they can impact surrounding fields and organizations in adjacent institutional fields. Existing logics are also questioned, morphed, and new logics emerge as a result of the innovation. Finally, these changes eventually become legitimized and accepted as the new status quo.

## **2.5. Conclusion**

In this chapter, I reviewed the institutional field emergence literature highlighting that we still know little about how the processes, actors, and outcomes of the creation of new fields differ in various contexts. As such, I draw on the innovation literature to build our understanding of institutional innovation. I argue for the need to differentiate between radical and incremental institutional innovation and develop definitions for both types of institutional innovation. I also advocate examining the process of recombining more closely. Both the distinction between radical and incremental innovation and the role of recombination are drawn from the innovation literature and then extended to build the conceptualization of radical institutional innovation. From there, I present the conceptual framework I developed before beginning my field research that specifically focuses on the dynamics of radical institutional innovation. These dynamics involve processes at multiple levels of analysis including field level conditions, institutional actors and their social position, recombination institutional work, bricolage, and mobilization.

The next chapter outlines the methodology used to study radical institutional innovation. I first describe the context used for this study, and the methodological paradigms adopted. I then provide details about the data sources used and methods for data analysis, before presenting the findings in the succeeding chapters.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In the previous chapter, I presented and discussed the theoretical framework that informs my research. This chapter describes and justifies, the context used for this study. It also highlights the methodological paradigms that I adopted for data collection, analysis and interpretation that culminated in the findings that are outlined in the next chapters of this dissertation. I will first provide an overview of the context of this study as it sets the stage for why I chose this case study and why it is an exemplary case of institutional innovation.

### 3.1. Empirical Setting

“It is impossible to understand an institution adequately without an understanding of the historical process in which it was produced” (Berger & Luckmann, 1967: 54-44)

#### 3.1.1. *Historical Background: The Gaddafi Era*

For over four decades, Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi ruled Libya with an iron fist. Gaddafi came to power on September 1, 1969 after leading a group of Libyan military officers against King Idris in a coup d'état. The Libyan Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), headed by Gaddafi, abolished the monarchy and the constitution and claimed Libya to be a new Libyan Arab Republic with the motto “*freedom, socialism, and unity*” (Vandewalle, 2006). Soon after coming to power, the RCC abolished parliamentary institutions, as they took control of all legislative functions. They also prohibited the formation of any political parties.

The press was officially conscripted in 1972 as part of the Gaddafi. Italians and Jewish communities were expelled from the country and their property confiscated in October 1970. For years Gaddafi continued to change Libya's political and administrative structure. In 1977

“revolutionary committees” were created and assigned the task of supervising and raising the general population’s devotion to revolutionary ideals. By the early 1980s, the functions of the RCC expanded to officially include the right to “propagate, guide, and control the revolution”, all under Gaddafi’s orders. Their task was to defend the revolution at all costs, which included the power to pursue, hunt down, and physically liquidate ‘*enemies of the revolution*’ abroad and at home (Vandewalle, 2006).

This led to a number of assassinations both within Libya and abroad. The RCC also infiltrated the country’s legal system, where they created revolutionary courts based on the “law of the revolution”. Surveillance took place in the government, in businesses, and in the education sector. The government often executed dissidents through public hangings and mutilations on university campuses and soccer stadiums and rebroadcast them on state television channels, a scare tactic used to show the population the consequences of dissent. As late as 2004, Gaddafi still provided bounties on his critics, including \$1 million for one Libyan journalist in the United Kingdom (Freedom of the Press, 2009). He also made it against the law to talk with foreigners about politics, with a three-year prison term as punishment (St. John, 2008). Gaddafi banned elections, political parties and all forms of autonomous organized activity including non-state owned media and not-for-profit organizations by introducing Law 71. The law imposes the death penalty on anyone who forms, supports or participates in an opposing political party. Gaddafi saw civil society as “a bourgeois culture and an imitation of the West that has no place here [in Libya]” (Thursday 28, January 2010, televised address to the General People’s Congress).

The RCC, under Gaddafi’s orders also infiltrated the private sector. In 1978, the Gaddafi regime started to build a so-called socialist country by taking over businesses one by one. The country’s small business were quickly dissolved. By the end of 1980, larger industries became

controlled by Basic Production Committees, a selected group of workers within each business or enterprise. Managers of these large corporations were thrown in jail for months while the committees took over. The role of traders was also abolished, and only the banking system and oil-related industries were saved from this takeover (Vandewalle, 2006). Land was also confiscated and turned to public property. In a speech on September 1, 1980, Gaddafi emphasized that the country's entrepreneurs were nothing but parasites because their economic activities did not contribute to productive activity within Libya (Vandewalle, 2006). Private businesses closed throughout the country, often with "the assistance" of the revolutionary committees. Their function was taken over by a number of state supermarkets.

In 1992, sanctions were put on Libya for its involvement in the Lockerbie bombing that killed over 270 people, including all passengers and crewmembers on the flight. Libya's already suffering economy took a spiral for the worse as sanctions were put on travel, oil trade, and investments. As part of a reconciliation process, the Libyan government agreed to compensate the families of the bombing (\$10 million dollars each) and disarm its nuclear weapons program. Although an attempt for some reform took place within the country, such as lifting the ban against retail trade, little else would change. According to the 2009 Freedom of the Press Index, Libya is the most-censored state in the Middle East and North Africa (Freedom of the Press, 2009).

### ***3.1.2. February Uprising***

The protests in Benghazi on February 15, 2011 quickly led to clashes with security forces that fired on the crowd. After only a few days, what initially started as peaceful demonstrations, turned into violent protests, and escalated into a rebellion that spread across the country. By February 28, 2011, Libya had ignited into a full-fledged, and soon to be very bloody, civil war

between those opposing Gaddafi and those forces loyal to him. Footage and photographs of the atrocities the regime were committing on innocent civilians quickly spread across the world through media networks and various social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. Shelling of civilian homes, ruthless killings of dissidents, and even footage of gang rapes by Gaddafi loyalists were making their way to the homes of anyone across the world who had internet or a TV. Pressure for UN intervention quickly mounted as a growing consensus between country leaders and the global population in general that something needed to be done. On March 17, UN resolution 1973 was approved and the war in Libya became an international affair. On August 21, 2011, the final city under regime control was liberated. After months of bloody fighting, NATO led offenses, tens of thousands of deaths, thousands missing, and hundreds raped, the war was over.

Around the world, organizations were quickly formed to help deal with the humanitarian and political crisis, including the Canadian Libyan Council, Libyan Emergency Task Force, and Libya Outreach in North America. Until February there had been few, if any, formal organizations created under a Libyan heading, even outside of Libya, in fear of the consequences if any actions were to be viewed unfavorably by the regime back in Libya. But the mobilization and creation of civil organizations was not isolated to those living outside of Libya who likely had some experience with not-for-profit organizations and civil work. Inside Libya, literally overnight, civil society was being born in the wake of the revolution including groups such as the Free Generation Movement, located in Tripoli, Voice of Libyan Women, and media stations such as Libya AlHurra (Libya the Free), TributeFM, and TripoliRadio. Furthermore, political parties started to form as early as three months into the revolution. In a matter of months, Libya had gone from a country void of civil institutions to hundreds of socially focused organizations,

politically parties, advocacy groups, and non-state controlled media channels. Rather than starting from scratch, 'Free Libya' was leveraging on a foundation of qualified professionals and scholars from various institutionalized fields even before the regime toppled. Libyans were already practicing democracy and participating in a sector that had never existed before.

### ***3.1.3. Post Revolution Libya: A Case of Extreme Institutional Innovation***

Prior to the February revolution in Libya, there were 22 registered civil organizations in Libya, many, if not all, were under government control (Mercy Corps, 2011). By May 2011, only a few months into the revolution, 250 civil organizations were registered in Benghazi alone. It is estimated that there are over 1800 registered civil organizations in Libya right now (UNDP Civil Society Organizations Survey Report, 2015). Additionally, there is now a Ministry of Civil Society, and in just a little over a year after the end of the Gadaffi regime, Libyan citizens have voted for the first time in over sixty-two years. The election by-laws now include a mandatory quota to include women members in the various cabinets and ministries.

The phenomenon I examine is radical given the need to form civil organizations and institutions quickly to tackle the crisis the revolution produced in an environment characterized by an institutional void. It required bridging and combining together various elements outside of civil society given the extreme void present. Thus, the context of the rise of civil society in Libya presents an exemplar case of radical institutional innovation.

### **3.2. Approach for this Study**

To develop a relevant research paradigm and methodology for data collection, I was guided by my research objectives and questions, *and* my relationship to the context being studied. This dissertation is part of a three-year study, begun in March 2011, exploring the emergence of

an institutional field. In particular, this dissertation focuses on the actions of entrepreneurs engaged in building an institutional field and how their actions and positions allowed for institutional innovation. I adopted an iterative inductive approach, intended to build upon and extend recent work in innovation and institutional theory (discussed in Chapter Two), to understand the underlying processes of emergence of a new institutional field. More specifically, I employed ethnographic methods and approaches to data collection and analysis. This approach, which included submerging myself in the field, continuing to elaborate and refine my emerging data-driven themes, and connecting it to existing literature, helps build confidence in my findings.

### ***3.2.1. Grounded Theory***

The methodological approach taken in this study is that of grounded theory, which is suitable for studying emergent phenomena not fully explained in the existing literature (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed grounded theory as an inductive method to understand patterns of behavior and activity in order to arrive at new theory. They (1967:3) describe grounded theory as an approach that will:

“Fit the situation being researched, and work when put into use. By “fit” we mean that the categories must be readily (not forcibly) applicable to and indicated by the data under study; by “work” we mean that they must be meaningfully relevant to and be able to explain the behavior under study.”

There are three important elements in conducting grounded theory; theoretical sampling, constant comparison, and iteratively moving between data collection and data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Unlike random sampling, in theoretical sampling the researcher is not concerned with identifying a representative sample, instead the researcher is more interested in identifying patterns and relationships in the data which best illustrate the phenomena under investigation.

The second important element is constant comparison. Here the researcher is continually identifying concepts that emerge from the data and comparing them to other samples and concepts. The researcher is able to uncover (and confirm) the presence of patterns and concepts in the data by iteratively moving between data collection and data analysis. This process is completed when the researcher feels they have reached theoretical saturation, or when the same types of patterns and concepts emerge in new samples or cases.

The final element, data analysis, has been a point of concession as Glaser and Strauss had different views on how a researcher enters a field. Whereas Glaser (1978, 1992) argued that the researcher should not enter the field with preconceived categories and a flexible methodology, Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) supported entry into the field with more specified categories and a more systematic and methodological approach to data analysis. Despite this divide between the original founders of grounded theory, most grounded theory studies in the management field's top journals adopt an analytical strategy advocated by Miles and Huberman (1994). Table 3.1 summarizes some of this work. This approach involves three main stages; 1) data reduction, which involves identifying and extracting key themes contained in a single case, 2) data display, a cross-case analysis that compares themes across multiple data points, and finally 3) conclusion drawing, by examining the data in its aggregate form.

**Table 2: Recent Grounded Theory Articles in Management Journals**

<b>AUTHOR &amp; YEAR</b>	<b>PUBLICATION</b>	<b>PHENOMENON UNDER INVESTIGATION</b>
Shubha, Gioia, & Hamilton (2015)	<i>Academy of Management Journal</i>	Identity crisis in an emerging field.
Powell & Baker (2014)	<i>Academy of Management Journal</i>	How founder identity affects strategic responses.
Perkmann & Spicer (2014)	<i>Organization Science</i>	Organizational bricolage for organization formation.
Beck & Plowman (2014)	<i>Organization Science</i>	Factors that affect inter-organizational collaboration
Austin, Lee & Sullivan (2012)	<i>Organization Science</i>	Factors that support accidental innovation
Gemmell, Boland, & Kolb (2012)	<i>Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice</i>	Use of social behaviours, techniques, and cognitive processes to generate ideas
Dijk, Berends, Jelinek, Romme & Weggeman (2011)	<i>Organization Studies</i>	The legitimization of radical innovation through institutional work
Clark, Gioia, Ketchen & Thomas (2010)	<i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i>	Changes in organizational identity during a merger.
Margolis & Molinsky (2008)	<i>Academy of Management Journal</i>	People's response to performing 'necessary evils'
Shah (2006)	<i>Management Science</i>	Understanding participation in open source software projects
Michel (2007)	<i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i>	Cognitive change processes in junior bankers
Baker & Nelson (2005)	<i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i>	Resource recombination among bricoleurs

### **3.2.2. Qualitative Research Design**

Qualitative research is useful for building process theories because it is highly sensitive to the context and sequence of organizational events and actions (Gephart, 2004; Pettigrew, 1990) and “has the ability to offer insight into complex social processes that quantitative data cannot easily reveal” (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007: 26). Furthermore, qualitative methods allow for examination of actors’ interpretations and their enactment of strategies while paying attention to the analysis of meanings and social interactions (Gephart, 2004), thus providing meaning to the how and why (Pratt, 2008; Yin, 1994). I employ a qualitative research design based on an embedded single case study design. Although the research question focused on the institutional level of analysis, the case study approach allowed a close examination of the interrelationships among the actors and organizations in the field and the relationships and dynamics of these actors and organizations within their institutional context.

One of the major applications of case studies is to explain the causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for surveys or experimental methods. Case studies allow the researcher to retain the “holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events – such as individual life cycles, and organizational managerial processes” (Yin, 1994: 14). Although case studies may pose difficulties in generalizability, they are ideal for revelatory cases where an observer may have access to a phenomenon that was previously inaccessible. Pettigrew (1990) encouraged researchers to seek extreme situations and to choose cases where the change occurring is *transparently observable*. Given the lack of civil institutions in Libya prior to the revolution, any innovation taking place in this sector is highly observable and therefore can be easily followed. In this sense, a case study allowed for greater depth in understanding

(Eisenhardt, 1989). It also contributes to a thick description of events within their natural context that aims at creating understanding of a phenomenon (Gephart, 2004; Pratt, 2008).

### **3.3. Data Collection**

#### ***3.3.1. Ethnographic Approach***

I used ethnographic methods and approaches to data collection and analysis by submerging myself in the field from the beginning of the phenomenon. As Greenwood and Hinings (1996: 1046) suggest, analyzing the evolution of a given organizational field requires “immersion” within it. An ethnographic approach (Watson, 2011) was adopted for this study as it emphasizes the experiential, with an approach to knowledge that is both contextual and interpersonal. I first entered the field with the research question, “How does institutional innovation emerge and evolve?” and the desire to look at the relationship between grass-root organizations and international organizations as a locus for knowledge creation and innovation. My intention was to conduct this research with special attention to the role of networks as I felt there was a lack of direct observation of entrepreneurs and organizations and how they used their networks to bring about radical innovation.

My data collection can be divided into 4 techniques; 1) Open-ended interviews, 2) participant/field observations, 3) archival data analysis, and 4) social media analysis. The various data collection techniques facilitated data triangulation, which helped in building confidence in my conclusions (Eisenhardt, 1989; Patton, 1990).

Data collection took place in three subsequent phases. In the first stage (from March 2011 to June 2012), I began the study with a rather open aim to study how civil society was emerging in Libya and to understand how organizations emerge and lead to institutional change – at this

stage I was trying to grasp the focus of this study. Data collection at this stage mostly consisted of archival data as I did extensive studies of documents that helped build my understanding of the historical context.

However, I also interviewed participants to develop a better comprehension of the landscape prior to the war, and even prior to the 1969 coup by Gaddafi. During this stage, I also became involved in Libya focused organizations. All of these organizations were created during the revolution. This included participation in Canadian-Libyan based organizations sending aid to Libya and spearheading lobbying efforts in Canada, partnering with newly formed organizations in Libya, following and participating in over 36 Libyan based Facebook groups and following Twitter feeds.

Another vital form of data collection at this stage was participant observation. Participant observation is an important aspect of ethnographic research. In this research practice, the investigator *joins* the group, community, or organization being studied, as either a full or partial member, and both participates in and observes activities, asks questions, takes part in conversations, and reads relevant documents (Watson, 2011; p. 206). For this to be significant to the research, the observation has to occur over a period of time that is sufficient for the researcher to appreciate the range of norms, practices, and values that characterize the research setting (Watson, 2011). During the war, I participated in conference call meetings with 5 organizations, and ad-hoc groups dealing with the crisis in Libya. These meetings were either via Skype, conference calls, or in person. Three of the organizations were located in North America, 2 in the UK, and 1 in Tunisia. I also attended day conferences in North America. I became heavily involved in two organizations, the Canadian Libyan Council (CLC) and Libya Outreach. This involved over 3 hours every day participating in meetings and program and organizational

development. The CLC was a newly established organization created in light of the war and focused on lobbying and media efforts in Canada and humanitarian projects at the Tunisian-Libyan border to deal with the refugee crisis. After the war was over, the CLC spearheaded a program to develop communication between elementary schools in Libya and Canada, and an election focused program to encourage voting during the first elections. Libya Outreach was an international organization headquartered in the United States and was also established in wake of the revolution. This organization spearheaded a number of humanitarian and lobbying efforts during the war, including Situation Reports that were used by a number of government agencies and NATO forces. Libya Outreach's main activities included a secret online group that brought together over 2000 activists across the world during the crisis. This online group acted as a key platform to connect other activists, disseminate information during the revolution, and as a means to organize various humanitarian, political and media efforts.

In the second stage (July 2012-August 2013). I visited Libya three times over a period of one year for data collection through interviews, observations and retrieving additional documents. I spent 65 days all together in Libya. The timing of my trips was deliberate. The first trip coincided with the first national election to ever take place in the country in over 50 year. The second trip allowed me to attend a 4 day conference that brought together the leading women focused organizations in the country. The final trip was a year after my first trip to allow for observation on how the field has evolved in the past year and follow up with key informants. During these trips, I attended workshops, conferences, focus groups, election stations, round table meetings, and social gatherings. Observations that were recorded included assessments of the organization, characteristics of the individual, historical information, processes taking place, activities, general impressions of what was happening, relationships and network dynamics.

Interview participants were initially selected through theoretical sampling and then snowballing (Eisenhardt, 1989); therefore, those that had the greatest potential to illustrate how the institutional field was created were selected. These participants were either individuals involved in highly visible civil organizations, or they themselves were highly visible and active in the emerging field. I also interviewed members of more grassroots organizations and spoke to citizens who were not involved in civil society to understand their perceptions on what was happening. Since I was interested in the civil society field, I tried to interview individuals that are participants in this field. As a researcher, I was the primary instrument of data collection, personally conducting and recording each interview. I employed the ethnographic interviewing processes and techniques outlined by Spradley (1979), a process he describes as involving “two distinct but complementary processes: developing rapport and eliciting information” (p.78).

Because of my Libyan nationality and involvement in civil society, I was in a position to build on the rapport that already existed between myself and many of the participants, which allowed for cooperation, engagement and interaction. I was also able to quickly gain the trust of participants as I was seen as “one of them” with vested interest in using this work to help the country. My familiarity with the language, history, and culture also eliminated the barriers of language and culture that could otherwise have limited the success of this approach to data collection. All of these factors combined to make the conversational interviewing techniques I used more natural and more productive with this group of research participants than formal interviews with more structured questions would have been.

After framing the problem being examined in the study, each participant was allowed to tell his or her story with myself asking questions only for clarification or for added detail. Through interaction stemming from descriptive and open-ended questions, the flow of each

interview was very conversational. A list of questions used is included in Appendix A-D, although these only served as guiding questions. Audio-recording, notes, and subsequent transcription of interviews were conducted for most of the interviews. Detailed field notes were taken during all interviews where permission for recording was not granted.

Over 42 semi-structured interviews were conducted with 57 informants. Of these, 31 were recorded and transcribed in full. For those interviews not recorded, I took extensive notes during and immediately following. Interview lengths ranged from 10 minutes to 170 minutes. Given how nascent the field was, organizational documents were difficult to collect. Nonetheless, I gathered all news articles, reports, documentaries, online videos, proposals, bylaws (drafts and actual), promotional material by organizations, meeting minutes (when available) and petitions. Websites for the various organizations and government bodies were also used. In the final phase, I followed up with key informants to check on progress, new updates regarding their organization and the field in general. I also used this opportunity to check with those I considered experts in the field on my constructs and the emerging framework and to follow up with questions that had emerged as I was working through the analysis.

***Social Media Analysis.*** Social media was a critical tool used during and post the revolution. In all three phases of data collection, I followed various Facebook and Twitter groups pertaining to Libya. This included discussion groups, pages associated with the various civil organizations, and government agencies. At times I would start certain discussion topics on Facebook and observe the resulting conversations.

Table 3 provides an overview of the data collection phases and the data gathered.

**Table 3: Data Collection Phases and Subsequent Data**

<b>DATA TYPE</b>	<b>PHASE 1</b>	<b>PHASE 2</b>	<b>PHASE 3</b>	<b>TOTAL # OF PAGES</b>
<b>Interviews</b>	12 (54 pages) • 3 exiled citizens • 4 elder members of the community • 5 activists	31 (491 pages) •14 founders • 6 organizational members • 8 international org employees • 3 government official • 2 media workers • 4 activists/regular citizens • 1 lawyer/activist	9 (108 pages) •5 founders • 2 international org employee •1 government official •1 media worker •1 lawyer/activist •2 organizational members	<b>653</b>
<b>Field Observations</b>	81 pages of notes	390 pages of notes	23 pages of notes	<b>494</b>
<b>Archival Data</b>	657 Pages (Books, laws, 1951 constitution, websites, New Reports, Situation Reports)	489 Pages (Bylaws, draft laws, proposals, petitions, government websites, organizational websites, news reports, official reports, blogs)	116 Pages (Bylaws, draft laws, proposals, petitions, government websites, organizational websites, news reports, official reports, blogs)	<b>1,062</b>
<b>Social Media</b>	Constant following of Facebook pages Twitter accounts	Constant following of Facebook pages Twitter accounts	Constant following of Facebook pages Twitter accounts	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Total # of Pages</b>	<b>792+</b>	<b>1,370+</b>	<b>247+</b>	<b>2,409+</b>

### ***3.3. 2. Ethics and Confidentiality***

This research project received ethical approval from the Faculty of Graduate Studies at York University. Interview participants were assured anonymity. Where interviews were done in person, each participant read and signed a copy of the consent form. Where interviews were done by phone, the consent form was read to participants and/or sent over via web. Participants were informed that they could discontinue the interview at any time or could decline to answer any specific questions. They were also assured of anonymity, and names were not used in the final report. Given the unique Libyan dialect, any transcription would have to be done by someone familiar with the dialect, meaning a Libyan citizen or someone who has lived in the country for a very long time. Given the sensitive nature of the current situation in Libya and safety risks involved with disclosure of names of organizations, participants and government officials, I personally transcribed all interviews.

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

Data analysis and interpretation were closely linked to the process of data collection in that I frequently engaged with the gathered data by transcribing it myself, studying my notes, and developing new memos on impressions, ideas and perceptions that came to mind from the data. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) argue that:

“...analysis and interpretation are not two distinct phases in the process of qualitative research process... the researcher often engages simultaneously in the process of data collection, data analysis and interpretation of the research findings” (p. 355).

Following the procedures recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994) a three stage inductive and iterative process was used to analyse the data. In the first stage, I coded the data to

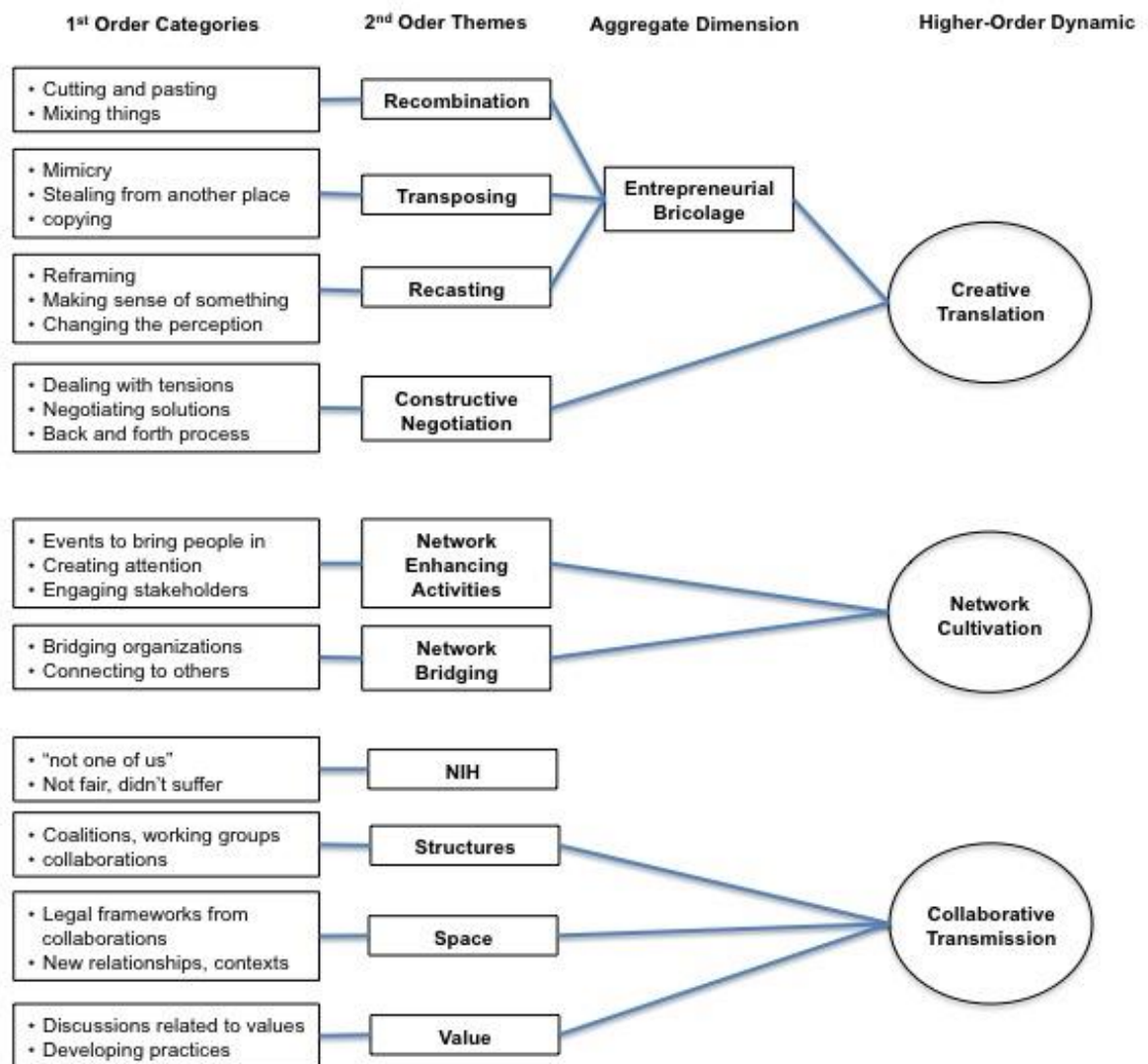
identify emergent themes and constructs. A set of *a priori* codes was first developed from the review of the literature. I focused on the type of actors involved in the field, their actions, outcomes of their actions, and their perceptions of the events that were happening. Iterating back and forth between the data and the literature informed the coding of the data to create the first order codes. This process kept theory building grounded in the available empirical data. I primarily focused on coding the interviews and observations, but I utilized documents and the social media data for support and for extra details. Although I was using my *a priori* codes to analyse the data, I was also cognizant of conceptually powerful codes that were emerging. For example, the role of networks quickly became apparent once I had started coding, as respondents were referring to leveraging their contacts to gain access to resources. I was also paying attention to text that were not directly related to civil society, however were of importance to the development and outcomes of civil society. I kept in mind that “equating civil society with the non-profit sector excludes important instrumental and normative dimensions that are of fundamental importance to understanding civil society’s central role in political and social life” (Siever, 2010:6).

In the second stage, I integrated the first order codes by extrapolating the common elements from the first stage. This second stage of data analysis coincided with the second phase of data collection when I realized that individuals based outside of Libya and also had a connection to Libya, kept coming up as key actors in the field. Based on this emergent theme, I narrowed my focus during this coding stage and subsequently refocused the rest of my data collection to understand the process, actions, and relationships surrounding these actors and their organizations. At this point of data analysis I also sectioned the data based on phases of data collection. My field notes pointed to a process that was emerging and I therefore wanted to

organize my data in a way where I could identify emergent themes that had a temporal aspect to them. For example, during my third phase of data collection, I noticed that there was much more collaboration happening in the field. Respondents were also discussing collaborative efforts with me. I did not note this in my prior data collection trips. This alluded to the possibility that there was a processual framework in the emergence of radical institutional innovation that I wanted to capture.

Finally, in the third stage of analysis, I revisited all the codes created and searched for how they are linked. At this point I was focusing on specific dynamics that were emerging as aggregates of the data, but I was also paying attention to whether these aggregate dimensions were happening across the three data collection visits or if there were certain dynamics that were more present at certain phases of data collection. At this stage analysis, I grouped the emergent constructs into what I considered were the 5 key elements of the process framework, antecedents, actors, triggers, actions, and finally outcomes. I then went back to the 1<sup>st</sup> order categories developed in stage 1 of analysis to help inform me of the connections between these 5 elements. Figure 3 shows the final data structure, moving from first-order categories to second-order themes to aggregate dimensions.

**Figure 3: Data Structure**



### 3.5. Quality Criteria

While validity and reliability measure research rigor in quantitative studies, qualitative researchers differ a great deal in the language used to describe the process of assessing the internal validity, external validity, and reliability of a qualitative study. Moreover, these terms

are typically not used when referring to qualitative research. Four criteria which are typically used to measure data trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) are:

- a. Credibility (in preference to internal validity)
- b. Transferability (in preference to external validity or generalisability)
- c. Dependability (in preference to reliability)
- d. Confirmability (in preference to objectivity)

To achieve data trustworthiness in my study, I employed several techniques that cover these criteria.

*Credibility.* Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe credibility as the extent to which results of a study are truthful or realistic. They argue that ensuring credibility is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness. To achieve credibility, I used multiple data sources as a triangulation measure, so as to cross-check the accuracy and consistency of the information I gathered. I also interviewed a wide range of informants, so that individual viewpoints and experiences could be validated against others and construct a rich picture of what was happening. Patton (1990) advocates the use of triangulation as it “strengthens a study by combining methods. This can mean using several kinds of methods or data” (p. 247). I also checked my constructs, interpretations and findings with participants and those I considered experts in the field. Finally, my prolonged time in the field and engagement with the participants and the context allowed me to develop trusting relationships and therefore a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study.

*Transferability.* Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose that it is up to the reader, not the original investigator to determine the transferability, or the applicability of the findings to another setting. As a researcher, I tried to provide a rich and thick description of the context and I used multiple informants and data sources to strengthen the study’s usefulness for other settings.

By providing a thick description of the phenomenon under investigation a reader is hopefully able to understand it.

*Dependability.* Dependability is the researcher's account of the changes inherent in any setting as well as changes to the research design as learning unfolded (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Acknowledging that reality is socially constructed and continually changing, dependability is problematic (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Lincoln and Guba (1985) stress the close ties between credibility and dependability, arguing that in practice, demonstrating the former helps ensure the latter. To address the dependability more directly, again, I took extra care in documenting the process and reporting it in detail.

*Confirmability.* Confirmability deals with whether the findings could be confirmed by another researcher, thus removing some of the researcher's objectivity (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). This criterion is about research objectivity, where the gathered data and findings should truly represent the participants' views and perspective or meanings rather than that of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This being said, a researcher's subjectivity is a strength of qualitative research and allows the researcher to build rapport with participants. Although a researcher's insights increases the likelihood that they will be able to describe the complex social system being studied, controls for bias in interpretation still need to be considered. Again, by triangulating my data, the effect of any bias is reduced. I also checked and rechecked the data, and I paid extra attention to contradictory information.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS - INSTITUTIONAL FIELD AND BROKERS

*"If we have learned anything in these many months, it is this—do not underestimate the aspirations and will of the Libyan people." - President Obama*

In chapter two, I presented the conceptual framework I utilized going into the field. This framework was based on a review of relevant literature in innovation and in institutional theory. The grounded theory approach used for this dissertation described in Chapter 3 allowed for the continuous back and forth iterative process between the field and the literature.

After my first trip into the field, I realized the critical role that institutional brokers play in radical institutional innovation. I modified my research questions to center specifically on the pivotal role institutional brokers play in radical institutional innovation.

More specifically, I set out to understand:

- Who are the key actors that bring about radical institutional innovation?
- What characteristics do they hold that enables them to innovate in an institutional void?
- How do they create radical institutional innovation?

In this chapter I discuss the antecedents of radical institutional innovation and the characteristics of the actors that were found to instigate the process. More specifically, I build an argument for why Libya's civil society can be considered an extreme institutional void, what triggered the instigation of civil society, and then I present my findings in terms of who were the actors seen in this context. This sets the stage for the following chapters, Chapter 5, 6, and 7, where I delineate how a specific type of actors, whom I label institutional brokers, create a new

field through three different, but connected dynamics. In chapter 8, I integrate the three dynamics and discuss their relationship to each other.

#### **4.1. Institutional Field Characteristics**

Three fields, an emergent institutional field, adjacent institutional fields, and non-adjacent institutional fields, were identified in this study. The field where institutional innovation is taking place is referred to as the emergent field. These are social spaces where rules, practices, and networks of organizations did not yet exist (Fligstein & McAdams, 2011). The emergent institutional field may be surrounded by, connected to, or have overlapping fields. I refer to these as adjacent fields. The organizations, meaning systems, and practices may come into contact frequently with actors in the emerging field as the process progresses. These fields included religious institutions, the private sector, and the government. Finally, non-adjacent fields were also identified as playing a role in the radical institutional innovation process. These are fields that have little, if any, ties to the emerging field and little capacity to influence it on their own. For example, institutional fields embedded in foreign countries, such as Canada, the United States, and Tunisia, would be considered non-adjacent fields.

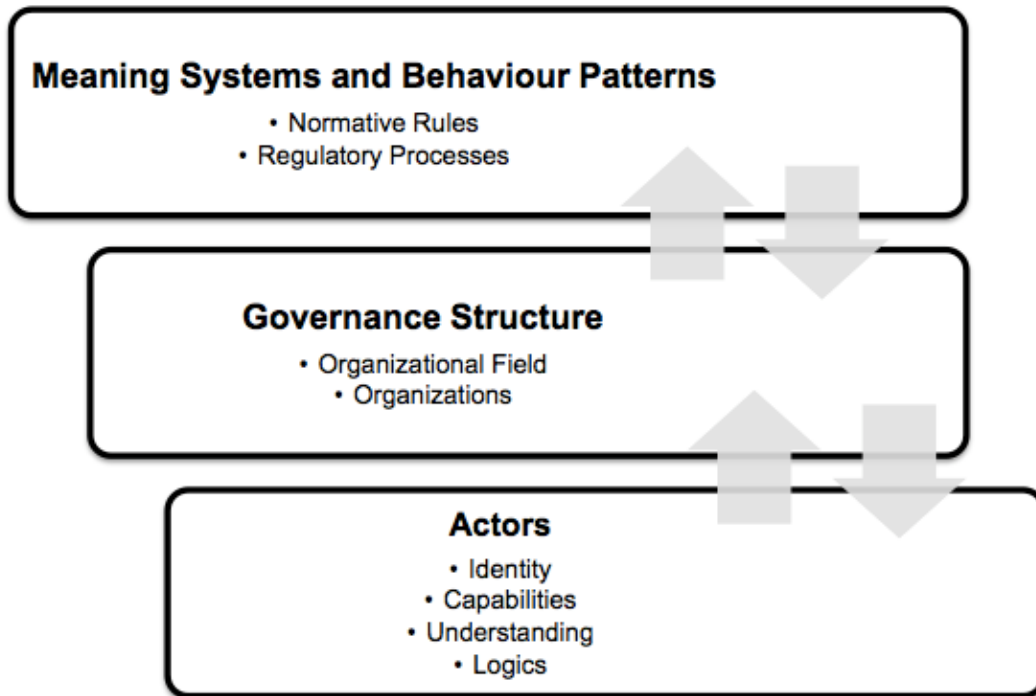
##### ***4.1.1. Civil Society as an Institutional Void***

The complex assembly of formal rules and informal norms generates institutions that organize and configure the “terms of action” (Fligstein, 2001). Whether formal or informal, the features of well-functioning institutions are manifested in meaningful, taken-for-granted understanding of actions and decisions within a field. These actions are consistent and repetitive, thus bringing about some level of social order (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Greenwood et al.

2008). When these “rules of the game” (North, 1990), whether they are formal rules or shared unsaid beliefs, are not present or weak, scholars have pointed to the presence of institutional voids (Khanna & Palepu, 1997).

Based on Scott’s (2001) classifications of institutions into three pillars; regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive, Libya’s civil society, or lack of, can be characterized as an example of an institutional void. The regulative pillar of Scott’s system consists of enforcement mechanisms by the state and formal rule systems such as laws, policies and regulations that direct and constrain actions (North, 1990; Scott, 2001). The normative pillar refers to the expected norms of behaviour concerning what is right or wrong, and may include professional societies that define the roles and expectations of the members within the field. Finally, the cultural-cognitive pillar encompasses the take-for-granted beliefs and values shared among individuals that guide their action. My findings point to a void in all three of these pillars and transcends three levels of analysis. Figure 4 provides a layered model of institutions with the various institutional elements adapted from Scott and Meyer (1994: 57). The arrows in the figure represent how these institutional elements effect one another.

**Figure 4: Layered Model of Institutions from Scott and Meyer (1994: 57)**



Prior to the revolution, it was clear that elements of this model were absent. During my first visit to Libya, I asked members of civil society organizations hereafter referred to as CSO's whether civil society existed before the war. Sarah<sup>5</sup> shared:

“Nope (civil society didn't exist before). I didn't know about it before the revolution. Maybe before, I didn't know I imagine line-ups. Like a line up of people getting food” (*CSO Interview*).

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<sup>5</sup> Given the volatile and dangerous security situation in Libya, all respondent names have been changed to protect their identity. In situations where I feel the respondent's identity can be linked to the CSO's name, the CSO name will not be shared as well.

Mohammed, one of the members of the CSO 1Libya told me;

“Yeah we’re kids, but when I sit with the adults we explain exactly what we were doing. And given the situation in Libya, whether you were young or old, you had no experience doing this so it didn’t matter who was putting together the program or the charity, you were an expert because no one else had experience. Everyone was at the same level” (*CSO Interview*).

Even the regulative body responsible for civil society was clearly weak from the lack of experience, resources, and at times understanding, of the current landscape in the country. The newly formed Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Civil Society was created to manage all the CSOs that were established during the revolution. A number of the founders of various CSOs in Libya voiced their frustration with the Ministry. Eyad from the an organization named “*February17*” shared:

“There is no organizing at the government level. There are lots of organizations, but no plan or control on what they are doing and how they will use the money. We don’t even know if there is any money at that Ministry [of Cultural Affairs and Civil Society]. No one knows how to get funding or endorsement” (*CSO Interview*).

May, an investment banker from the United Kingdom who left her job during the revolution and started a women’s empowerment center in Libya shared:

“They [Ministry] are useless. We couldn’t even get our organization registered. We had a friend who worked for them and even through him we couldn’t get registered. It’s a joke” (*CSO Interview*).

In fields characterized by voids, uncertainty and controversy are present. At the organizational level, there is confusion about what an organization looks like, what elements it should contain, what practices are needed and how to achieve common goals. A number of informants voiced the frustration with the complete lack of understanding of what organizations do. May also shared:

“I helped as much as I can and tried to give them advice on what to do, like get business cards, and like seriously some did not know even what that is. It was a bit ridiculous. I also had to teach them how to have a meeting. So when you have a meeting you have to close the door. Someone leads the meeting etc. And they’re like ‘but she’ll get upset’. And I’m like it doesn’t work like that. They’re so funny, but it’s this basic stuff that they don’t know” (*CSO Interview*).

These examples illustrate the Libyan landscape and dramatic challenges institutional actors faced.

Table 4 gives an overview of my findings describing Libya’s civil society as an institutional void.

It illustrates the absence of the institutional elements from the institutional layer model illustrated in Figure 4.

**Table 4: Examples of Institutional Layers Missing in Libya’s Civil Society**

<b>Missing Layer</b>	<b>Institutional Element</b>	<b>Illustrative Examples</b>
Meaning Systems & Behaviour Patterns	Normative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Question at a workshop: “But what if a law comes out preventing us from working on this strategy (for women inclusion in the constitution committee)?” – International NGO leader responds, “Wait a minute. What is the role of civil society? Is it to sit down if a law comes out? No! Your role is to scream and make noise, and make sure the law is changed.”</li> </ul>
	Rules	
	Regulatory Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No governmental body responsible for CSOs</li> <li>Registration and funding mechanisms completely missing</li> <li>Civil Society law absent</li> </ul>
Governance Structure	Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“There was nothing in Libya before. Like I was there right from the beginning. There was just protests. Then we formed teams, and then we realized we needed organizations and Libya became all these organizations. Wherever you go, there’s an organization. And everyone is doing something. Like some people created an organization for the purpose of cooking food for people.”</li> </ul>
	Field	
	Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only a few CSOs registered prior to the revolution. Media stations all state owned.</li> </ul>
Actors	Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“They have no concept of how to get money. You know, their idea of getting the money is going through the government.”</li> <li>“I had to teach them how to have a meeting.”</li> </ul>
	Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I told Safia that we were going to become an organization so we can do things. And she said “what’s an organization?” And I explained.”</li> </ul>
	Logics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Civil society was a fund where people made monthly contributions and then when you needed some money you could go into the fund. It’s called a jemeeya. That’s all there was. That was our civil society”.</li> </ul>

Thus, by applying Scott and Meyer's classification of institutions, the data reveals that Libya is missing many institutional layers and can be conceptualized as an institutional void and thus setting the stage for radical institutional innovation. The next section presents how institutional innovation was initiated and the actors initiating the change in the field.

#### **4.2. Triggers of Institutional Innovation**

By definition, institutions are stable and enduring. Although minor adaptations occur with most institutions frequently, radical upheavals that occur in an institutional field happen less often. Radical institutional innovation in Libya was triggered by the humanitarian crisis brought on by the war. The outcome of this led to a void in institutions that could deal with the crisis, and the dismantlement of the government, which meant that civil society activities were now allowed.

At the start of the revolution, grassroots organizations were developing in Libya. These organizations were not much more than a group of individuals with shared interests for some cause, working under a name and logo. Three main types of organizations were starting to emerge at this time. The first were charity groups that collected donations to be distributed to families in need, organized food preparations for the rebel fighters, and took over government controlled activities that had been abandoned since the fighting started (e.g. garbage collection, teaching, and even traffic control). Young Libyan men and women typically led these groups.

“In the first weeks of the revolution it was all charity and humanitarian work. We had lots of refugees to deal with. We had many injured. It was a nightmare... When the war continued we had other issues to deal with... there was no government in Benghazi at the time. No one paying salaries, no one taking care of the everyday tasks to run a city. So these organizations turned into labour based organizations. Someone had to patrol the streets, pick up the garbage” (*Ahmed – CSO Interview*).

The second group of organizations was media and outreach related. During the Gadaffi regime, all media outlets were state controlled and Libyan press and media were considered “among the most tightly controlled in the world” (Freedom of the Press, 2011: para.1). When the revolution broke out, all news officially coming out of Libya was very one sided. Some of the news outlets were claiming that there were no protests happening, and terrorist groups were leading all fighting against the regime. This was contradictory to the videos being leaked by individuals from Benghazi showing protests of thousands of people, and shots being fired from the government army at unarmed protestors.

Once the government was no longer able to deny the protests and fighting that was happening, state news started reporting that those leading the fighting were high on drugs that had been put in their Nescafe coffee drinks. During the first few days of the revolution videos were being shared on popular media sights such as Facebook and YouTube showing the brutality of the Gadaffi regime. One video, shot by a women on her balcony, showed mercenaries (individuals who were believed to not be of Libyan origin and hired by the Gadaffi regime) running after protests with machetes. The women could be heard in the background yelling “they are setting us on fire. They are setting us on fire”. This video, and many similar ones, were being used to get the attention of the international community. The sharing of this real-time footage and information about the situation were critical in gaining international support for the NATO mission in Libya<sup>6</sup>. Without them no one knew what was exactly happening in Benghazi. Technically savvy individuals were able to hack some of the systems put in place by the regime to prevent Internet access and use v-sat devices to communicate with those outside of Libya. These small media groups such as Libya AlHurra, AlManar, and ShababLibya were set up to

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<sup>6</sup> United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 is a measure that was adopted on March 17, 2011. It formed the legal basis for military intervention in Libya by a NATO led coalition.

provide real-time footage and accounts of the events unfolding to those outside of Libya. Many would evolve to be the first post-revolution, non-government controlled media stations in Libya. These graphic videos and personal accounts became critical in gaining international support for the NATO mission in Libya.

While these organizations were developing inside of Libya. Groups of people were also coming together to form organizations outside of Libya. The Libyan diaspora, once fragmented and quiet, had started to form organizations to deal with the crisis at hand. Outside of Libya, the organizations forming were focused on sending humanitarian aid into Libya, and pushing for international support for involvement in Libya.

When the war ended, people started to return to their homes. Services such as garbage collection and education resumed, and the injured were being sent to developed countries for the long recovery process. Life started to resume to somewhat of a normal state in Libya. However, the countries institutions needed reform, a constitution was to be rewritten and democratic elections, the first in over 50 years, were scheduled to take place within the next six months after liberation. NGOs created for charity and humanitarian purposes during the war now had a new role in ensuring a democratic process, that women had a role in the new Libya, and previously neglected groups, such the mentally and/or physically disabled, widows, rape survivors, had a voice. For example, Malik, from the organization 17<sup>th</sup> of February (named after the first day of the revolution) shared how his group was in charge of protests during the early days of the revolution. They would organize protests taking place in Benghazi, make signage, and videotape the events and post them on social media stations for sharing. Once the NATO mission had started in Libya, there was little to protest. Malik and many of his co-organizers joined humanitarian efforts to collect money and items for those displaced at Tunisian refugee camps

due to fighting in their city.

“Then, when things started to settle [in Benghazi] and we had a [temporary] government; some of us joined the fighting, and some focused on civil society based issues. This is how it happened” (CSO Interview).

Libya’s civil society was slowly emerging. Figure 5 illustrates some of the headlines of major international news outlets and reports celebrating the emergence of civil society in Libya. These headlines point to the novelty of the situation, and also suggest how apparent and visible this process was.

**Figure 5: Representative Headlines Focused on Emergence of Civil Society in Libya**



However, it was not just necessity that triggered the institutional innovation seen in Libya, it was also the dismantling of the government that now allowed for civil organizations to exist, as previously, civil society was considered an illegal sector in Libya.

During the Gaddafi era only two civil organizations were present, Watasemu and the Gaddafi Foundation. Both organizations were affiliated with the government. A few other organizations existed but were considered “youth activity” and therefore not under the civil society umbrella. These were the Libyan Scouts, and Global Change Makers, an initiative started by the British Embassy in Libya that organized youth targeted, and run, charity projects. All other organizations that touched upon areas of civil society including politics, human rights, activism, and unions were banned. The consequences of starting or belonging to collective groups in this third sector were serious. In the early eighties, the Gaddafi regime created a fear campaign where anyone known to be participating in political dissent was publicly executed, sending a clear message to Libyans that the government was serious about those going against their rule. Ibrahim, a Libyan-Canadian, shared his account of what it was like growing up in Libya:

“I remember arriving on campus (in 1982) and seeing something hanging from one of the trees outside of the engineering faculty. I thought it was a bag of garbage or something. When I got closer, I realized it was a man. He was in my class. I ran home shaking. I will never get that image out of my head”  
*(Historical-context interview).*

Videos can be seen of some of these public executions. One of the more famous ones was that of Sadiq Shwehdi, a 30 year old Libyan man accused of plotting to assassinate Gaddafi. A video of him from 1984 emerged during the revolution<sup>7</sup>. It shows him sitting in the centre of a

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<sup>7</sup> Video available on <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jul/18/gaddafi-brutal-regime-exposed-lost-archive>

stadium, crying as he is sentenced to death. Moments later he is hung from the basketball nets of the stadium.

Even outside of Libya, the fear was present. The Canadian Libyan Council (CLC) was created in wake of the February 17 revolution. At a roundtable discussion with founding members and the advisory board, I asked why such an organization was not started before? Clearly, with the growing population of Libyan-Canadians, there was a need to create some sort of organization that met their needs. Hani, a board member of the CLC shared:

“Well we had social committees. Nothing formal, but it was a mailing group where we organized Eid parties, and some picnics. Even those events were controversial [laughing]. We talked, moved, did things, very carefully, weighting everything, and making sure we weren’t breaking any rules. Anyone could have been a spy for Gadaffi. We’re here, but I have family back in Libya, we have to make sure we don’t break the rules. Even in Canada” (*Historical-context interview*).

Civil society did not exist in Libya because it was not legal, and the consequences of any sort of civil action outside of the regime has serious, many times deadly, consequences.

#### **4.3. Radical Institutional Innovation Actors**

Who are the actors that bring about institutional innovation? Two key groups were clearly visible in the emerging institutional field in Libya; International Non-Government Organizations (INGOs) that had a mandate to fund and help develop Libya’s civil society, and grassroots organizations that were founded by Libyan individuals who mostly associated themselves with Libya only. International organizations came into Libya even before the war ended. They had lots of resources, experiences and funding, however, they suffered from a “liability of foreignness” (Zaheer, 1995). International organizations can face a liability of

foreignness due to a lack of embeddedness in a country. This creates additional structural/relational and institutional costs or social costs of access and acceptance (Zaheer, 1995). Eden and Miller (2004) found that institutional distance is the key driver behind each of these costs. INGOs were disadvantaged for two reasons; unfamiliarity with the local environment, and distrust.

INGOs did not completely understand the unique culture, tribal characteristics and social fabrics of Libya. Zeineb, a Libyan-Tunisian who grew up in Libya, worked for one of the INGOs. She provided some interesting insight on the challenges INGOs were facing.

“It’s like you must speak their language. Not literally just their language, but you have to, you have to understand the cultural fabric, the social fabric. The international NGOs don’t. A lot of times they think they can bring in a template from whatever country they were in before and use that, but we’re different in Libya” (*INGO interview*).

They also have a limited understanding of the history, culture and norms within the field. This especially became apparent when I explored the rape crisis in Libya as many civil organizations stemmed from this crisis. The INGOs did not clearly understand the stigma behind rape in Libya. Thus, they had a lot of difficulty accessing rape survivors, hospitals and clinics. Lisa, from a European NGO shared:

“Early on we realized we were not going to be able get to the survivors at the camp. We’ve had experience with war crimes and rape victims, like in Kosovo, where we brought with us Kosovo nationals, women, but here they wouldn’t even talk to us if we were around, even if we had Libyan women on our team. It was hard” (*INGO interview*).

This quote from Lisa further supports Zeineb’s statement regarding the use of templates from other contexts by the INGOs for the situation in Libya. It also illustrates how this did not work, at least for the rape crisis. Finally, Lisa did not realize, until much later on, that women in Libya do not even talk to Libyan women about rape. There is

incredible stigma surrounding rape in Libya.

Abeer, a young stay at home mom, who I interviewed, shared with me the following anecdote:

“Remember the ‘ghara’ (1986 air strikes on Libya by the U.S)<sup>8</sup>? You know what my mom told me about that night? That’s? when they fled their house, because it was right beside the airport and they were afraid it would get hit. You know what they took with them? Knives. Large kitchen knives. You know why? Because they wanted to use them on themselves if the American soldiers came down. They would rather kill themselves than be victims of rape” (*Non-civil society interview*).

Liability of foreignness also creates distrust as the international CSOs share little in terms of cultural and institutional systems (Zucker, 1986; Mollering, 2006) with the people they are trying to serve. And because they are not part of the environment, their intentions for being in the field are questioned. Many times people referred to them as having “an agenda” and “untrustworthy”.

“Our biggest challenge? First it was building trust. This was the biggest challenge because for months I thought I was, I felt I was perceived as a spy, or I did something wrong. But it’s a learning process, we dealt with their issues, with opening bank accounts, and withdrawing money at the beginning. I mean, we did everything that you can imagine in order for us to build trust with the organizations”

Another INGO manager shared:

“They wanted to see that we were registered. Every single one of our organizations took the grant agreement to a legal adviser. That’s never happened in my life... It’s like, we’re giving them money, so they’re thinking ‘what are they planning for us?’” (Pierre – INGO Interview).

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<sup>8</sup> On April 15, 1986, President Ronald Reagan ordered air strikes against Libya in response to the Berlin discotheque bombing that killed three people and injured 230. The bombing was said to be targeting American soldiers as the La Belle discotheque was popular entertainment venue for United States soldiers.

Also present in the emerging field are grassroots organizations. These organizations were founded by individuals, and groups of individuals with low levels of embeddedness in a few or no relevant fields. Many of them were homemakers, teachers, retail associates, and civil workers. Grassroots organizations were trusted as their purpose was clear given their ties to the country. They also had a strong understanding of the Libyan socio, cultural, and religious landscape.

However, they suffered from a *liability of institutional newness*, a term I developed based on my research in Libya. This is a problem associated with organizations with little experience in relevant fields. The founders of these organizations have little or no entrepreneurial and organizational experience. They lack an understanding of the logics of the developing field. In Libya, these organizations had limited experience in building civil organizations, the role of civil society or its meaning. They are also confined to the institution they are already embedded in and therefore bound by existing norms, logics, and values of a field established without civil society based institutions. I saw many grassroots organizations that did not exist upon my return in my second trip because they couldn't get funding. Many grassroots organizations that were part of international civil society incubators on my second trip were no longer part of the incubators by the time I made my third visit. Many of these organizations were not meeting milestones, and not keeping up to date with what many would consider lenient and very basic, reporting mechanisms put in place by the international funding bodies. When asking a local organization focused on the handicapped, that I had met with on my first trip, why they were no longer active, one of the members, Aya, told me:

“The president started acting like a dictator. If we wanted dictators then we would have been happy with Gadaffi. You know, people like power, and I'm sick of this. Everyone is sick of this” (*CSO Interview*).

### *The 50 – Key Institutional Entrepreneurs*

Who was bringing about the radical innovation seen in Libya's emerging civil society? Initially, this study was looking at the various types of institutional entrepreneurs in Libya's civil society. This included the grassroots organizations, the INGOs, the local businesses, and all other players that were helping to shape Libya's fast emerging third sector. However, early into the research, it became clear that there was a consensus among Libyans that civil society in Libya was being built by a third group of organizations and individuals. These were referred to as 'the 50'. A small group of individuals were the founders of what were considered the successful civil organizations in Libya. The following comment by Sura one of the founders of a youth based organization in Libya, Libya Today, sums up a theme that repeatedly came up during the interviews:

“There is a group now that is civil society. Because right now, wherever you go, a workshop, an event, whatever, it's the same people. It's maybe 50 people. Even in Benghazi and here, it's the same people you see all the time. This is Libya's civil society” (*CSO Interview*).

Zeyad, from the T.V station, Libya Al-Hurra, shared:

“Yeah (civil society is 50 people), they're the 50 that speak English. They are better at networking and therefore getting exposed. When the foreign organizations come to talk, this person is easy to communicate with, have a proven track record. They can market themselves. They know the strategy” (*Media Interview*).

I identified 16 organizations with members belonging to “The 50”. Table 5 provides an overview of these organizations and their brokerage characteristics based on collected data about their founders.

**Table 5: Overview of “the 50”**

Description	Characteristics of Founders
Civil society capacity building and funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-Founder 1               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Libyan-American</li> <li>○ United Nations Youth Delegate for Libya – spent 4 years in Libya while working with the UN – co-founded a coaching service after her time in Libya</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Co-Founder 2:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Libyan-American</li> <li>○ VP of an American Biotechnology company she co-founded.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Women Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founder: Libyan-Canadian medical student</li> </ul>
Women Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rest of founding team also medical students</li> </ul>
Transitional justice and human rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founding team includes: - Libyan American – Master’s and PhD graduates from Egyptian and American Universities</li> </ul>
Women Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lawyers graduating from University of Oxford, London School of Economics, Berkely, Cairo University, and Stanford.</li> </ul>
Women Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment banker from the UK</li> </ul>
Women Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pharmacist with an international mother</li> </ul>
Women Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engineers graduated from Libya               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Worked for international companies in Libya</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Children’s Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fathers are Libyan-Canadian business men who grew up in Canada but moved back to Libya</li> </ul>
Children’s Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spent summers in Egypt</li> </ul>
Children’s Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spoke fluent English               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Learned English through courses in Libya and television</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Dental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dentist from the UK but located in Libya during the war</li> </ul>
Victims of War Displacement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global change maker leader – associated with British Embassy prior to the revolution               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Spent some time in England with the group</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Women Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK born medical school student</li> </ul>
Political Lobbying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global change maker participant</li> </ul>
Youth Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engineers working for international oil companies in Libya</li> </ul>
Youth Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sisters raised in Italy</li> </ul>
Youth Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daughters of Libyan entrepreneur based in Italy</li> </ul>
Media Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Libyan-British technician</li> </ul>
Social Media Activism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Libyans from across the world – various professional backgrounds</li> </ul>
Libyan Canadian Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lawyers, doctors, professors, and engineers</li> </ul>

**Table 5 Continued**

Description	Characteristics of Founders
Libyan Canadian Organization Activism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engineers, civil employees, students</li> <li>• Muslim Brotherhood based organization</li> </ul>
American Libyan Organization Think Tank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founder is an entrepreneur in the tech sector</li> <li>• Civil employees, students, professionals from various sectors</li> <li>• American, British, and Canadian Libyan backgrounds</li> <li>• Founder worked for CSO in Morocco</li> <li>• Political science and finance backgrounds from international universities</li> </ul>
Online Network of Activists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founder is a women retail entrepreneur</li> <li>• Co-Founder worked for the WorldBank and the White House</li> <li>• Rest of the members are from all over the world</li> </ul>
Youth Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founder is a Libyan-Canadian serial entrepreneur based in Canada</li> </ul>
Women Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founder is a teacher in Libya, but spent 10 years in Texas where she managed the Muslim community center</li> </ul>
Political Lobbying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate lawyer based in Libya</li> <li>• Most of her clients are international companies operating in Libya</li> </ul>

Closer examination of who was in this group indicated three key characteristics; these individuals were of Libyan background, typically had some professional experience in large organizations, and they had spent a considerable time in countries with established civil societies. Research in neo-institutionalism and social movement theory suggests that institutional innovation is a “political process in which social movements play a double edged role: they deinstitutionalize existing beliefs, norms, and values embodied in extant social structures and establish new structures that instantiate new beliefs, norms, and values” (Rao & Giorgi, 2006: pg. 271). Institutional entrepreneurs are crucial in this process as they are able to identify opportunities, frame issues and problems and mobilize others. In Libya, there was a special group of institutional entrepreneurs responsible for rapid, starting from scratch, institutional innovation.

#### **4.4. The “50” as Institutional Brokers**

The unique position of “The 50” allowed them to successfully maneuver through the void and spearhead the attempt to infuse new values, beliefs, and norms into the emerging field. These individuals, or the organizations they had founded, acted as institutional brokers connecting otherwise unconnected institutions. More specifically, these entrepreneurs are partially embedded in developed institutional environments of civil society, or non-adjacent institutional fields in Figure 3, but are also partially embedded in Libya’s society void of civil institutions. They are able to facilitate the diffusion of knowledge in a social system from outside that system by moving across institutional fields. This partial embeddedness in very different fields, links these actors to different sets of actors and therefore providing them with distinct opportunities and competitive capabilities (Zaheer & McEvily, 1999).

A large body of research has looked at the roles of brokers in the assembly of new combinations as they are ideally positioned to receive new and previously uncombined ideas (Brass, 1995; Burt, 1992, 2004; Hargadon & Sutton, 1997). Brokerage relies on leveraging the knowledge and efficiencies that reside in elements of existing technologies. It is based on a strategy that lends itself to innovation by combining existing technologies in new ways that result in dramatic synergy (Hargadon, 1998). The concept is rooted in the theory of structural holes, which explains how certain organizations can play a key role in bridging knowledge gaps in a market (Burt, 1992). Although most research has centered on technology brokering, it is a concept that can be applied to the combining of not only technology, but the development of other innovations such as theories, policies, processes, and in this case, institutional elements. Thus, brokerage can be considered to happen at various levels.

Interest in the role of brokers spans a number of different research fields at various levels of analysis in the last 20 years. This work has typically focused on technology transfer and diffusion, innovation management, and service organizations (Howell, 2006). However, little work has looked at brokerage at the institutional level.

At an organizational level of analysis, Hargadon and Sutton (1997) describe the advantages of brokering within a firm that operated between different industries. They studied a design firm that routinely took technologies and ideas from one industry and applied them to another and found that the firm exploited its network position to access the knowledge of existing technologies in various industries which allowed them to generate new solutions for other industries. Hargadon and Sutton (1997) argue that knowledge brokers use their industry position to facilitate the acquisition, retention, and retrieval of information. Thus, they have the ability to effectively recombine knowledge given their access to previous ideas. Their study focused on how brokers, as agents, facilitate the process of knowledge and technology transfer across people, organizations and industries. They stress that brokering is more than just a linking role, but also helps transform the ideas and knowledge being transferred as they are a repository of knowledge that can provide solutions that are new combinations of existing ideas to their clients (Howell, 2006).

Literature looking at the role of social positions in changing institutional arrangements has found conflicting results, where some studies have suggested that organizations and individuals located in the periphery of a field are more likely to act as institutional entrepreneurs (e.g. Garud et al., 2002; Kraatz & Zajac, 1996; Leblebici et al., 1991), other studies have found that those in the centre of a field are more likely to act as institutional entrepreneurs (e.g. Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Greenwood et al., 2002). The variance in these findings may be

due to differences in field characteristics such as the level of heterogeneity and institutionalization (Battilana et al., 2009) or due to differences in the type of change (Battilana, 2007). The related concept of boundary spanners in the institutional transformation literature (Helfen, 2015; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010) overlaps with the concept of brokerage, however spanners redirect information that is confined by boundaries, whereas brokers connect otherwise unconnected entities. Thus “brokers can span boundaries but not all boundary spanners broker” (Fleming & Waguespack, 2007; 166).

Building on this, I argue that an institutional entrepreneur’s position, or the type of institutional entrepreneur involved in the innovation process, also depends on whether it is incremental or radical institutional innovation that is taking place. Tracey, Phillips, and Jarvis (2011) discuss institutional brokerage as one of the strategies available to entrepreneurs in emerging markets. They argue that “the greater the institutional uncertainty in an emerging market, the greater the opportunity for entrepreneurs to act as institutional brokers by creating ventures that reduce the risk for other actors” (Tracey et al., 2011; 31).

In this study, institutional brokers are defined as organizations or individuals who facilitate the diffusion of knowledge in a social system from outside that system by moving across institutional fields. They help build organizations and ultimately new institutional fields by bringing in elements, such as practices, logics, and organizational templates, from other institutions they are embedded in. In extreme cases of institutional voids, institutional brokers are an important type of institutional entrepreneurs.

Giddens’ (1984) structuration theory provides a useful perspective for integrating the concept of brokerage and exploring institutional embeddedness and how actors can be reflexive and constrained. He argues that structure is not detached from action as social structures are

made up of human action, and are also mediums for this interaction. Thus, structuration refers to the process by which actors reproduce and transform social practices across time and space and can either enable or constrain action. Actors are seen as embedded in a social context, including the history of their previous interactions. They are engaged with various structures that they also reproduce or transform.

Research has previously looked at how the embeddedness of individuals in social networks determines the success of knowledge transfer within that network (Burt, 1992). It is believed that ties to a cohesive group boost the motivation to share knowledge (Reagans & McEvily, 2003), and stronger ties reflect greater trust that helps enhance the articulation of knowledge (Levin & Cross, 2004). Thus, brokers can use their connections to access knowledge valuable to the institutional field and to realize opportunities for knowledge sharing. These ties help offset institutional and cultural barriers to transferring knowledge across the institutional borders. Because they are connected to multiple institutional fields, institutional brokers are able to see multiple frames, and not attach themselves to a single frame. This allows them to step outside of conventional wisdom and think more creatively. They have connective awareness, the ability to hold different ideas and experiences loosely, and connective legitimacy, legitimacy through their connection with the field.

Whereas research has focused on institutional entrepreneurs already taking action (Smets et al, 2012) and the position of brokers in a social network, there is little insight about how their position allows them the ability to act as brokers, and what it is exactly that they do.

Bourdieu (1985) argues that field characteristics are likely to influence whether actors become institutional entrepreneurs and that actors view various aspects of a field differently depending on where they are located or positioned within that field. This research found that

institutional brokers are able to bring about innovation to the field as an outcome of two dimensions of their positions; a spatial dimension and a temporal dimension.

The spatial dimension stems from the network position of a broker. Social network theory describes the relationship between individuals and organizations within a network. Actors in a network form subgroups that “know one another, are aware of the same kinds of opportunities, have access to the same resources, and share the same kinds of perceptions” (Burt, 1983: 180). This conceptualization can be moved up to the institutional level by looking at institutional fields as the subgroup of actors. Institutional brokers occupy the space between institutional fields that would otherwise not be connected. Thus, if we explicate the difference between an institutional entrepreneur and an institutional broker, institutional entrepreneurs occupy a position within one relevant subgroup, however brokers occupy spaces within both relevant subgroups spanning the distance between subgroups therefore creating bridging ties. This spatial aspect of institutional brokers allows connections to be made between the fields therefore creating a flow of existing solutions from one field where they are ample to an emergent field void of these institutional and organizational solutions.

The cognitive dimension stems from the memory that allows brokers to “acquire, retain, and retrieve new combinations of information obtained through such a position” (Hargadon & Sutton, 1997; 717). Being positioned in both fields allows for a bridge between the two fields that creates a channel for knowledge and resource flow, and the ability to connect other actors from one field to another. However, being present in a field also creates unique, field specific events and experiences that are retained in the broker’s past. Thus, this dimension is dependent on the history of the broker, where successful institutional brokers spent a considerable amount of time taking part in activities that are relevant to the work that is needed to be done to help

create radical institutional innovation. Many times this history was based on time spent in a professional organization, for-profit entrepreneurial ventures, courses taken in English, or occupations these brokers held. For example, a mid-age woman named Amina was on the founding team of LSO, one of the larger organizations in Libya. She also served as a liaison for a number of international organizations trying to reach Libyan women entrepreneurs. Amina also free-lanced for some of the new media outlets for reports on civil society events and women in business related events and stories. Amina had hardly ever left Libya except for the occasional trip to Europe and Syria. Amina was however a successful pharmacist who had opened her own pharmacy before the war. Her ability to network with the foreign organizations and local organizations was incredible. When I asked her how she made time to go to all these events, she told me;

“It’s like marketing your business. There’s pharmacies all over Tripoli, the only way to get people in yours is to go to them. It’s the same here. I’m not going to get anything done by waiting for someone to come to me” (*CSO Interview*).

Amina’s past experience in the pharmaceutical field as an entrepreneur in the field led to experiences that shaped her ability to act in the emerging field.

Thus, the brokers in this study had one foot in the emergent field and one foot in an established field giving them connective awareness and connective legitimacy. This unique position allows them to successfully maneuver through the void, build new organizations successfully and infuse new beliefs, norms and values into the emerging field vis-a-vis their relationship and knowledge from the more established institutions they are a part of, and the experiences they had within the more established fields.

Sahar from an INGO described the successful organizations she had come across.

“Some people, some organizations, will be by people who were working in organizations already and have some knowledge, some functions. Not civil society, but I mean expertise in management, in managing an organization, planning. You would find those kinds of people having some kind of exposure to the business, and also to, they have functions, like function in management, human resources. They typically are from companies before the war. Of course you will not find them knowing fund raising, or advocacy, because this type of activities or functions is new to Libya” (*INGO Interview*).

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

In summary, as shown in Figure 3, three types of fields are present in the institutional innovation process; non-adjacent fields, adjacent fields, and the emerging field. Institutional innovation in Libya was triggered by the humanitarian crisis brought on by the war, and the dismantlement of the government that created an opportunity for actors to bring forward innovations that ultimately can be legitimized. Findings from my first data collection phase in Libya led me to exploring those individuals who were embedded in Libya, but also belonged to other institutional fields that provide relevant institutional building blocks for the development of Libya’s nascent civil society. The founders of these organizations typically spent considerable time abroad in fields with established civil society and/or belonged to professional organizations. I label these agents of radical institutional innovation as institutional brokers as they straddle both the emerging field and non-adjacent fields, and thus connect these otherwise unconnected social arenas.

Actors situated in institutional voids must develop unique strategies to overcome the challenges present. The lack of resources, institutional pillars, networks, and legitimacy pose significant hurdles for institutional entrepreneurs. Normative, regulative forces are especially

weak here. Cognitive forces from the previous status quo are powerful, and institutional brokers must surmount these. This is further exasperated by the relative speed societal gaps created by institutional voids need to be addressed in times of crisis. However, institutional voids also provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to creatively construct a field from scratch.

In the next chapters, I present how these institutional brokers go about creating the new field, and the micro and macro dynamics that play out between these individuals, their networks, the organizations they belong to or started, and the fields they are embedded in. I also discuss the outcomes of these processes along the various phases.

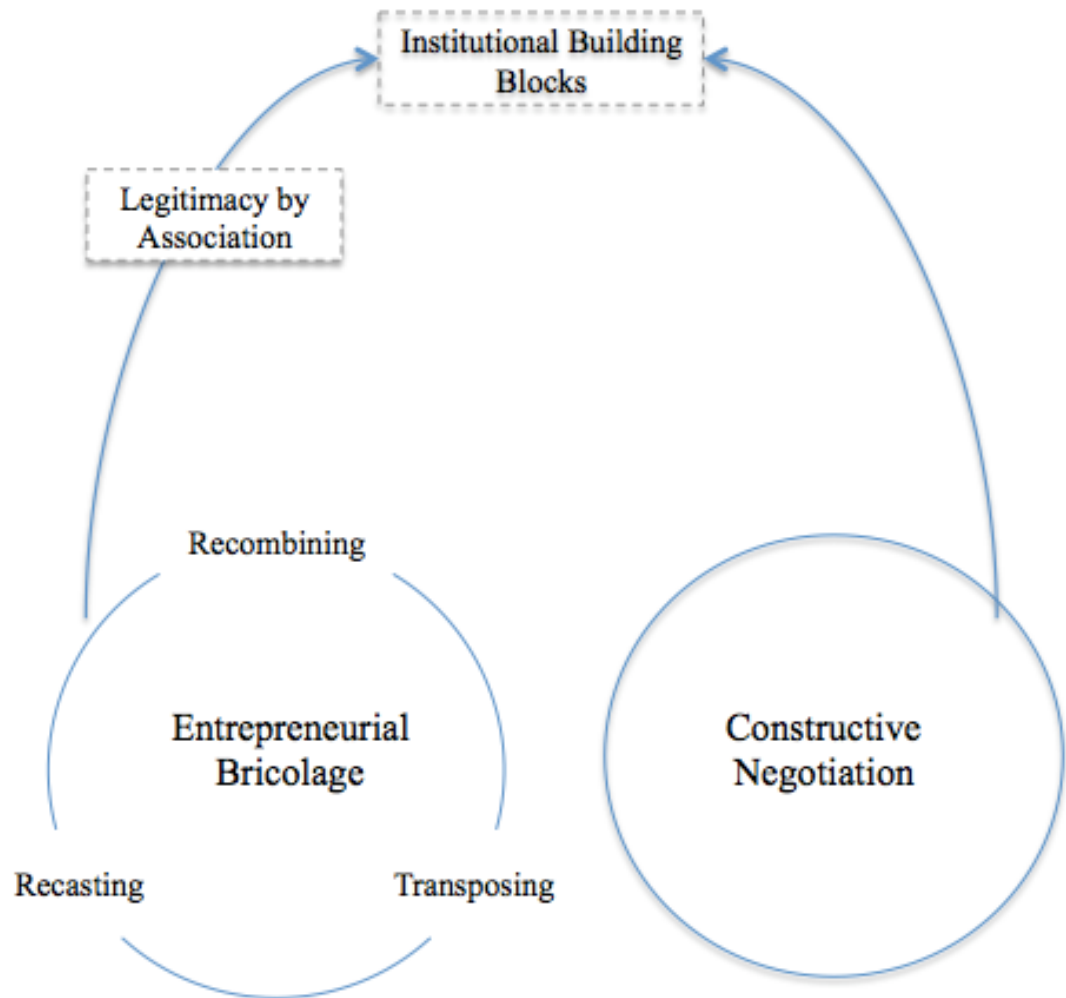
## CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS - CREATIVE TRANSLATION

How are institutional elements introduced in environments characterized by institutional voids? At the individual and organizational level of analysis, radical institutional innovation begins with creative translation, the transformation of ideational and material objects within and during the process of adoption, diffusion, and and/or institutionalization (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996; Czarniawska & Sevón, 2005; Zilber, 2006). This process relies heavily on chance, necessity, and sometimes naiveté, versus the more linear process of discovery and exploitation that is often described in the innovation literature (Hughes, 2011; Powell & Sandholtz, 2012).

Creative translation is based on the notion that “ideas do not diffuse in a vacuum but are actively transferred and translated in a context of other ideas, actors, traditions and institutions (Sahlin & Wedlin, 2008: 219). Translation can synthesize institutional elements such as practices, structures, ideas, models, and laws, which change as they flow through institutional borders (Sahlin & Wedlin, 2008). They get modified and reshaped and can take on new meanings eventually. In the technology transfer literature, existing technologies are often adapted and transformed before they become usable in a new field. This notion is also present in DiMaggio’s (1992) description of how Professor Paul Sachs used his strong connections to museums, universities, and financial institutions to help create New York’s Museum of Modern Art. Institutional brokers are positioned to put together different practices and templates to create new institutional fields from other fields they are embedded in (Hargadon & Sutton, 1997).

Figure 6 illustrates the creative translation dynamic and the resulting outcomes that emerged based on my data collection in Libya.

**Figure 6: Creative Translation Dynamic**



Given the presence of institutional voids, the creative translation process involves an overlying strategy of bricolage (Levi-Strauss, 1966). Here institutional brokers play the part of bricoleurs, patching together, somewhat unconsciously, the elements of various institutions they are embedded in and reworking the institutional materials they had at hand given the resource constraints they face, and the lack of institutional elements that would normally be present to

support organizations and institutional entrepreneurs. Figure 6 illustrates the creative translation dynamics. In this chapter, I will describe and explain this process and resulting outcomes. In particular, two micro-dynamics are present here. The first is entrepreneurial bricolage, which is how recombination, transposing and recasting takes place. The second is constructive negotiation. The actors involved in these processes are considered institutional brokers, unless otherwise stated. Where relevant, I describe some background information about the individual or their organization to further illustrate the characteristics of these brokers.

### **5.1. Entrepreneurial Bricolage**

Bricolage is a dominant force in the dynamics of radical institutional innovation in Libya. As show in Figure 6, it is comprised of recombining, transposing, and recasting. This section begins by describing bricolage more generally then moves to further elaboration on these three processes encompassing bricolage observed in the field.

Although institutional brokers may have experience in established organizations, many were never entrepreneurial before the war. They had little or no experience in the activities needed to build organizations and develop institutional fields with very few resources, or cognitive, social, and material support to work with.

As a result, these institutional brokers relied on bricolage during the initial phase of innovation. Bricolage refers to the process of theoretical tinkering by which individuals and cultures use objects around them to assimilate ideas. It is a response to resource scarcity. Levi-Strauss (1966) first developed the concept while studying primitive societies constructing their religions. The ethnographer noticed that these people take what they have at hand – an animal, a tree, a natural setting – and recombine these objects, places or persons. The result is the creation of a religion that includes these objects that now have a new sense of purpose (Levi-Strauss,

1966). This process of innovation differs from the traditional view of the innovation process where entrepreneurs approach a problem by hypothesizing a solution and then finding resources that fit the criteria. Institutional brokers on the other hand, start with the resources at hand and then work their way towards an innovative solution. Although bricolage is a concept more familiar to social movement theorists than to organization theorists, a stream of research has started to emerge in the management literature that has explored bricolage as an important component of institutional work and entrepreneurship in resource-constrained environments (Baker, 2007; Baker, Miner, & Eesley, 2003; Baker & Nelson, 2005; Di Domenico, Haugh, & Tracey, 2010; Mair & Marti, 2009; Stinchfield, Nelson & Wood, 2013).

Institutions are constructed through a process of bricolage by using elements that are part of existing institutions. This capability is also used to build networks as individuals rely on their networks to gather financial and symbolic resources needed to create the rules and organizations that will govern a new field (Rojas, 2010). This is similar to Douglas's (1986) work that elaborates Levi-Strauss's (1967) concept of 'intellectual bricolage' and extends it to institutional thinking to illustrate how the construction of institutions and decisions to act are rarely made on the basis of individual rational choice.

As the revolution started to unfold, groups operating under a logo and name, but no organizational structure, were becoming key players. Established organizations interested in Libya, such as INGOs and media channels were looking for people to work and communicate with. Masoud, a member of the Red Cross, one of the first organizations to enter Libya during the revolution, said:

“We came in and asked where are the NGOs, and we honestly couldn’t find any. We come into these crisis situations and find local groups to work with... we recognize that we can’t do this on our own, but I remember the first days in Benghazi, it was a bunch of people cooking and selling revolution flags. We ended up stretching ourselves and finding groups that in any other situation we wouldn’t see as a good fit, but we were desperate.”

This comment further emphasizes the void present in Libya’s civil society at the time of the revolution, and illustrates the “making do with whatever is at hand” concept of bricolage. It was not only institutional brokers that acted as bricoleurs, but given the extreme institutional void, INGOs also had to rely on bricolage to reach their goal.

To acquire resources, institutional brokers used both symbolic and material artifacts readily available. Things made of simple materials were sold by connecting them with symbols that reflected the euphoria felt over the revolution. I asked May how did they collect money? “We made stuff” she answered. “Like simple stuff. Like we found rocks and we’d draw on the rocks, the revolutionary flag or a picture of Omar Mukhtar<sup>9</sup> and sell it”. Majid, from a local media station that started in Benghazi, shared how he and his friends sold flags.

“My grandmother sewed the flags. We sold so many. Everyone wanted one. Even when it was dangerous to have one, we were still able to sell them, and for good money” (*Media interview*).

With little experience in humanitarian work and working in civil society organizations, many organization founders resorted to leveraging skills they had developed in other areas. Leila was a woman in her late thirties that I met at one of the civil society workshops. She was a pharmacist by training, but became involved with various civil society organizations during the

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<sup>9</sup> Omar Mukhtar (August 20 1858) was the leader of the Libyan resistance to Italian colonization that took place in 1912. For nearly twenty years he organized a movement against Mussolini’s forces. In 1931 he was captured by the Italian armed forces and hanged. He’s considered one of the greatest Arab heroes of the past century. The movie *Lion of the Desert* from 1981 starring Anthony Quinn centered on his story.

revolution. She was present at most of the civil society related events I attended. Although Leila had spent most of her life in Libya, I noticed she spoke fluent English. When I asked her about this, she told me she spent time in various European countries, as her dad was a diplomat. I later learned that her mother was not Libyan and she visited her mother's home country often during the summer. Leila also had completed a Master's degree in England. During our first encounters I shared with her that I was looking at how civil society all got started in Libya, and who the people leading this change are. She shared:

“These individuals (ones starting the organization) have inner leadership skills. Some talent, there's something there. It's about doing what you can with what you have. Then they become more and more sophisticated. For example, remember that workshop we went to? Zeineb, she's a nurse. She has a skill that stems from being a nurse that is not directly related to nursing, but helps her in this”.

With time, these groups started to progress into organizations. The presence of the INGOs helped push the need to formalize the organizations. In Benghazi, a quasi-government was starting to form and the sudden surge of civil society organizations required them to set up the first Ministry of Civil Society and Cultural Affairs. They started to register organizations, but required that they include some information including the organizational bylaws. Many of the brokers I talked to, especially those in Libya, had little or no experiences with developing organizational bylaws. Many said they didn't even know what they were. They shared a variety of ways on how they came up with bylaws to cater to the Ministry's request. One man said he Googled how to build an organization and found a bylaw template online and just used that. Another even relied on a documentary her illiterate grandmother watched about a scandal involving an NGO:

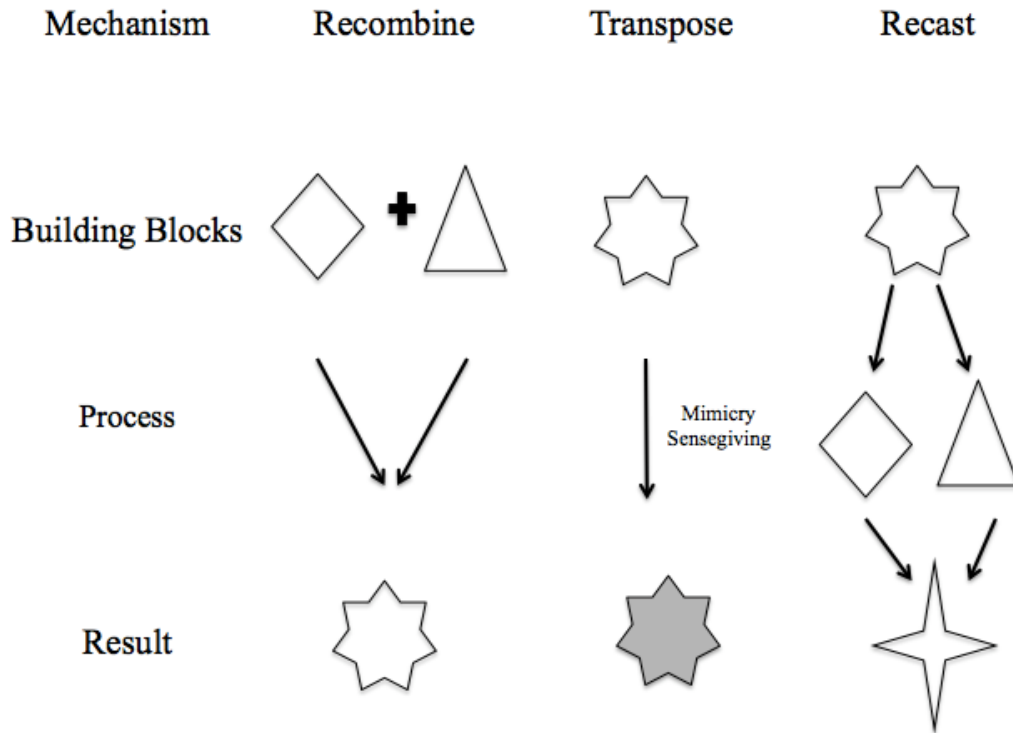
“Well initially we didn’t (know how to put together an organization) either but we were actually told most of this, even before I Googled, because we didn’t have internet at the time, so before I even Googled I was told most of this by my grandmother. Yeah, she doesn’t know shit about anything, and she’s like, she knows. Well turns out she knows a lot. I just didn’t know she knew. I love my grandma, amazing cook, awesome woman. Anyways, she knows a lot about grandmotherly things, but not about organizations. She knew this stuff because of some foundation she had seen on TV. And she’s telling me how this foundation has a branch, and a headquarter, and an educational arm, and an operational arm, and this and that. And I’m like what the hell? And 'no', she’s not educated at all. But she’s seen it on TV. Some documentary about an organization under investigation, and she’s like telling me to write this stuff” (*CSO Interview*).

Bricolage continued to play an important role as the field developed. I saw this happening throughout the dynamics I discuss in the preceding sections, however it was most prominent in the first phase of the process. The next section describes three mechanisms of bricolage I observed being used by the institutional brokers; recombining, transposing, and recasting.

### ***5.1.1. Mechanisms of Bricolage***

How does bricolage happen? What are the mechanisms involved? Delving into this, I discovered that brokers recombine, transpose, and recast elements from the non-adjacent institutions they are embedded in, so that they may be used in the emerging field. Figure 7 illustrates the differences between the three mechanisms of bricolage.

**Figure 7: Differences in Bricolage Mechanisms**



*Recombining.* Resources for organization and capability building are especially constrained in emerging fields. Just as technological innovation requires the recombining of previous innovations, institutional innovation can be seen as a combination of already present, institutions and institutional elements (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Hinings & Greenwood, 1988; Rojas, 2010).

The drafting of a new constitution was a highly anticipated event post revolution. Although the constitution governs the actors inside of civil society, it is not directly associated

with the civil society field. However, the constitution embodies the norms and values of civil society such as equality, tolerance, and common good. Furthermore, civil society provides an enabling framework for democracy and state building (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti, 1993) and therefore the drafting of the constitution was an important part of the development of this field.

The first Libyan constitution was introduced in 1951 under the monarchy rule of King Idriss. This constitution was relatively short with only 35 articles, but it was the first introduction of some codification of rights for Libyans. After the monarchy was overthrown in 1969, Gadaffi introduced “The Green Book” in 1975. This consisted of 37 articles written by Gadaffi himself, and included controversial, and what some may consider ridiculous articles, such as: “There is no freedom for a man who lives in another’s house, whether he pays rent or not” (Part II of The Green Book, Qadaffi, M. 1975). This resulted in renters taking over the homes they lived in, and thousands of families losing their properties to their tenants. Therefore, a new constitution was a priority for the transitional government that took over during the revolution, and the public in general. Before a constitution committee was even elected, Azza Maghur, a prominent lawyer in Libya, was taking the lead to prepare potential committee candidates, government officials, and even the public, on constitutional law. Ms. Maghur was fluent in Arabic, English, and French. She spent some time studying in France, and also called Canada home as a Canadian citizen. Ms. Maghur was especially known for her role in the defense team for the famous Lockerbie case<sup>10</sup>. I attended a number of her presentations. Her strategy in assisting with constitution development was to not “build it from scratch” but to “start with the original 1951 constitution and look at

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<sup>10</sup> The Lockerbie bombing refers to the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 on December 21 1988. 243 passengers and 16 crewmembers died when the plane crashed onto residential areas of Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 11 more people on the ground. Two Libyan nationals were arrested and one was found guilty. In 2003, Gaddafi accepted responsibility for the bombing and paid compensation to the families of the victims.

similar countries, with strong constitutions, and what they have done, and use them” (*Presentation by Azza Maghur at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual One Voice Conference*). According to Azza, “the Tunisian and Egyptian constitutions have been strong examples for the shaping of the Libyan draft”.

The Women’s Platform for Peace (LWPP) developed a “Charter of Libyan Women’s Constitutional Rights” based on a series of workshops and consultations with both Libyan and International academics, lawyers, judges, religious leaders, and civil society activists. A promotional video created by LWPP ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=glauhZOqpMA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glauhZOqpMA)) shows clips from the meeting, where members of the committee are sharing their thoughts on other constitutions. At the beginning of the video a man is heard saying “We review different constitutions of different countries, and constitutions of countries that went through difficult experiences”. Another man then shares with the group in the room; “We suggest a mixture of part of the Moroccan constitution and the part of the Italian constitution article 51”. A woman then takes the microphone and shares with the group; “My colleagues with me thought that there are many points about children in the South African constitution that we should look at”. Another women is then heard saying “In these rights we prefer the text in the Ecuadorian constitution”. I asked Rania, a prominent Libyan activist and member of the committee, how the meeting took place and whether the video really represented the discussion that happened.

“We consulted our local experts, so people like Azza Maghur and Salah Marghani, and some of the international organizations that were supporting the constitution drafting procedure... We needed to bring in a diverse group of people with various expertise, and representing the various groups in Libya. Our focus was on women and children’s rights though. And we asked all participants to go over the constitution of what our experts and partners thought would be relevant constitutions. So one’s like Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, South Africa, and Bosnia” (*CSO Interview*).

One of the founders of LWPP shared:

“The roundtable discussion was critical. We’re dealing with a unique situation here. You have a population where a large majority of them were born at a time when we had no constitution. Many have no idea what a constitution is or what purpose it serves. There’s a need to reconcile Sharia Law and international conventions, and we are in dire need of some sort of transitional justice and reconciliation due to the revolution. And, this needs to be done in a time of increasing militarization of the country... We’re doing our best with what we have... (the word) “Challenge” is an understatement” (*CSO Interview*).

The individuals sitting around the table given the task to come up with key points for the new constitution had a tremendous responsibility. They were taking the lead in shaping the constitutional rights of all Libyan women, their children, and the generations to come. Many participants in that room had little legal experience, and only a 60-year-old constitution that had been abandoned for decades to work with. More importantly, they realized how incredible the situation was. That, unlike many countries with constitutions set in stone, that were hundreds of years old, this was an opportunity to start from scratch and literally use years and years of history, templates from the best and worst constitutions ever written, to write something new.

The process was one of cutting and pasting from the old Libyan constitution, neighbouring and far reaching countries, and modifying them until a draft charter was put together. The charter was then shared on various social media sites and workshops to gather feedback before presenting it to the elected constitution drafting committee. This process illustrates the recombinative nature behind the new constitution in terms of women’s rights, and the underlying processes of bricolage that were critical in the radical institutional innovation that was creating civil society in Libya.

*Transposing.* Unlike recombining, which involves piecing together various elements to come up with something new, *transposing* is a mechanism through which attributes and elements are

introduced into foreign domains with little change (Powell & Sandholtz, 2012). Transposing is accomplished through translation via mimicry, leveraging existing sets of taken-for-granted practices, technologies and rules for the purpose of associating the new with the old (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). In this study, I found that transposing relies heavily on sense-giving (Thomas, Clark, & Gioia, 1993) as well.

Institutional brokers in Libya mimicked institutional elements from a number of sources. Most notably were institutions from other countries with stronger civil societies, and from more established institutions within Libya, such as religious institutions, and professional institutions such as medicine and law.

An important part of everyday life in Libya is that of religious institutions. Elements of this institution were integral in the emerging of new logics in Libya's building of civil society. Institutional brokers leveraged teachings and principles of religious aspects and used them to connect to the logics of civil society such as those surrounding human rights and women's rights, concepts that received little discussion prior to the revolution. At the second annual Voice of Libyan Women conference in Libya, the pamphlets had various quotes from the teachings of Islam regarding respecting women. One of the sessions was completely devoted to what Islam says about respecting women. These beliefs stemming from religious viewpoints were continuously used to help shape logics of civil society that were compatible with those of religious institutions in Libya. For example, one of the quotes on the pamphlet was from a famous saying of the Prophet Muhammad, who Muslims consider the most perfect of man, and devoutly practice his teachings. The quote read:

“The best among you is he whose treatment towards his wife is the best” – (*Back of VLW 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference Pamphlet*).

During the fighting that took place between March 2011 and August 2011, it was

reported that rape was used as a weapon of war in some of the cities in Libya<sup>11</sup>. In the city of Misrata, where the most violence was seen, cell-phone footage of the rapes were confiscated and shared on social media sites. The social stigma attached to rape and sexual violence in Libya created a number of obstacles for CSOs as they tried to help the survivors of these war crimes. The survivors would not come forward to get the help they needed, and sadly, there were reports of families committing ‘honour killings’ of their own daughters and sisters<sup>12</sup>. Libya Outreach, a U.S. registered CSO, and online network of over 1500 Libyans from within Libya, the Libyan diaspora, and non-Libyans from all over the world, put together a small coalition of their members to tackle this issue. They brought in sexual violence experts, Libyan female doctors, and connected with organizations in the refugee camps in Tunis that was housing some of the survivors. They came up with Public Service Announcements (PSA) to be shared on social media and radio and news stations across the country. They even approached Imams (religious leaders) that gave sermons in the local mosques in Libya.

“We need to make this about religion. That this (honour killings) are against Islam. Can we get some religious leaders to come out and say something?”

“No, it’s too dangerous. No one will talk.”

“What about Gheryani? He’s already declared himself with the opposition. He’s in hiding, and everyone listens to him”

*(Skype Conference Call with Libya Outreach Rape Crisis Team).*

The institutional logics surrounding rape and sexual violence are highly embedded in the Islamic logics of virginity, purity, and a woman’s sexual monogamy. To target the stigma of rape,

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<sup>11</sup> Libya: ‘Forced to Rape in Misrata’. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13502715>

Libyan Forces Use Rape as Weapon of War, Experts Say:

<http://www.usip.org/publications/libyan-forces-use-rape-weapon-war-experts-say>

<sup>12</sup> Government of United Kingdom Country Information and Guidance Document October 2014.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/362008/CIG\\_-\\_Libya\\_-\\_Women\\_-\\_October\\_8\\_2014.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/362008/CIG_-_Libya_-_Women_-_October_8_2014.pdf)

Libya rape victims ‘face honour killings’. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13760895>

institutional brokers focused on the underlying logic from Islamic teachings to disentangle and separate the two logics. By using religious scholars to distinguish rape as a crime, from the sexual behaviour between a man and a woman, brokers were hoping to shift the logics so deeply rooted in the vast population.

Many organizational building blocks were also transposed from adjacent organizational fields, and from non-adjacent domains including civil society institutions and experiences not close to Libya. Professional institutions such as law and medicine played an important role from an organizational perspective. Professionals from these areas used their learning from being a part of various associations connected to their profession to transport organizational structures and practices over to their newly formed CSOs. One informant was part of her medical school student association. She mentioned how she knew the importance of creating a mission and vision for an organization from her experience with the university association. Another informant, a graduate student from the United States, shared:

“You know why it’s only the English-speaking people who have funding from these guys [INGOs], because they know how to market themselves and ask for money. I’ve written tons of proposals. Heck that’s sometimes all I did back in Washington. I know how to ask for money and build my case. But these poor folks have no clue. It’s unfair... So now, the biggest complaint we hear is lack of funding, and our workshop focuses really have been towards writing proposals and grants” (*May – CSO Interview*).

Organizational templates and structures were borrowed from the private sector as Libyan business men and women became important mentors, advisors, and even partners to many of the emerging NGOs. Sarah, from a small organization in Tripoli, talked about how much of the learning she received was from the owner of the business they were renting from. In one example Sarah is explaining to me how they needed funding for a concert they were organizing for the children that had been out of school for so long due to the fighting;

“How did we get sponsors? So this businessman suggested that we write down our goals with this project, our needs, and what exactly they can help us with. And we gave them options such as one, donate x dollars or two, give us one of these items that we are in need of, or three, recommend something else. And because we wanted school supplies, we visited the supply stores and got an idea of the costs to take care of one child. So one of the options we gave them was the cost per child, and how many children they wanted to help. Our office was in a company so we were able to use this businessman who was in the company and he would look over our letters and tell us what to do and change. Even the idea of getting a cost per person, that was his idea” (*CSO Interview*).

Securing funding is a critical capability for organizations to survive, and most capacity building workshops given by INGOs focused on this topic. However, before these workshops even started to take shape, institutional brokers were transposing some of these elements into the field through the relationships they shared.

“How did we come up with a bylaw? My uncle is a lawyer, he shared one of the bylaws of his client with me and just blacked out the name [laughing]” (*Ekram – CSO Interview*).

Outside of Libya, the Libyan diaspora was facing similar problems to those inside of Libya. No registered NGOs were present and therefore individuals were facing push back when collecting money as donators were looking for legitimate organizations that had some history, and could issue tax receipts. When it came to political lobbying, protests were being held across the world begging for international intervention in the crisis, however approaching government leaders was becoming a challenge. As one of the founders of the Canadian Libyan Council shared:

“I was able to secure a meeting with my local MP. I was thinking this is great. But then on the morning of my meeting I realized I had little leverage. It was just me delivering a letter I wrote asking for something to be done. So I quickly made up a name and a logo and added it to the letter and signed it as the president of the organization” (*Safia – Canadian CSO interview*).

Safia had volunteered for various NGOs before, however she was never part of any lobbying efforts or entrepreneurial ventures. She did however have a legal background. Safia

was aware that to look legitimate and be taken seriously she needed to be associated with an organization. How is that done? By mimicking the methods of association from her professional life, the use of an organizational email, letterhead, and signature, she was able to paint the picture to her local MP that she represented a legitimate and established organization.

Institutional brokers also facilitate the dissemination of ideas and models as they are able to introduce these elements selectively based on the environment they are in. They are able to engage in “sensegiving” by addressing ambiguity experienced by others by providing meaning to the radical changes taking place in the field (Thomas, Clark, & Gioia, 1993). By providing meaning, institutional brokers are able to help others in the field navigate perceived tensions between logics and address gaps in the field. Framing change to align with stakeholder values (Maitlis & Lawrence, 2007) allows for progress as it helps create a cognitive shift (Foldy, Goldman & Ospina, 2008) that can then lead to action. Thus, little or no change are made to what is being transposed, however, new meaning or clarity is provided by the brokers so that those in the field, and in the adjacent fields, can be more accepting. Women based CSOs face an especially challenging environment in Libya given the very conservative culture in the country. Institutional brokers understand the importance of including women in decision-making processes and the workforce for a country to prosper. However, given their position in the field, they also understand the gender dynamics in the country, that getting people, especially men, to pay attention to women’s rights in a society where the primary role of a women was to stay home and take care of the family is incredibly difficult.

To overcome this hurdle many women empowerment focused CSOs invested a great deal of time and energy trying to bring some understanding to the general public about women’s rights. They used any opportunity they could to discuss the topic, get them involved in the

discussion and share with them their experiences living in an environment where women were active members of various aspects of society. A few days after the election results came out, May, one of the first informants I had interviewed in Libya, called me. She asked me if I could pay a visit to her Women's Center and talk to the ladies there about the election results (17% of elected officials being female), what it means for women's rights. She described the Women's center to me during our interview as a place where underprivileged women would come in and get vocational training in hair-dressing, make-up application, and learn English and how to use the internet. I told May that I really was not qualified to give such a talk but I would come in to share my thoughts. I later asked May why she came to me.

“You're from abroad, they'll pay attention to you, and they're tired of hearing me blab on... I keep hammering them with women's rights. The elections can actually help them understand this stuff” (CSO – informal discussion - notes taken).

The election results were leveraged to bring more energy to the women's rights discussion, an example for May to build on to illustrate the consequences of pushing for women inclusion. May told the audience that 17%, although not a lot, still meant that there were women on board that could fight for issues pertaining to women. May was attempting to transpose logics surrounding women's rights by making sense of a current event in relation to women's rights.

Thus, transposing whether it was to connect religious logics to civil society or to help legitimate funding activities or to help educate about women's rights provided an important mechanism of bricolage that helped build and shape radical institutional innovation in Libya.

*Recasting.* Whereas transposing involves imitating institutional elements, recasting is the deconstructing of elements and subsequent remolding to fit the environment. It is about rearranging, remodeling, and creating a new form of the shared practices or presenting them in a

new way. This comes from the art of metal recasting where different forms of objects are made by melting them down and reshaping them. The fundamental components and materials are the same, however they are given new purpose to fit more with the current environment.

As an INGO worker, Laila, shared, “You need to learn to speak their language”. For example, one CSO had a creative way of framing their questions so they could understand what critical obstacles were in the way of women joining the workforce in Libya:

“For the women groups, we asked “What would make **you** go to work? **You** want to do this. What would make **you** feel comfortable?” But for the men it was “what would make you **allow** your wife?” That way they were open to this. And for that reason they were OK. They would be “I would allow my wife if the following... “ If we had said “What would make it OK? Or Would you be OK for your wife to work if...” then I don’t think they would have been as open to it. We kinda made them feel like they were in charge” [emphasis added] – (*Alia – CSO Interview*).

Another strategy used by another organizations was to resort to relabeling workshops as something else to get women to participate. May, who I referred to before, shared the following:

“We built the workshops and called them ‘women cultural centers’. And we advertised them as cultural centers. Why did we do this? Because they’ve never heard of workshops, but they know what cultural centers are”(CSO Interview).

Workshops are an important part of civil society as they provide capacity building education, and are used as a means of developing concepts crucial to civil society, such as human rights, lobbying and advocacy. The workshop concept was introduced by the INGOs and they were able to bring in many of the newly founded CSOs that had a strong presence of institutional brokers. However, organizations looking at providing workshops towards a crowd not familiar with the concept had to be much more creative in how they described workshops and their purpose. Many were not familiar with the term workshop, but more importantly, civil

society workshops were associated with a political movement, and lectures on women's rights, autonomy, and the importance of being a part of society. In the very conservative Libya, husbands and fathers were not comfortable of this as they saw this as a movement being led by "Westerners". In one cartoon being circulated on Facebook, a woman covered in the Islamic veil and a long dress is seen entering a building labeled 'Workshop'. The next frame shows her leaving the workshop in tight jeans, a cropped blouse, and her hair flowing.

Thus, recombining, transposing and recasting are three mechanisms described above that illustrate the micro-dynamics of the entrepreneurial bricolage process of creative translations and how institutional entrepreneurs infused new elements into the emerging institutional field.

## **5.2. Constructive Negotiation**

Another mechanism beyond bricolage that emerged to facilitate creative translation was constructive negotiation. Negotiation is 'the deliberate interaction of two or more complex social units which are attempting to define or redefine the terms of their interdependence' (Walton & McKersie, 1991; 3). In the institutional entrepreneurship literature 'rhetoric' and 'discursive strategies' with their opponents are some of the mechanisms used by institutional entrepreneurs to evoke change. This persuasion through language is a form of negotiation, however the means by which innovation can come about via this process has been largely neglected.

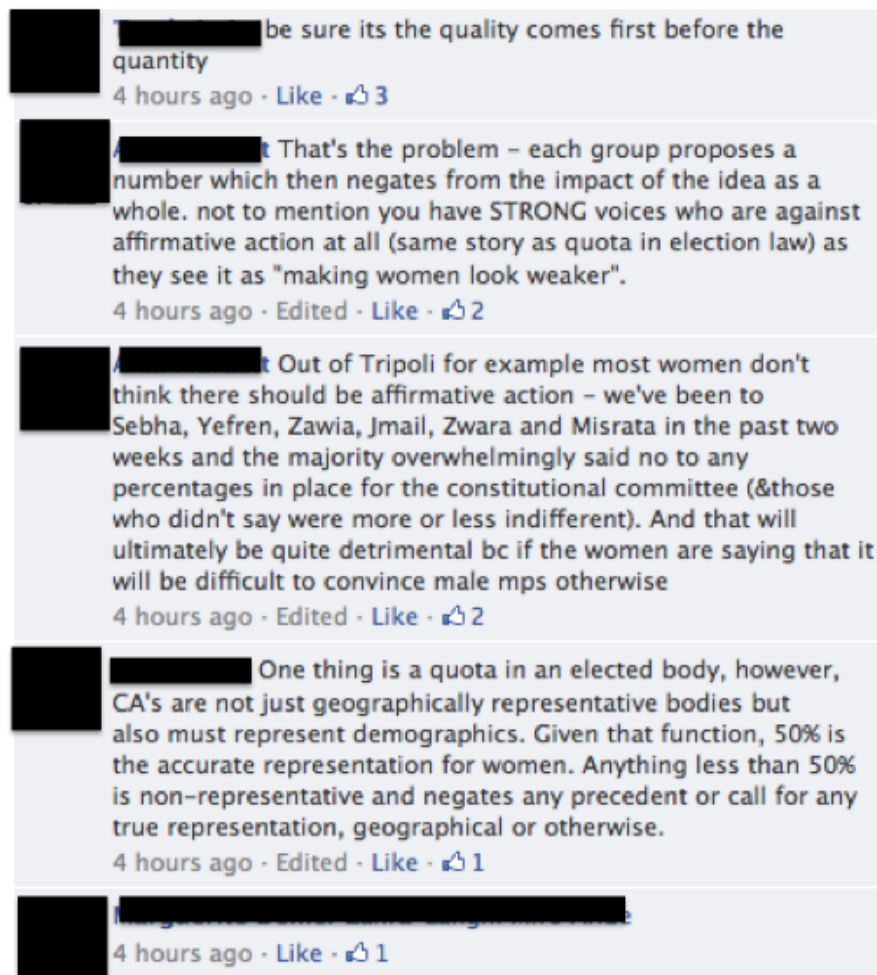
In Libya, I found that negotiation between parties with conflicting ideologies was also sometimes a means of constructing new solutions to problems which are then embedded in the field. When elements from outside fields could not provide a solution that satisfied all parties

involved, even after various translation processes, it was sometimes through a process of negotiating that novel solutions to problems were constructed. These conflicts between opposing forces synthesize new outcomes. I call this form of creative translation *constructive negotiation*.

The parties that enter the negotiation usually have competing institutional logics (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). Brokers bring to the table the ability to reconcile competing logics as they often share logics with the field surrounding the one newly forming and also bring with them foreign logics from non-adjacent fields. Their ability to sit on both sides of the fence provides them with a unique opportunity to see the various sides of an argument and many times come up with creative solutions as a result of this.

The introduction of the zipper ballot is an example of the use of constructive negotiation. The electoral law initially did not include a quota for women representation in the General National Congress (GNC) elections that took place on July 7, 2012. Women rights groups lashed out. They could not foresee a fair representation of women if a quota did not exist. Discussions soon initiated into what the quota should be. Members of the National Transitional Council, the transitional government overseeing Libya until elections could take place, put forward a 10% quota. A version of the electoral law, including the quota was shared online, and the NTC asked for feedback. Women empowerment focused CSOs were not happy with the 10% quota for the most part, however they could not reach a consensus on what the right quota should be. Some looked at recent examples of similar countries, such as a 25% quota in Iraq, and 30% quota for Tunisia. Some, including women's groups, felt these were too high given the lack of experienced women in the political sphere in Libya. Others did not believe any affirmative action should be taken. The following post shown in Figure 8 between some of the well-known women's rights CSOs in Libya illustrates the discussions surrounding the electoral law.

**FIGURE 8: Facebook Post Discussion on Women’s Rights CSOs**



The Libyan Women’s Platform for Peace (LWPP) led a coalition to bring the various stakeholders including women focused CSOs, members of the International Organization for Migration (a branch of the United Nations), and NTC, and lobby for a more inclusive electoral law for women for the elections. Leila from LWPP shared:

“It was a back and forth process that lasted weeks. We came in with a number, they (NTC) pushed back. We got feedback, and would go back with a counter offer. It was negotiating back and forth and we realized no one was going to be happy. In the end we asked ourselves, what do we want from this? And it really was at this point to make sure women had a fair chance of winning seats. That’s when someone at the meeting, I forget who, said, ‘OK, let’s put their names on a separate list’. That of course made no sense, so then we came up with the zipper ballot” (*Leila – CSO Interview*).

The zipper ballot was an innovative solution as a result of the back and forth negotiations between the various parties. It was compromised of the alteration between male and female candidates vertically and horizontally on the ballot lists of all political parties. This way, all women candidates were clearly visible on each ballot, therefore bringing more attention to them, versus having their name lost in the list of hundreds of men. Women won 17.5% of the vote in the first elections ever in 52 years.

### **5.3. Outcomes of Creative Translation**

The creative translation dynamic results in two key outcomes; institutional building blocks to develop the field, and legitimacy by assimilation.

#### **5.3.1. Legitimacy by Assimilation**

Legitimacy is the “generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions” (Suchman, 1995: 574). It involves the understanding and acceptance of change (Glynn & Abzug, 2000) and an audience that endorses or can authorize the change.

To secure legitimacy for a new innovation, organizations seek to conform to prevailing institutionalized norms, cognition or practices (Hargadon & Douglas, 2001; Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001; Navis & Glynn, 2010; 2011; Raffaelli & Glynn, 2015). In the context of institutional voids,

where the field is still nascent, connecting new innovations of the field to adjacent and familiar fields can help legitimate any new field innovations. The use of already existing and familiar logics, practices, and normative, cognitive and regulative elements of adjacent institutional fields, helps build familiarity and understanding and therefore make innovations more acceptable. Institutional brokers, through the process of bricolage can therefore help legitimate new practices, rules, and technology. Hargadon and Douglas (2001) offer a vivid description of Edison's efforts to institutionalize a radical innovation, the electric light bulb. They argue that Edison drew on the public's pre-existing understandings of the technology, its value, and its uses to design the incandescent light around many of the already familiar features of the gas system. Although the new electric light offered many advantages from a practical and technological standpoint, "Edison deliberately designed his electric lighting to be all but indistinguishable from the existing system, lessening rather than emphasizing the gaps between the old institutions and his new innovation" (Hargadon & Douglas, 2001: 489). This strategy can make new structures and institutional innovations, especially those that are a radical departure from what was previously available, more understandable and accessible, leading to legitimacy by assimilation.

### ***5.3.2. Institutional Building Blocks***

Institutional building blocks consist of components that can lead to the development and institutionalization of the field. These elements may include regulative structures such as laws and ministries, normative aspects such as shared norms and values, and cultural-cognitive aspects such as beliefs and logics amongst those within the field. They can also be more structural aspects such as the organizations that make up a field, and the networks that help diffuse the elements across the field.

The creative translation dynamic creates a number of building blocks that are summarized in Table 6. These building blocks are infused in various levels of the process and are used as resources for the subsequent phases. These institutional building blocks can be begin to be institutionalized due to the legitimacy by assimilation that occurs due to entrepreneurial bricolage.

**Table 6: Overview of Institutional Building Blocks as Outcomes of Creative Translation**

<b>Institutional Building Block</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example and/or Illustrative Quotes</b>
Technical knowledge and competencies	Form crucial resources for operational purposes in the field.	“They (grassroots) think the government is the only source of money. Then they see these other organizations with funding and realize there’s other ways to get the money”.
Regulatory processes and enforcement mechanisms	Externally imposed by policymakers and governmental agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zipper ballot bylaw for elections</li> <li>• Ministry of Civil Society and Cultural Affairs</li> </ul>
Organizations	Organized body of individuals with a common purpose.	<p>“[They trusted us] because we had a logo and an office”.</p> <p>“Phoenix organization have volunteers. They have turned a villa into an office. They now have a proper office space. They’re an organization. This is needed to succeed”.</p>
Networks		<p>“But, the funding opportunities, these English speaking people have access, they know people in embassies, they know people within government, they know how to access and reach out. They know about the EU, they know about the USA”</p>

#### **5.4. Conclusion**

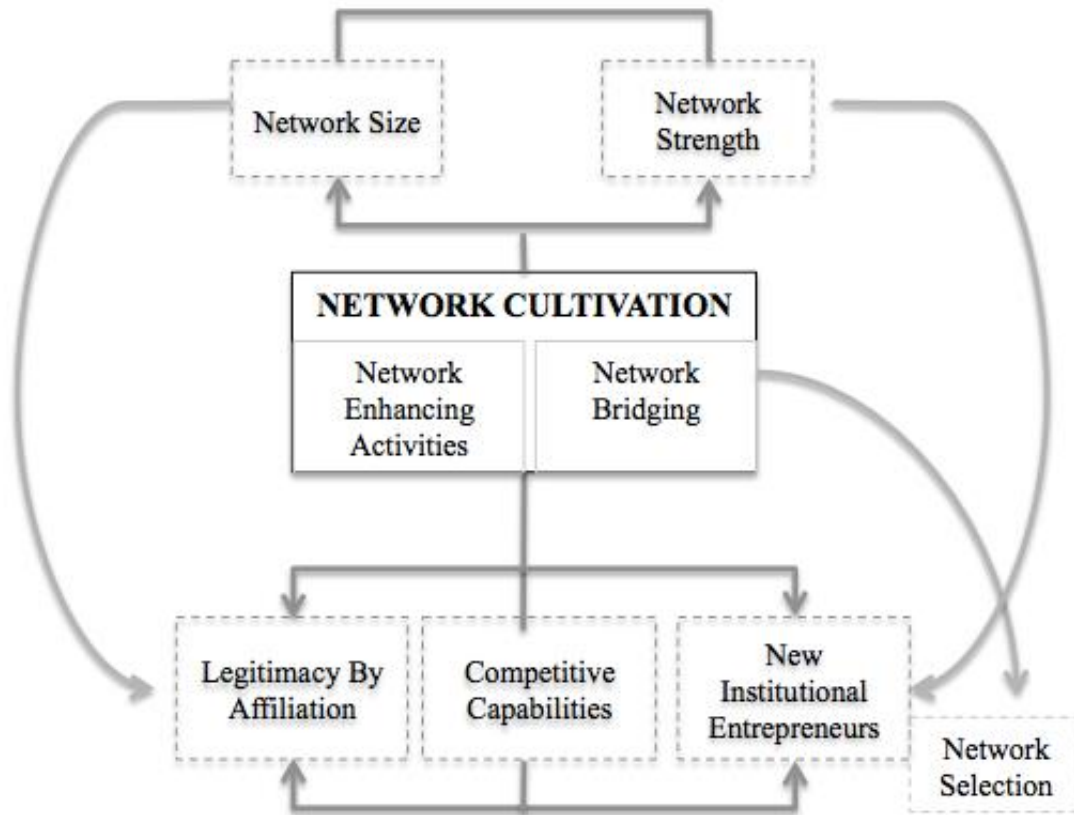
In summary, creative translation involves a process of entrepreneurial bricolage and constructive negotiation. Entrepreneurial bricolage occurred through three mechanisms; recombination, transposition, and recasting. Institutional brokers were able to introduce various elements from fields they are situated in outside of Libya into the emerging civil society field through these mechanisms. These mechanisms transform these outside elements into recognizable institutional building blocks that are considered legitimate by those entering the field due to their familiarity. Another way institutional building blocks enter the field is through constructive negotiation. Here institutional building blocks negotiate with other actors inside and outside the field for creative solutions. This negotiation process leads to innovations that help propel radical institutional innovation and the emergence of a new institutional field.

## CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS - NETWORK CULTIVATION

“I think there’s an elite group, who have the advantage of having a lot contacts, and knowing who to contact, and a network base, and they’re the ones who host these elaborate and extravagant workshops and you get all the guest speakers from government coming to them, which obviously attracts a lot of new participants and stuff. They’re probably a step ahead of the grassroots civil society organizations” (*Linda – INGO Interview*).

Institutional brokers need to spread and disseminate their work. To do this they must grow the network they work in and create new ones. This is done through a process of *network cultivation* that involves *network enhancing activities* and *network collaborations*. Figure 8 illustrates the process and outcomes of this process. The network cultivation dynamic leads to two types of outcomes. At the network level, the network size and strength are enhanced. At the individual and organizational level, network cultivation creates legitimacy by affiliation, competitive capabilities for the brokers, and new institutional entrepreneurs. There is also a network selection effect, where individuals and organizations that do not become associated with the networks that are developing tend to be selected out.

**FIGURE 8: Network Cultivation Dynamic**



As the fighting settled and the focus turned to rebuilding the country and institution building, institutional brokers started to bridge ties with other brokers and organizations in the developing field and establish their position within the expanding network. This network cultivation process was strategic in that most of the time the connections and collaborations that were made were planned, intentional, and had a purpose. Network cultivation was achieved by creating network enhancing activities and by building collaborations within and outside the

network. These actions lead to two useful outcomes of a network; an increase in the network's size, and strengthening of the position of the brokers within the network and the ties they had with others. This also resulted in four outcomes at the organizational level; legitimacy by affiliation, competitive capabilities for the individuals and organizations within the network, new institutional entrepreneurs, and a selection effect where organizations that did not link to the networks created were selected out. I elaborate the process and its outcomes below.

### **6.1. Network Enhancing Activities**

Institutional brokers created *network enhancing activities*, events that bring positive attention to the existing network. These activities tend to provoke the attention of important stakeholders.

At the start of the revolution, lobbying efforts by organizations outside of Libya primarily involved protests and media interviews. Initially, the protests and interviews were led by individuals or groups of individuals. Information regarding protests were emailed to friends and shared by word of mouth. At the protests, media outlets would find random individuals to talk to. This scenario quickly changed. In Canada, protests started to be “organized” by certain newly formed organizations. Official announcements about upcoming protests were sent out to mailing lists that had been formed. Logos were attached to these emails, and signage seen at the protests. Press releases were being made with the name of an organizational media contact at the bottom. In one email thread that included over 200 members of the Libyan diaspora in Canada, an argument broke out between two organizations, the Canadian Libyan Council and the Libyan Canadian Association, about who was responsible for an upcoming protest. When I probed some of the individuals involved in the heated discussion about why did it matter who was organizing it, a member from one of the organizations shared:

“We are the Canada organization. The other (organization) only has members from Ottawa. They’re not the contact people for the government or the media. That’s us”  
*(Ali – Canadian based Libyan Organization).*

Protests and interviews with the media served a critical role in gaining international attention to the events in Libya and pushing for international intervention. However, for organizations, they also served as a channel to important actors such as government officials, funding organizations, and media stations. Seeham from the United Kingdom organized a large fundraising dinner that included a number of British MPs and an invite to some cabinet members. She mentioned:

“We want them to be in the room with us to see what we are doing, what we have accomplished. This event is one of the only ways we can get them in the same room as us”.*(Seeham – UK based Libyan Organization Interview).*

The events in Libya during the first few months of the revolution were fluid, dynamic, and complex. Libya Outreach developed what they called Situation Reports, a daily account of the events of the previous day. The report covered the three aspects of the conflict; military, humanitarian, and political changes or events. A small group of about ten members of Libya Outreach’s online group would create the reports and send them out to a targeted mailing list that had been developed. The mailing list included subscribers to the website, government officials, such as senators, congressmen, Ministers of Parliament, and media contacts. The Situation Reports provided a daily snapshot of the conflict for those interested. However, even more importantly to Libya Outreach, it was a daily connection to important stakeholders.

I joined the Situation Report committee and quickly saw how media stations and government officials who were looking for someone to connect to leveraged the reports by replying back to the email the reports were sent from. The Situation Reports were sent out to NATO emails Libya Outreach had obtained. A tweet from the official NATO twitter account

directed at Libya Outreach referencing the Situation Report led Libya Outreach to start sharing coordinates they had obtained of where Gadaffi forces were hiding weapons in the reports. It is believed that these coordinates were actually used by NATO to target weapon depots.<sup>13</sup>

In Libya, once the fighting had slowed down in the major cities, a small women focused organization, Voice of Libyan Women (VLW), organized its first conference. VLW was shaping into one of the most popular, and the most funded organization, to come out of the revolution. Its founder, Alaa Murabit, is a Saskatchewan born Libyan-Canadian who was in Libya studying medicine at a local University at the time of the revolution.

The conference was to bring together media, embassies, INGOs and other organizations. The British Embassy, European Union, United States Institute of Peace (USIP), and two of the largest business groups in Libya, The Husni Bey Group, and Al Hawari Import and Export were the main financial supporters. The conference was open to individual guests, and included prominent speakers such as Her Excellency Lady Catherin Ashton, Vice President of the European Commission, and the current and past Prime Ministers of Libya. One of the members of the organizing team shared:

“No, they (international NGOs) found us. We didn’t find anyone. What happened was we did the conference in November. Following that we had a lot of organizations working with us on a lot of issues that we need” (*Alia - VLW Representative*).

INGOs were looking for organizations to partner with in Libya. They were especially keen on working with organizations with visibility. VLW had already started to build a strong reputation in Libya prior to the One Voice conference by connecting to various embassies, and the transitional Libyan government early on. Murabit wrote articles for Canadian newspapers while still in Libya bringing attention to her cause. They soon became the ‘go-to’ women’s

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<sup>13</sup> Nato, Twitter and air strikes in Libya;  
<http://www.theguardian.com/help/insideguardian/2011/jun/15/nato-twitter-libya>

focused organization in Libya. In October 2011, VLW was one of a few organizations that met with then Secretary of State Hilary Clinton.<sup>14</sup> Even before the One Voice conference, VLW was being funded by various groups and had built a strong name for itself. INGOs were eager to partner up with VLW. As one informant shared:

“They (INGOs) want to be associated with successful organizations, and successful events that are going to get them some marketing. So in the end they can go back to their funders and say ‘look, look what we’re doing’” (*Donia – CSO Interview*).

In established fields, entrepreneurs typically attend networking events to build ties to various actors in their field that may provide them with the necessary resources to build their enterprise and achieve their goal. In a nascent field, institutional entrepreneurs create events to attract important actors that can help increase the size of their network and ultimately the field.

The first VLW conference was a critical event in the field’s development. Not only did it help VLW founders bring further attention to their organization and therefore expand their network, but it also instigated a new interest in activism, a shift from the previous focus on humanitarian aid. As one of the founders of VLW shared:

“And, the idea was, we would try to shift the focus from humanitarian to actual civil society work. It (the conference) would kind of kick-start women initiatives”.

And it did do just that. The conference represented what some referred to as a “glitzy”, “professional”, and “extravagant” event. At a time when those fighting had come home to no jobs, and those working on humanitarian projects were not needed anymore, the conference gave many attendants an opportunity to get involved in what appeared to be an attractive arena in the ‘new’ Libya. Representatives of some of the largest NGOs in the world and many key political

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<sup>14</sup> Clinton and Libyan Youth Share Views on Libya’s “New Era” - <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/article/2011/10/20111019134455nehpets0.4402887.html#axzz3nAhjFb4U>

actors from inside and outside of Libya were present in one of the most expensive hotels in Libya. The presence of the head of the NTC and the Prime Minister could not be ignored. As one of the conference attendees shared:

“Like Jibreel and Jalil (NTC heads, considered celebrities of the revolution) were in the same room for four hours. It was pretty awesome. Well a lot of the women said, ‘we need to start working hard and doing things’. So it did actually really kickstart a lot of women’s organizations” (*Elham - CSO Interview*).

Secondly, although this conference brought various actors from within the field and from adjacent and non-adjacent fields together, many voiced their anger at being excluded and labeled it as an “elitist” event used to “promote VLW” versus kick start the women movement in the “new Libya”. A group of women were so angry they were excluded from the conference, that they organized a protest outside the conference venue. One woman I interviewed shared the following description of the event:

“So you know the first conference that happened, back in November, the Voice of Libyan Women conference? I went to this conference. There’s a demonstration outside, basically women’s groups that wanted to come and they were like, you weren’t invited so you can’t come. So one of these women was like ‘Ok, you don’t want to invite me, well don’t call yourself the “Libyan women conference’’. So this whole hoopla happened. Cameras were there. One of my colleagues flew in to this conference and she got so emotional And she saw these women and she started crying. There was screaming, crying, cameras, it was crazy.” (*Donia – CSO Interview*)

Thus, while network enhancing activities within and across institutional fields was another key mechanism of radical institutional innovation, navigating the political terrain was complex and sometimes created unintended consequences.

## **6.2. Network Bridging**

The turn of events at the conference led to some animosity towards VLW and further marginalization of grassroots organizations. VLW, although continued to be a well-funded organization, lost the support of other actors in the field. The following year, as a means of reconciling this, VLW held its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual One Voice Conference. This time it partnered with a number of grassroots organizations to develop the conference, opened registration for anyone affiliated with an organization that was doing relevant work, and used various activists from different organizations across Libya as speakers. This collaboration between organizations was not seen in my prior visits. The 2<sup>nd</sup> VLW conference seemed to pave the way for collaboration, as it was the largest event that brought together the various CSOs across Libya. The sponsors funded the travel for two representatives from each organization. The conference had a large focus on collaboration and working together. There were a number of breakout sessions where representatives from the different organizations would join together to discuss various topics and plans. VLW had become not only an institutional broker, but also an organizational broker as it now connected otherwise unconnected organizations within the field.

VLW was not the only organization that was able to connect organizations within the network that was being formed. Other institutional brokers were well positioned to bridge various actors in the field. More specifically, institutional brokers became the bridge between INGOs and grassroots organizations.

Institutional brokers were able to access the INGOs through their already existing networks. They were also well received by INGOs as they shared similar attributes such as language spoken, and an understanding of the role of civil society, and key capabilities such as financial planning, and marketing. Institutional brokers were already on social media sites such

as Facebook and Twitter before these sites became popular in Libya, and they had developed ties with media outlets early on. These proved very important as they were channels to find the INGOs that were providing funding.

This was not the case for many of the grassroots organizations in rural areas, and even in the major cities. I found that the INGOs started to use institutional brokers as a way to connect and find the grassroots organizations that otherwise would have been impossible to find. As one manager from a U.S based INGO shared:

“A lot of them have the network and, rather than reinvent the wheel, we do things through workshops, and we’ll announce a workshop and ask some of organizations we know to go out and find others that may be interested. Sometimes I even make a rule that they need to bring with them one new organization that has not been to our workshop yet. And they do that. We can’t! So when we have them together, and they sit there, and there is a presentation, and then they start asking questions, and voicing the grievances they have, the difficulties and the pressures they have and then, suggestions come. This one tells you he has some experience, and this is the solution. And then they, like magic, during the breaks, you see them all together, sitting together, discussing, planning” (*Linda – INGO interview*).

Institutional brokers not only create new ties between CSOs in the field and INGOs, but through this process they also strengthen their ties with these CSOs, therefore creating a new channel of possible knowledge transfer. Hatem, who was a British-Libyan working for a Danish INGO referred to these brokering CSOs as “good CSOs”. He also shared similar thoughts to those shared by Linda:

“We need to raise the capacity of these good CSOs that worked and have access to these areas, to work with the grassroots. This helps in two ways – it bridges the gap and it’s like, it makes you reach to the grassroots, who cannot write maybe, who cannot get to the government, who cannot communicate with the donors. Although they have great ideas maybe, but we cannot reach them, they cannot reach you, so, these are the ways that I am thinking about to get the organizations themselves to go and talk to them, and bring the ideas, and bring them together, and fill the momentum to learn”. – (Hatem – INGO)

This network bridging was vital as it provided grassroots CSOs who were doing great work, in areas that were in great need of CSOs, to survive. The INGOs were located in the major cities of Tripoli, Benghazi, and a few in Misrata. These cities tend to be more progressive in terms of women's rights and empowerment, and there was access to funding, if not through the INGOs, then through large businesses.

However, the organizations in the more rural areas were being sustained by volunteers, many were using their own money to fund their projects. Members of one of these organizations that I interviewed from Yefren, a small mountain region of Libya, shared how they felt alienated and marginalized by all the activity that was happening in Tripoli. They felt they were being forgotten. One nurse, Naila, told me how she started off delivering food to the fighters and after the war she started an organization focused on children with special needs. She became very emotional when she mentioned how she sold her car to pay for things like registration of her organization and some small projects her organization developed in Yefren. She wanted to be involved in civil society but she shared how she couldn't afford it anymore. "They (INGOs) want a proposal, I can't write a proposal in English. What am I suppose to do?" A year later I met Naila again at a CSO workshop. She was working with a branch of VLW in the mountain regions. I asked her about her organization: "I'm not doing that, but I'm working with VLW and learning a lot. Maybe I'll go back and do that soon. That's my dream".

### **6.3. Outcomes of Network Cultivation**

Networks create bridging ties between a focal organization and contacts in economic, professional and social circles that otherwise would not be accessible (McEvily & Zaheer, 1999). Institutional brokers bring to the emerging field a small network that they leverage to build the field. However as resources become depleted, these networks are further cultivated. The outcome

of this cultivation results in both network level and organizational level outcomes. At the network level, the network strategy observed introduces more nodes (individual actors or organizations), thus increasing its size. It also strengthens the ties (relationships or interactions) between the nodes, allowing for more collaboration. At an organizational level, benefits include increased legitimacy via the ties, and access to funding, knowledge, and the introduction of new institutional entrepreneurs.

### ***6.3.1. Network Level Outcomes***

The two processes discussed above - network enhancing and networking bridging, lead to two network related effects, expansion of the network (a size dimension) by creating ties outside the field, and enhancing the network quality, by building and enhancing new ties within the field (a strength dimension).

*Creating Ties Outside the Field – Expanding the Network (Size).* Individuals and organizations outside of the emerging field play significant roles during the initial phases of institutional innovation, as they are typically located in fields with strong institutional elements, abundant resources, and legitimacy. Institutional brokers leverage their position to build ties with these actors. From a resource dependency perspective, in environments characterized by institutional voids, these connections help acquire critical resources and reduce uncertainty (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Consistent with entrepreneurship research, when building a new venture, entrepreneurs use a stock of social capital from friends, family members, and other relationships or ties that may have come about through work, previous businesses, etc. (Elfring & Hulsink, 2003; Grandi & Grimaldi, 2003). These contacts bring much support for entrepreneurs, however entrepreneurs

eventually require resource that cannot be satisfied by their existing network contacts (Hite & Hesterly, 2001; Larson & Starr, 1983). To access these much needed resources, entrepreneurs expand their network to include additional contacts from outside the field (Batjargal, 2003; Lee & Tsang, 2001). This typically leads to a cascade effect where network connections, lead to more network connections and so on.

For example, VLW initially was connected to a few INGOs that had entered Libya. These connections led to a substantial amount of funding that allowed VLW to create successful events, such as the conference, a women's sewing center, Purple Hijab Day, and the Zawia Women's Center and NGO Hub for Education and Empowerment. These projects led to a great deal of media attention that led the founder, Alaa Murabit, to become the go-to person for anything related to women's rights. Her speaking engagements in the past three years include, a number of TedX talks, the Oslo Freedom Forum, the Oprah Winfrey Foundation, and the United Nations. At each of these events, Ms. Murabit continues to expand her network, bringing in continuous support for her organization.

*Creating Ties Within the Field - network strength.* Granovetter (1985) notes that organizations are embedded in a wide variety of networks that both constrain their actions and provide them with opportunities to achieve their goals. These networks can create opportunities for cooperation through developing trust, commitments between network parties, and providing for opportunities for organizations to achieve their goals (Larson, 1992). The ties forming within the field between individuals and organizations would lead the way to collaborations that set the stage for the final phase observed in the radical institutional innovation process in Libya.

Collaborations are many times a way to develop new solutions to complex problems and bring about changes to institutional fields (Lawrence, et al., 2002). As ties between organizations

get stronger, so does an awareness of involvement for a common purpose. A common purpose brings organizations together so that they may mobilize their collective resources and diffuse any developing institutional elements beyond their immediate field. Collaboration is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.

### ***6.3.2. Organizational Level Outcomes***

Networks provide individuals and organizations with access to knowledge, resources, markets, and technologies (Inkpen & Tsang, 2005). In emerging fields situated in institutional voids, there are minimal networks for entrepreneurs to leverage. Whereas institutional entrepreneurs interested in institutional change work to construct normative associations in already existing networks and organizational fields (Garud, Jain, & Kumaraswamy, 2002; Lounsbury et al., 2003; Podolny, 2001), institutional brokers are concerned with building strategic partnerships and connections with actors, organizations, and institutions in adjacent and nonadjacent fields. This network cultivating process leads to the accumulation of social capital, “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (Bourdieu, 1985: 248). In the entrepreneurship literature, social capital has been found to directly impact performance by providing entrepreneurs access to information, financial capital, emotional, legitimacy, and competitive capabilities (Florin, Lubatkin, & Schulze, 2003; McEvily & Zaheer, 1999; Stam & Elfring, 2008). I focus on three outcomes of the development of social capital through network expansion and enhancement; legitimacy through affiliation, competitive capabilities, and new institutional entrepreneurs. Finally, an additional outcome of this process is

a network effect selection, where organizations that do not participate in these networks building strategies are selected out of the field.

*Legitimacy through Affiliation.* A large stream of network research looks at the role of network ties as informational cues about actors sharing the tie. Podolny (1993) argues that high status is derived from affiliations with other high-status actors. Affiliations with prominent institutions and actors can yield beneficial consequences for organizations and actors in the field by enhancing their status and thus perceiving them as more legitimate. Ideas can also become legitimate, popular and even taken for granted as a result of having been adopted by certain actors in the field (Tolber & Zucker, 1983; Westphal, Gulati, & Shortell, 1977). Neo-institutional theory emphasizes the importance of gaining legitimacy through ties to gatekeepers or higher status players in the organizational field (Baum & Oliver, 1996). Baum and Oliver (1992) show that by establishing ties to prominent organizations within their community, day care centers can enhance their legitimacy in the eyes of potential consumers. Similarly, Stuart, Hoang, and Hybels (1999) show that biotechnology firms affiliated with venture capital firms are more likely to be acquired. Organizations use these ties to build legitimacy.

For example, the Canadian Libyan Council posted the following on their Facebook page:

**Figure 10: Facebook post from the CLC – Meeting Names**



In Figure 11 the Canadian Libyan Council is seeking input for their meeting, however instead of just stating what are the important issues to be addressed with government officials and NGOs, they emphasize the names of the reputable and powerful organizations and individuals they are meeting. The exclamation mark at the end of the sentence further emphasizes the importance of those attending the meeting.

**Figure 10: Facebook Post from the CLC – Parliamentary Mention**



In Figure 10, the mentioning of the organization in a government debate on the mission is shared with all their followers. The Canadian Libyan Council emailed a similar announcement to their mailing list and included it in their 2011 Annual Report. These examples illustrate the role of legitimacy through affiliation as an outcome of the development of network expansion and enhancement.

*Competitive Capabilities.* Although one of the most direct outcomes of networks for both institutional brokers and other actors in the field is material resources, such as funding, networks also provide the network actors, those participating in the network, other sources of competitive

advantage. Formation of networks enables ideas and institutional building blocks to flow.

Networks create access to knowledge for the network actors (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Gargiulo & Benassi, 2000; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). The ties that organizations and actors have with other firms allow the members of the network to be exposed to various types of valuable knowledge. Thus the larger and stronger network can help facilitate learning via the transfer of knowledge (Inkpen & Tsang, 2005).

Networks also represent an informational advantage (Gulati, 1999). Organizations benefit from having a network of knowledgeable contacts that can provide reliable sources of information and enhance their capabilities. Inkpen and Tsang (2005) argue that ties within a network can lead to network learning and can create a locus for new innovations. Lawyers for Justice in Libya (LFJL) is an organization comprised of international lawyers living in the diaspora and in Libya. Their ‘About Me’ section on their website states<sup>15</sup>:

### **Figure 12: About Me Section of LFJL Website**

Collectively, LFJL’s members have expertise in international human rights law, the law of armed conflict, international arbitration, transitional justice, corporate law, finance law, and oil and gas law.

The team of six members works in five cities, speaks six languages, and is qualified in seven jurisdictions. It includes graduates from the University of Oxford, the Sorbonne, the London School of Economics, University of California, Berkeley, Cairo University, and Stanford University. All members hold post-graduate degrees in law. LFJL also maintains a growing network of talented Libyan lawyers, currently in excess of 60 lawyers, working on the ground across all regions in Libya.

LFJL became an important partner for many CSOs given their expertise. Although they were a small group, they had the experience and knowledge to assist many of the organizations with maneuvering around the legal landscape in Libya. They were also key players in all regulatory-based discussions such as constitution building, bylaws, and civil society laws.

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<sup>15</sup> Lawyers for Justice in Libya ‘About Me’ Page: <http://www.libyanjustice.org/about-us/who-we-are>

*New Institutional Entrepreneurs.* Another outcome of network cultivation is new institutional entrepreneurs. Research has explored why individuals participate in collective action. The social movement literature points to existing grievances or pro-movement values and attitudes. However, these attributes may be present without collective action occurring (Tilly, Tilly, & Tilly, 1975; Tilly, 1979). Critical is whether those holding grievances become organized and mobilized (Tilly, 1978) and to do so, researchers have argued that it is contact with an agent of recruitment, or a network tie, that distinguishes those who participate in collective action and those who choose not to participate (McAdam, 1986; Tindall, 2002). Network cultivation creates more contact with individuals in adjacent fields in Libya that are recruited as institutional entrepreneurs to build the field. These individuals end up connecting with strong nodes of the network with resources and power and are therefore positively influenced to join the cause.

*Network Selection Effect.* A final outcome of network cultivation is network selection effect. Given the resource scarcity in the field, the organizations being established in Libya were forced to give up some autonomy and develop formal types of collaborations with the INGOs to gain better access to critical resources. Some of these organizations found this worthwhile, while others gave up quickly. Those organizations that were not able to anchor themselves in the network had a hard time surviving past the first year post-revolution.

“Over 2000 civil society organizations were registered within the first year of the revolution, now, there may be 100, 200 max that are still here. They ran out of money, the volunteers went back to their work, they got tired. Some just aren’t cut out for this work, they were caught in the moment, others, just didn’t know who to go to” (Pierre – UNDP).

Throughout my research I followed all the Libyan CSO organizations on Facebook and Twitter that I could find. During the first year, most of the CSOs I was following were posting weekly, if not daily. This started to decrease with time. By the time my data collection phase was

completed, only 17 of the 43 organizations were still active on Facebook, and of the 17, only 8 were posting more than once a week. These 8 were organizations I had initially labeled as institutional broker based organizations. Thus, those organizations that fail to be successful at network cultivation may be selected

#### **6.4. Conclusion**

Network cultivation creates larger and stronger networks for institutional brokers to disseminate their work. To build on the networks they may already have, brokers participate in network enhancing activities and bridging with other institutional brokers. This dynamic also creates individual and organizational level outcomes. By affiliating themselves with powerful actors brokers create legitimacy by affiliation. This leads to competitive capabilities for the brokers. Finally, as the network expands it touches new individuals and organizations that are not participating in institutional innovation. Those individuals and organizations that do not become associated with the network tend to be selected out.

## CHAPTER 7: FINDINGS - COLLABORATIVE TRANSMISSION

How do micro-level interactions gain sufficient collective agreement to spur change? In institutional voids, do actors build institutions based on individual agency or do they mobilize collectively? The institutional entrepreneurship, and recent institutional work, has focused our attention on individual action (Battilana et al., 2009; Hwang & Powell, 2005; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Maguire, Hardy & Maguire, 2008). Whereas a few key entrepreneurs can spearhead change in relatively simple fields where actors are highly coordinated and institutional innovation is relatively incremental (Dorado, 2005), radical institutional innovation involves sometimes highly diverse interest, perspectives, and stakeholders. In line with what social movement scholars have stressed (Schneiberg & Lawrence, 2008), this type of innovation requires collective action by a wide group of actors on the basis of mutual interests (Emery & Trist, 1965; Marwell & Oliver, 1993).

During my first two visits to Libya, I noted how most organizations were working on their own. Even when it came to projects or causes that were very similar, and in a context where resources were incredibly scarce, there was little collaboration, or even communication, between the various organizations and stakeholders. When I probed respondents about collaboration during these visits, responses included:

“No, not a lot of collaborations. We talk to each other but little joint efforts. But sometimes I know some will approach us for stuff and we’ll steer them in the right direction. But that’s about it” (*Ahmed – CSO interview*).

When asked whether her organization collaborated with other organizations during my first visit, Anisa from a women’s CSO shared:

“We don’t like collaborations. Can I say that? We don’t mind collaborating if the other organization is willing to do the work they promised to do. But that’s hard to find in Libya”.

During my final visit to Libya, I spoke with Anisa again, I knew she was working with a number of other organizations on the constitution recommendations. This time she shared:

“We started to collaborate more because I think for us it was very much seeing which other organizations will last, which organizations can we work with, and which ones are doing things which represent, or are doing things we are OK with”.

This led me to explore how did collaboration begin in Libya. In Libya, I found that collaboration was preceded by a *Not Invented Here Syndrome* that propelled the need for collaboration.

### **7.1 Not Invented Here Syndrome**

Not invented here (NIH) syndrome is a mindset that favours internally-developed products over those developed outside the organization (Katz & Allen, 1982, Kanter, 1983; Chesbrough, 2006). The concept stems from the open innovation literature. Organizations participating in open innovation strategies bring in innovative ideas from outside the organizations. Those inside the organization may reject externally generated knowledge. The introduction of externally generated technologies can be significantly hindered by internal resistance if the group receiving the technology feels that their identity is being challenged by the external knowledge or the associated group (Katz & Allen, 1982).

I found that the positional advantage of brokers also created functional disadvantages and an NIH effect was observed. Institutional brokers started to lose their popularity as animosity started to develop toward “New Libyans”, those who were thought to have ‘newly found their nationalism’, and “double SIM card Libyans”, similar to a phone that takes SIM cards from more than one mobile carrier.

These feelings developed for a number of reasons, including the new surge of Libyan expatriates who had come back to Libya hoping to secure jobs after the war. Many of these individuals were educated in reputable universities abroad, and spoke fluent English. These “new Libyans” were seen as stealing jobs from Libyans who had not had the same experience. Marwan, an electrical engineer who was working in a clothing retailer voiced another sentiment that I heard from a number of people while I was in Libya; “they didn’t suffer like us. And now when things are good, they want to come back here and run the show”. This was especially voiced towards Ministers and the elected Prime Minister who had been living outside of Libya during the revolution. Comments on Facebook with these grievances were ample. On a popular Facebook page, Marbo3a, the following comment was directed towards what was considered double Sim card Ministers:

“He (Prime Minister El Keeb) failed. He failed because he knows nothing about us. He hasn’t been Libyan for decades”.

At a small conference on violence against women, things became very heated, when one of the speakers, a Libyan-American, introduced herself in Arabic, and then said she would continue her presentation in English as she is more comfortable with English when it came to academic discussions. The venue had professional translators and had equipped the audience with headsets to listen to any translations. When she was finished, a woman from a grassroots CSO took the microphone to ask a question. Instead she angrily pointed out: “This is a Libyan conference, if you cannot address the audience in Arabic, then you do not belong here”. Most of the participants applauded her remark.

Many of the organizations I refer to as institutional brokers fit the “new Libya” and/or “double SIM” definition and were therefore facing barriers when it came to the public. During my second visit I asked my sister-in-law to introduce me to some of her friends. I wanted to

understand how those not involved in any CSOs, but were still aware of the work being done, whether through other friends, or social media, viewed the dynamics. One woman, Ibtihal, shared with me her opinion on the situation;

“I think they (the ‘50’) are getting the rest of the people in civil society to do the donkey work for them. They get the publicity, and media coverage, and you know, the trips abroad, and handshakes with the ambassadors, and so on, and the real work is done by the locals, you know, the society on the ground” (*Ibtihal – Public Interview*).

The grievance she shared was one shared by many in the general public. However, organizations within the field were eager to learn from institutional brokers and leverage their resources in order to survive within the slowly shrinking field.

Research in knowledge transfer has shown similar findings. Tung and Lazarova (2006) looked at the skill transfer of nationals who had returned home after spending some time working or studying abroad. They found that the failure to connect with colleagues in their home country prevents returnees’ from transferring skills in their home country. Recently, Wang (2014) looked at how skilled return migrants acting as cross-border brokers, transfer knowledge about organizational practices from abroad to their home countries. Home-country embeddedness and host-country embeddedness, or the extent to which returnees were integrated in the workplace and other professional activities while at home or abroad, gave returnees different advantages as cross-border brokers. High home country embeddedness meant that the returnee had more familiarity with local practices and values and therefore helps them effectively recognize opportunities for knowledge transfer. It also instills greater trust in the relationships between returnees and their home country coworkers. Chen (2007) however argues that most returnees are weak brokers as they are not deeply embedded in either the foreign or home

networks or they are deeply embedded in one at the expense of the other. Many of the institutional brokers I talked to were aware of the resentment towards them. Some shrugged it off, but others started to use their networks to build collaborations with other institutional brokers and grassroots organizations. This led to collaborative transmission, which I will now discuss.

## **7.2. Collaborative Transmission**

“It was awesome. Did you see it? We all worked together. It wasn’t just one of us. No one can point and say it’s a bunch of girls for this cause. No, this is real. You have an issue with us, you’re going to have to fight all of us (laughing)” (Abi – CSO Interview).

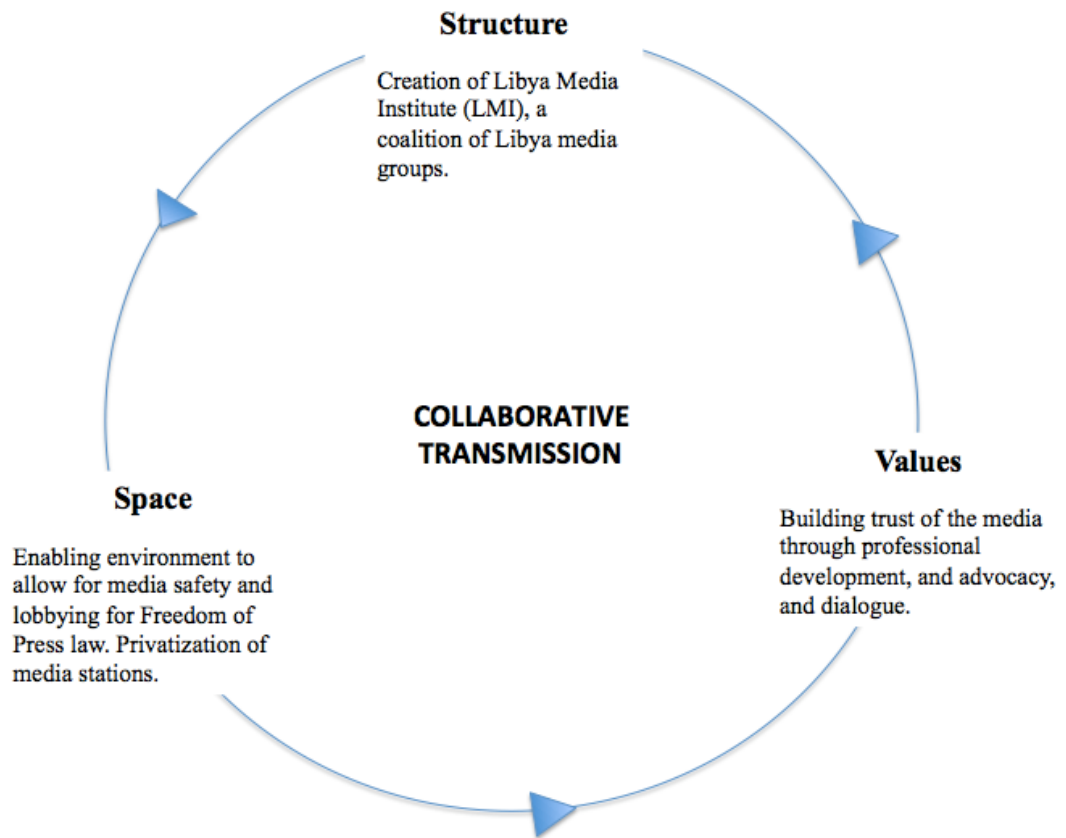
The ability of institutional entrepreneurs to bring about change also depends on their ability to mobilize constituents (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996, Rao & Giorgi, 2006). Institutional brokers *mobilize* by exploiting their position via the legitimacy they have created in the previous two phases and building collaborations with key allies. Their knowledge of the practices, working culture, and discourses of the fields they are embedded in allows them to convince other parties to join in accomplishing their vision (Rao & Giorgi, 2006). Radical institutional innovation requires support, and therefore actors must mobilize allies (Fligstein, 1997; Greenwood et al., 2002) and cultivate alliances and cooperation (Fligstein, 2001; Lawrence, Phillip, & Hardy, 2002) through collaboration. Collaboration is the cooperative, interorganizational relationship that is negotiated in an ongoing communicative process and that relies on neither market nor hierarchical mechanisms of control (Lawrence et al., 2002). The collaborations within the emerging field help build a sustainable coalition and interactions that create common understandings and practices that form the institutions that define the field

(Lawrence et al., 2002). Additionally, collaborations can lead to the mobilization of political and regulatory support resulting in protection of the field.

Similarly, the innovation literature has shown that collaboration enhances organizational learning (Hamel, 1991; Dodgson, 1993), allows for new entrants into a field (Powell et al., 1996), and improve creativity, innovation and performance (Gulati & Sytch, 2007; Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2000). Thus, collaboration is a means of transmitting institutional elements beyond the broker organization and its network, while also creating an environment conducive for further innovative ideas.

The civil society dimensions put forward by Anheier (2013) provide a useful backdrop for understanding the mechanism of collaborative transmission. The three dimensions representing the components of civil society; structure, space, and values, are characteristics of a field. Institutional brokers collaborated with other organizations, including other broker organizations and grassroots organizations to create new *structures* in the emerging field. The structures created were more powerful with greater resources and clout and were therefore able to have more influence to create new *space*. Finally, the space provided a context for the discussion, negotiation, and development of values related to the norms embodying the space. Figure 13 illustrates the collaborative transmission dynamic using an illustrative example with Libya's media groups, an important group of organizations in civil society according to a number of civil society scholars (Anhier, 2013; Hann & Dunn, 1996; Siever, 2010).

**FIGURE 13: Collaborative Transmission Dynamic**



Media groups in Libya were running into a number of problems by the end of the revolution. They lacked professional training for the most part, had little funding, and were operating in an unwelcoming environment given the historical context of media in Libya as it was all state controlled prior to the revolution. Therefore it was difficult for media stations to approach the public for information. This was partly due to the volatile situation in Libya even post-revolution. People still feared for their lives given the ever-growing presence of militia and newly formed radical political groups. However, much of the fear stemmed from the oppression instilled by the Gadaffi regime when it came to freedom of politics. There was a number of situations when I was not allowed to record my interviews for this study. Amina, was one of the

interviewees who refused to be recorded. When I asked her why, she responded that a Gadaffi official once interrogated her and it was recorded and she had a fear of being recorded ever since. Media stations at various events I attended were also constantly being refused requests to interview subjects.

To exasperate this situation, many of the media stations post revolution were not funded. A few had strong financial backing from countries like Qatar, but local bred stations were based in small make shift studios, and run by people who had a passion for journalism, photography, or had nothing else to do. This of course made it very difficult for these groups to report to the public in a timely and professional manner. The public was quickly losing trust for these organizations that had once been their only source of information during the fighting.

This led to the creation of the Libya Media Institute (LMI). A coalition of media groups that could share best practices, resources, and bring some structure to the media sector. This collaboration created a new non-profit organization that brought together already existing media organizations.

This new structure was used for lobbying efforts to build a Committee for Supporting and Encouraging the Press. Gaining support from international organizations, such as MedMedia, a European Union funded program, the LMI has more power to push politicians to create laws that will help provide support for these media groups. Through a Media Coordination Strategy, the LMI is also expanding its space. Recognition that business partners are important to bring in resources has pushed media stations to transition from completely non-profit or state dependent models to hybrid forms where wealthy business-men in Libya can provide the needed funding for training and equipment. This is an example of a transformation of space related to media organizations where business-civil society relationships have developed.

These collaborations and the spaces they create are important in building values and norms in Libya's civil society pertaining to media. The coordinated effort of members of a collective creates common ground to develop shared meanings and practices (van Wij, Stam, Elfring, Zietsma, & den Hond, 2013). The LMI created a small working group to participate in the constitution drafting process. This was to ensure that freedom of expression and operation of the media was included as the constitution was being built.

“We all came in with different things we wanted to see written in the constitution that had to do with us (media groups). It was interesting to see what other groups had to say. Some wanted funding, but of course that's not constitution stuff... what we all agreed on was freedom to do our job. To tell the news” (Atef, *AlWatan Media Group*).

This collective value, as shared by Atef, develops through discussion, tensions, debates, and is framed by the legal, social and economic space the collaborations are set in. This leads to a set of values that represent the groups in the field. A similar process was seen with women rights based organizations.

### **7.3. Conclusion**

Radical institutional innovation involves diverse groups, perspectives, and stakeholders, even though they may all be working towards the same cause. Actors must come together on the basis of mutual interests for institutionalization to occur.

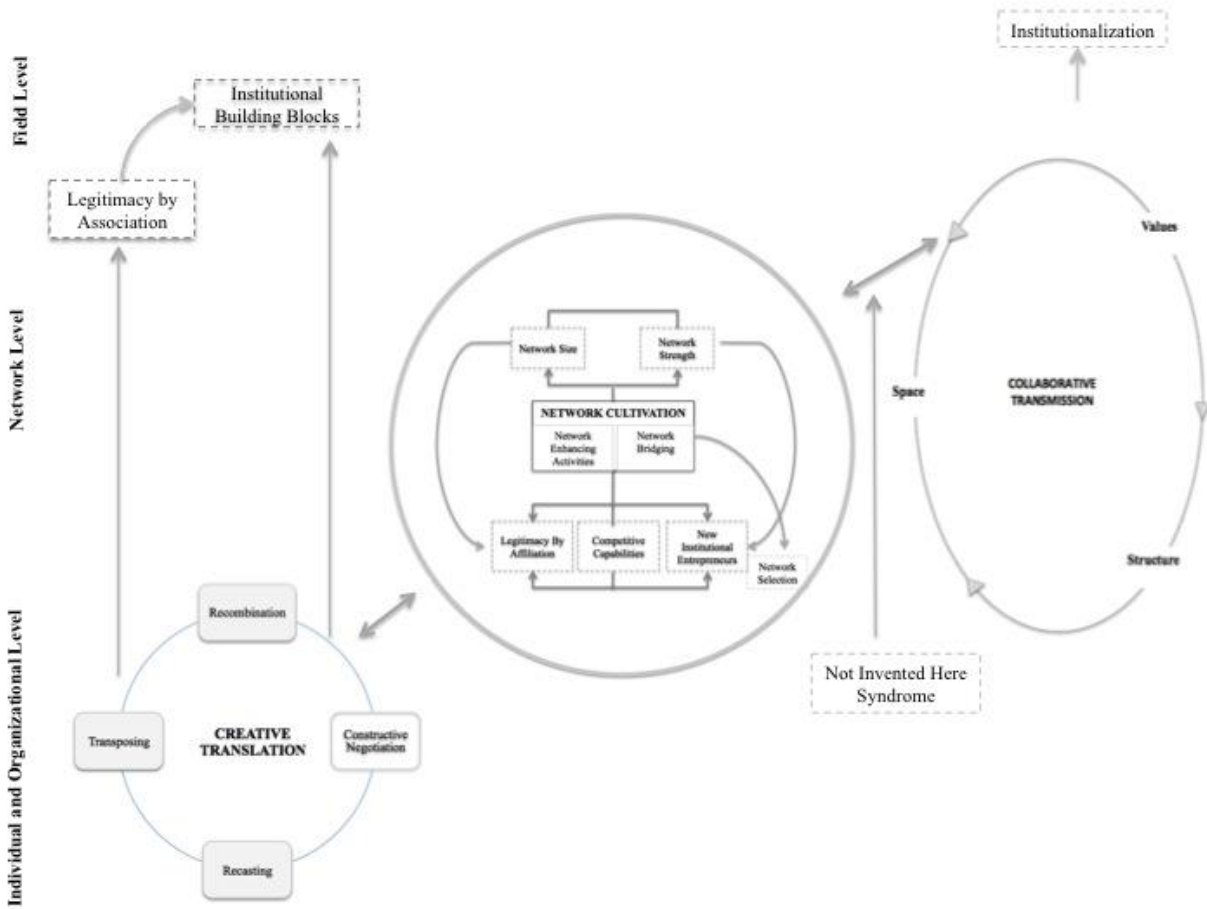
In this final dynamic, the result of a *not invented here* mindset propelled institutional brokers to collaborate with actors outside of the network to mobilize support for the innovation. This meant working with like-minded organizations to generate new structures. These structures created new relationships and frameworks that govern the space these organizations are in. Through this space, shared meanings and practices are slowly developed and can begin to be

institutionalized. These values can also feedback into the structures that already exist, further embedding them in the organizations.

## **CHAPTER 8: RADICAL INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION - A MULTILEVEL FRAMEWORK**

Institutional innovation aims to introduce formal institutions, such as rules, laws, and organizations, as well as informal or tacit institutions such as individual habits, norms, and practices. Institutional brokers are well positioned to carry out this process through their connections and experiences in established fields. The three dynamics discussed were observed as distinct processes however my experiences from the field point to an iterative and interactive process where the three dynamics are connected and feed into each other but also provided outcomes that looped back. Figure 14 integrates the three dynamics.

FIGURE 14: Multilevel Framework of Radical Institutional Innovation



## 8.1. Overview of the Model

The model illustrates a multi-level analysis of the phases, as what was seen in Libya was truly a ground-up approach to radical institutional innovation. The radical institutional innovation process happens at different levels of analysis, yet the various micro-processes lead to field-level innovation, which in affect feed into other micro-level processes. I now explicate the relations between the dynamics.

In the creative translation phase new ideas and practices start to originate in the field. Here the field is at its most nascent level. Organizations are just starting to emerge and there is little or no regulatory framework that is present to direct these organizations. Processes, procedures, and practices are non-existent, and no one organization dominates the field as they are all new. Those outside the field, and some within the field, do not understand its purpose or what logics surround it. At the start of the process, institutional brokers creatively translate institutional elements from fields they are familiar with into the emerging civil society field in Libya. New ideas and practices start to form in the field. This is done through a process of *bricolage* (shaded boxes) that leverages already existing elements they have access to by *recombining*, *transposing*, and *recasting* them to fit with the new field. The bricolage process connotes the resourcefulness of the institutional brokers, and their ability to improvise as they co-shaped the field. These three mechanisms of bricolage are part of a transformation process that takes place as resource constrained institutional brokers draw from the resources leveraged from other institutional fields they belong to. Through a process of *creative negotiation*, new solutions for the field are also created. This process creates institutional building blocks and organizations, that as a collective, start to bring some structure to the field. The bricolage process

also helps create legitimacy by assimilation as elements of the transformation are recognized given they are made from recognizable elements of life in Libya.

In the second phase of the process institutional brokers develop and grow the network they work in through a process of *network cultivation* that involves *network enhancing activities* and *network bridging*. Institutional brokers took part in a strategic and conscious effort to both increase the size of their networks and the quality of the network. By creating events that bring positive attention to the small existing network, institutional brokers were able to provoke the attention of important stakeholders so that they could become part of their network. They also build relationships with those already in their network, thus strengthening the ties between them. Network cultivation was found to lead to outcomes at two different levels. At the network level, the network size and strength are enhanced. At the individual and organizational level, network cultivation creates legitimacy by affiliation, competitive capabilities for the brokers, and new institutional entrepreneurs. There is also a network selection effect, where individuals and organizations that do not become associated with the networks that are developing tend to be selected out.

Finally, as a result of a *not invented here* mindset where other actors in the field start to question the legitimacy of institutional brokers, institutional brokers collaborate with actors outside of the network to mobilize support for the innovation. Although institutional brokers are able to introduce organizational and institutional building blocks through transformation and network building, for innovation to happen at the institutional level, a broad spectrum of actors and stakeholders across the field need to get on board. Ties are made in the network cultivation dynamics, however little collaboration has occurred and any results of collaboration have yet to reach beyond the boundaries of that specific relationship. By co-structuring the field with those

that are deeply embedded in the environment, institutional elements gain the support needed so that they can be institutionalized. This part of the process relies on distributed agency where the emergence of a new field cannot be attributed to any one individual actor. Although institutional brokers initiate and lead the process, the development of the field involves efforts of a multiplicity of actors. This is done through the creation of new structures, spaces and values through collaborations with like-minded organizations.

These dynamics are related and can at times be sequential and iterative, as the outcomes of the dynamics can feed into other dynamics and also feedback into the process at earlier phases.

Referring back to the civil society diamond discussed in Chapter 2, elements of civil society can now be seen in Libya, where they did not exist before. Table 7 presents the outcomes of institutional innovation in Libya at the time data collection seized using Anheier's (2013) four-dimension framework. This conceptualization of civil society according to four dimensions is useful, not just for civil society, but institutional fields in general.

**TABLE 7: Civil Society Diamond for Libya**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Elements</b>	<b>Elements Pertaining to Libya</b>	<b>Illustrative Example</b>
<b>Structure</b>	Breadth and depth of citizen participation; diversity within civil society; level of organisation; inter-relations; resources.	Philanthropic organizations, nonprofit and voluntary organizations,	Less than ten registered CSOs prior to the revolution to over 2000 as of January 2012.
<b>Space</b>	Political context; basic freedoms and rights; socioeconomic context; socio-cultural context; legal environment; state-civil society relations; private sector-civil society relations.	Ministry of Civil Society and Cultural Affairs, Civil Society Law	Civil Society Law developed by a network of CSOs, lawyers, Ministry of Civil Society, and the United Nations. The legislation contains 22 articles governing the protection of CSOs, their boundaries, and regulations.
<b>Values</b>	Democracy; transparency; tolerance; non-violence; gender equity; poverty eradication; environmental sustainability.	Women empowerment Civil society culture	Pictures of women candidates on billboards and signs during the first elections were blackened out. By the time parliamentary elections took place there were women candidates and their pictures on large billboards and Facebook profiles with less opposition.
<b>Impact</b>	Influencing public policy; holding state and private corporations accountable; responding to social interests; empowering citizens; meeting societal needs.	Influencing election policy on the representation of women on ballots	Inclusion of women in parliamentary vote (17%)

The structural dimension represents the actors, organizations, and resources that make up civil society. Although at the end of data collection there was little in terms of funding and

resources, the number of organizations and individuals active in civil society is unprecedented. The second dimension, space, pertains to the political, socio-economic, cultural and legal context of civil society. Here we see the establishment of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Civil Society, which did not exist prior to the revolution, and the development of a number of legal frameworks, including a Civil Society Law that governs the CSOs in Libya. The values dimension refers to the values civil society represents and advocates. Here we see progress in terms of women rights and inclusion in the political landscape. The inauguration of women to parliament is a step, although small, towards tolerance of women candidates was observed within the data collection timeframe. Finally, the impact dimension looks at the contributions of civil society. One of the most tangible direct influences of the work of civil society in Libya is the women led movement to change the electoral law that would make the women names on the election ballots more visible. This strategy led to a 17% women demographic in parliament. This number is higher than some European Union countries.

## **8.2. Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the overall multilevel framework of radical institutional innovation. My data pointed to three separate dynamics emerging from Libya, however these dynamics were also connected in a process that was linear at times, but also iterative and interactive. Outcomes from one dynamic many times fed into the next. At times, some of the micro-dynamics such as recombination and transposing were also seen in other dynamics.

The outcomes of radical institutional innovation led to the development of new structures that did not exist before. In Libya, this included new organizations, coalitions, and government bodies. We also saw the creation of a space for these structures to operate in. This space is governed by newly formed legal frameworks, and a sense of civil society culture. Radical

institutional innovation also introduces new values in the field. In Libya, women rights and the freedom of the press are just a few examples of norms and beliefs that are starting to emerge that embody the values of civil society. Finally, we starting to see the impact of the presence of civil society in Libya less than two years post revolution. CSOs worked hard to not only build the field, but acted to create tangible outcomes of their work that had great impact nation wide.

## **CHAPTER 9: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

### **9.1 Discussion**

This study sought to shed light on the process of radical institutional innovation and the actors involved in the process. To do this, I investigate the creation of civil society in Libya during and post the revolution of 2011. I illustrate the void in civil society in Libya prior to the revolution, and through an ethnographic approach in data collection, show how a new field was created from this void. Institutional innovation is a context dependent social process and thus the ethnographic approach is fitting as it emphasizes the experiential, with an approach to knowledge that is both contextual and interpersonal. The resulting framework stresses a multilevel perspective as the framework involves actors and capabilities at different levels of analysis, and relationships that span the different levels.

I found that in contexts of institutional voids, like that seen in Libya, a special kind of institutional entrepreneur is involved in radical institutional innovation. These entrepreneurs have a unique characteristic about them that was an outcome of two dimensions of their positions; a spatial dimension and a cognitive dimension. These actors are positioned in the emerging field, but are also embedded in adjacent and non-adjacent fields that had established civil societies. I label these actors institutional brokers, as they connect otherwise unconnected institutional fields. Institutional brokers are critical actors in the emerging field. They are able to build on their networks and use their resources from established fields to help create a new field. These individuals do not suffer from a liability of foreignness like the international organizations present in Libya, as they are familiar with the context and share similar backgrounds with other actors in the field. They also do not suffer from a liability of institutional newness, as did the grassroots organizations in Libya, as they had experience working in similar fields. Institutional

brokers became critical actors in the emergence of civil society in Libya and were the focus of this dissertation.

The process institutional brokers partake in can be divided into three dynamics which I illustrate in Figure 14. The framework developed illustrates the mechanisms by which these institutional brokers bring about innovation and how their social position mediates their relation to the environment in which they are embedded, and drives their access to the resources and capabilities that support innovation.

## **9.2. Contributions to Theory and Practice**

This research aims to contribute to our theoretical and practical understanding of how radical institutional innovation emerges. It also sheds light on a type of actor that is critical for the process coined institutional brokers, and how they successfully innovate and build an institutional field through creative translation, network cultivation, and collaborative transmission.

This study offers a number of contributions to the existing literature on innovation and institutional theory, and has implications for theory, policy and practice.

### ***9.2.1. Contributions to Innovation Research***

This study makes several contributions to the existing literature on innovation. First, this research looks at innovation at the institutional level versus the individual and organizational level that is common in this stream of research. We know a great deal about individual creativity and what leads to various types of individual level and organizational level innovation, however, macro-level societal innovation has been sidelined in the innovation research. Perhaps this is

because innovation researchers have left this to those interested in institutional theory. However, the constructs, insights, and processes that have been developed over the decades of work in innovation research have implications for understanding institutional level innovation and therefore it is imperative this this level of innovation is not ignored.

Exploring radical innovation at this level of analysis also lends to new insights that may bring some additional understanding to innovation at more micro level of analysis. For example, radical innovation of processes, organizational forms, business models, products and services understandably require resource-building aspects.

However, this research shows that generating novel ideas can be facilitated and lead to more creativity when the canvas has yet to be painted. Research looking at de novo entrants have shown similar findings (McKendrick, Jaffee, Carroll, & Khessina, 2003; Kaplan & Tripsas, 2008; Powell & Sandholtz, 2012). Individuals and organizations that enter a field, industry, or organization without the confining baggage of established ways of thinking may help spur radical ideas. Research has looked at how resources can be transferred through new connections. This research points to the broader environment, the norms, beliefs, and logics situated in the environment these individuals and organizations are embedded in that can create barriers to creativity.

This leads to a second contribution of this research to the innovation literature and also strategy literature in general. The findings of this study put the focus on brokerage as an innovation strategy but instead of focusing on where these brokers are positioned, it explores what they do to make innovation happen. Thus, my findings supplement the rather static portrait of the role of knowledge brokers with a more in-depth understanding of the innovation process individuals and organizations participate in as they create radical institutional innovation. Also,

the knowledge brokerage research embedded in the innovation and strategy literature points to the importance of brokers as they provide access via bridges to new knowledge. However, this study sheds light on how brokers also infuse a sense of legitimacy in innovations that is required for uptake. This dissertation also provides support for a more strategic view of brokerage and brokering (Hargadon & Sutton, 1997; Obstfeld, 2005) versus a passive nature of brokerage previously described in the literature (Burt, 1992, 2002; Fernandez & Gould, 1994).

Third, entrepreneurs, institutional or venture creating, have typically been the actors behind bricolage. However, in this context bricolage happens because of brokers. This unique relationship brings additional insight into our understanding of bricolage. These institutional brokers do more than link organizations and individuals; they also transform ideas as they are ideally positioned to receive new and previously uncombined innovation building elements. However, this transformation happens through a process of bricolage. And it is successful because of bricolage. Prior research has illustrated how bricolage is an important mechanism under resource constrained environments and that bricoleurs gain their resources from some sort of stock of resources or repertoire. However, a fundamental question yet to be explored is where do these stocks of resources from a repertoire come from? The findings of this dissertation point to where bricoleurs are positioned as a possible answer.

Additionally, this study takes place in the social sector, a sector typically ignored in innovation research. It is especially relevant to the growing area of research in social innovation as this type of innovation requires transformation at multiple levels and a radical systemic shift in deeply held values and beliefs (Westley et al., 2011). In other words, social change requires institutional innovation. Bridging institutional work, innovation, and institutional entrepreneurship can provide insight to this area of innovation. An institutional lens may provide

a way to explore the structures and processes that affect how people view a social problem and social innovations. Institutional innovation is particularly relevant as it highlights a purposive and strategic effort by individuals to radically innovate.

Finally, quantitative research is the dominant methodology in innovation research. The qualitative nature of this research provides greater insight into the process dynamics of innovation while being highly sensitive to the context and sequence of events. Innovation involves actors and the broader environment they are situated in. Although quantitative studies provide great insight on the vast array of relevant constructs in the innovation process, it is hard to capture the complex relationships, tensions, and interrelationships between actors and environments using quantitative measures.

### ***9.2.2. Contributions to Institutional Theory***

This study also extends current views in institutional theory, more specifically in the area of institutional entrepreneurship and institutional field emergence.

First, the findings of this study offer insights on the positional advantages and disadvantages of institutional entrepreneurs. Institutional theory scholars offer competing arguments as to how the positions of actors affect their motivation and abilities to create, disrupt and even maintain institutions (Rao et al., 2003; Battilana et al., 2006; Pacheco, et al., 2011).

On the one hand, actors at the periphery of a field are not bound by any existing logics preventing innovation to happen. However, innovation also requires resources and legitimacy, which peripheral actors may lack. This was seen in this study with the INGOs who had a liability of foreignness. On the other hand, institutional entrepreneurs embedded in adjacent fields to the one emerging may have trouble initiating radical innovation due to a lack of capabilities and

understanding of what the new field entails. This was seen with the grassroots organization that had a liability of institutional newness. Therefore, neither the peripheral nor dominant actors can be the instigators of innovation. In Libya, institutional brokers overcome this paradox, as they understand and have access to the resources in the landscape of the institutional elements surrounding the field they are trying to create, but they are also familiar with relevant institutional fields that they can use as templates to create new ones. Consequently, this dissertation argues that institutional brokers are a critical type of institutional entrepreneur in radical institutional innovation.

Second, this dissertation is based in a context of an extreme institutional void. Although recent studies in the management literature have studied various research questions in the context of voids (Mair & Marti, 2009; Miller, Lee, Chang, & Le Breton Miller, 2009), these studies have been situated in environments where weak market institutions exist, rather than the absence of institutional fields all together. Because of this, the findings of this study pointed to a multi-level framework of institution building where actors participate in dynamics at various levels of the void to create the field. Here it is not about maneuvering around a specific void in a field, this study explores how institutional brokers do their work across multiple voids. Third, research on institution emergence has tended to focus on one or two levels of analysis. Theories of organizations need to encompass the social processes that take place at the different levels of the organizational environment and to be able to connect the multiple sets of activities that take place (Goodman, 2000). Research examining innovation at the institutional level has typically been seen as a macro process with change being initiated at the field-level (Smets et al., 2012). There is a neglect of bottom-up change with repeated appeals for scholars to give greater attention to the micro-processes of institutionalization (Smets et al., 2012). These studies have

also typically looked at the slow emergence of micro-fields with little attention given to the wide-ranging and broad impacting transitions (Hoskisson, Eden, Lau & Wright, 2000; Peng, 2003). Neglecting radical innovation in organizations and institutions may keep the field “on the sidelines in debates about issues in which it potentially has much to contribute” (Pfeffer, 1997: 24). The level of analysis in this dissertation was the field level, however it was the actions of individuals and organizations that created institutional building blocks to help create the field and ultimately create outcomes at the national level, a level of analysis rarely looked at in institutional research.

Finally, from a methodological standpoint, process research in both institutional theory and field emergence tend to be retrospective. In this dissertation I follow the process as it unfolds, thus starting at time zero of the fields development. This brings insights that otherwise may have been missed.

#### ***9.2.4. Contributions to Practice***

We have become much better at technological innovation than at institutional innovation. Given the speed of change in the world, institutional innovation is becoming more and more important. Woodhill (2010) uses the software versus hardware analogy to illustrate this point. He argues that for society to prosper, adaptation and innovation needs to happen at both the technological and institutional level. Improving the ‘software’ side of how societies function is what he refers to as institutional innovation. The ‘hardware’ side is the technological innovation that has been the focus in the past. For example, the failure to effectively deal with hurricane Katrina was not because of a lack of machinery, military, transport, or communication equipment,

it was the software, the institutional arrangements that were the problem. There are times when institutions must be constructed or reconstructed rapidly and dramatically, as failure is not an option. The 2008 financial crisis is another excellent example of when radical institutional innovation is needed. Building our understanding of the process and what is involved can help society steer the wheel more quickly and possibly foresee problems and instigate innovation before they fail.

While this thesis focuses on institutional innovation in the context of civil institutions, the findings have implications for institutional innovation strategy in other sectors, contexts, and industries. By understanding the different processes and actors involved in the different typologies of institutional innovation, researchers may be able to better understand the ways organizations adapt to these changes as adaptation to change is a key determinant of competitive advantage and organizational survival (D'Aveni, 1994; Richardson, 1996).

From an organizational perspective, institutional brokerage is a strategy for organizations to gain a competitive advantage. Managers push their organizations to innovate faster, but their focus is largely on technology and product innovation. The problem is that product life cycles continue to shorten, meaning that value is only created in the short-term. But redefining the institutions we are in can overcome this. This 'fish-eye' perspective that institutional brokers have allows them to be observers and participants of more than one institution at a time, thus allowing for the potential of more successful recombination and the legitimization of innovations. For example, we see the health care industry starting to embrace this as more and more doctors are getting management training and going back to school for MBAs. These MBA-doctors saddle both institutional fields, therefore having a fish eye view of the fields and therefore able to

bring in their expertise in management into healthcare while also being seen as legitimate actors in the health field. This strategy can help overcome resistance to change.

It also has implications for the *not invented here syndrome*. My findings suggest that there is a need for localization when building collaborations. Innovations must be translated, but more importantly, this research shows that translation requires some sort of transformation by local actors.

Given the context of this study, the findings also have implications for nation building. Too often the international community intervenes to assist countries that have gone through radical upheaval and political turmoil. Many times this is unsuccessful. This study points to the potential role the diaspora can play in nation building as members of a country's diaspora can be considered institutional brokers. For INGOs, this study highlights the critical role of identifying institutional brokers and the importance of promoting network cultivation and collaborative diffusion. Fostering democracy and/or civil society in countries where it has no local roots is difficult. Connecting and legitimizing these institutions through brokers may have more long-term impact and sustainability if done through agents that are familiar with the environment void of these institutions.

### **9.3. Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

As with all research, there are limitations that provide directions for future research. First, this study is based on a single, qualitative case in a specific context.. In examining the radical institutional innovation in Libya's civil society, this research focuses on a specific sector, country, and an extremely radical situation. Therefore, although patterns unearthed may be relevant to other contexts of radical institutional innovation, there may be limitations on the

generalizability of the research It also focuses on field emergence at the infant stage, right when the field was beginning to be created. Fields develop, change, and take form with time. Upon completion of my data collection, the process of institutional innovation was still happening.

Also, subjectivity in qualitative research can be a limitation in certain contexts. Being originally from Libya with strong ties to the culture, people, and the events of the revolution, my interpretation of the data and relationship with the subjects involved may have affected the way the data is interpreted. This being said, understanding of the culture, language and the events that took place was also beneficial for this research.

There are a number of directions future research can take. First, a comparative study that looks at another radical institutional innovation context outside the civil society sector would help build generalizability. Although extreme cases such as the one observed in Libya may not be very common, less extreme examples of radical institutional innovation can be investigated. For example the introduction of patenting systems in countries where it did not exist before would be an example of radical institutional innovation as it would require the creation of a completely new institutional field of patenting agencies, firms, specialists, and the introduction of new norms when it comes to innovation practices. Another possible example is the introduction of Facebook and other social media platforms which have created a radically new field of social media focused organizations, a new way of thinking for organizations, and even legal reform in terms of privacy. Another form of a comparative study might use an incremental institutional innovation context as a comparison. This would be ideal for the study of any differences in the two types of innovations in terms of actors and dynamics. Examples of incremental institutional innovation are abundant, but perhaps a more recent one is the introduction and popularity of sharing based economy platforms such as Uber, Lyft, and Airbnb.

As these platforms become more and more popular, institutions such as insurance, and norms around legitimate jobs and safety will have to innovate to address new problems due to these new business models.

A second important direction for future research would be extending this study with more longitudinal data. This could provide insight into how the process continues and whether there are new dynamics that emerge later on during the process. It would be interesting to see whether the process starts to take on the stages of institutional change (Greenwood et al., 2002) where some institutions become deinstitutionalized (Oliver, 1992) and others do not. Additionally, what happens as institutional brokers stop brokering? Many times these individuals act as temporary builders of the field. How can other actors sustain innovation once the brokers are no longer present?

Finally, another potential areas for interesting research is on who are bricoleurs. In this study the institutional brokers were able to use bricolage as a way to creatively translate institutional elements outside of the field into the field they were trying to build. It was this position that helped them bricolage. What other characteristics are required for successful bricolage? Studies addressing this question would be beneficial to institutional theory, innovation and the entrepreneurship literature.

#### **9.4. Conclusion**

This dissertation was motivated by a phenomenon. A phenomenon I saw. One I felt. A phenomenon that changed my life and continues to do so. Studying this phenomenon has revealed the critical role of institutional brokers in radically transforming a society. It has explored how these actors do this in an environment where institutional building blocks are not

present. By cobbling together pieces of a different life so that they can breath life into an environment void of civil society, institutional brokers brought hope to a country.

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## APPENDIX A - Civil Society Organization Interview Guide

1. I'd like to start by asking you to tell me about yourself.
  - a. Probe: previous and other current occupations
2. How did you become involved with (name of organization)?
  - a. Probe for why they got involved and when
3. Were you involved with anything similar before the revolution?
  - a. Why or why not?
4. What is the purpose or main mission of (name of organization)?
5. How effective do you think (name of organization) has been in achieving this mission so far?
  - a. Probe for obstacles and challenges and enablers
  - b. Probe for accomplishments
6. Describe your experiences in the past year in regards to your organization and the work you do.
  - a. Probe: day to day work – challenges – enablers
  - b. Probe: obstacles and how they overcame them
7. Who would you say are the main partners in your organization?
  - a. How did you create these partners?
  - b. Why these partners specifically?
8. What or who are the main obstacles?
  - a. Probe: how they overcame them if they have, if not why.
9. I now have some general questions about civil society. What is civil society in your opinion?
10. How is civil society different now than before the revolution?
11. Did you ever see yourself doing what you are doing now?
  - a. Probe: What were the biggest pushes to get involved?
12. I would like to now focus on the recent elections. How was your organization involved in the elections or the events leading to the election? For example, the formation of the election bylaws or public awareness.
  - a. Probe: How as this done?
  - b. Probe: With whom?
13. What are the most pressing obstacles to come?
14. Do you work with any of the INGOs?
  - a. Who, how, thoughts on this.

## APPENDIX B - INGO Interview Guide

1. I'd like to start by asking you to tell me about yourself.
  - a. Probe: previous and other current occupations
  - b. Nationalities
2. How did you become involved with (name of organization/ministry)?
  - a. Probe for why they got involved and when
3. What is the purpose or main mission or goal for (name of organization) in Libya?
4. How effective do you think (name of organization) has been in achieving this so far?
  - a. Probe for obstacles and challenges and enablers
  - b. Probe for accomplishments
5. Describe your experiences in the past year in regards to your organization and the work you do.
  - a. Probe: day to day work – challenges – enablers
  - b. Experience compared to other countries they have been to
6. I now have some general questions about civil society. What is civil society in your opinion?
7. How is civil society different now than before the revolution?
  - a. Probe: What were the biggest pushes to get involved?
8. What are the biggest accomplishments of civil society so far in Libya?
9. Who is leading this effort?
  - a. Who are the successful organizations in your opinion? What makes them successful?
10. Civil society a year ago versus now and what do you think is going to happen by next year?
11. I have heard a couple of comments and I wanted to get your opinion on these statements:
  - a. Civil society is made up of 50 individuals right now – same people
  - b. Only those organizations led by English speaking individuals are getting funded
12. What are the roles of organizations within civil society?
13. What are the biggest challenges facing these organizations?
14. Does your organization help organizations deal with these challenges?
15. What are the most pressing obstacles to come?

Probing: - networks – transferring skills – gap between your organization and the organization you work with.

## APPENDIX C - Government Interview Guide

1. I'd like to start by asking you to tell me about yourself.
  - a. Probe: previous and other current occupations
  - b. Nationalities
2. How did you become involved with (name of organization/ministry)?
  - a. Probe for why they got involved and when
3. What is the purpose or main mission of (name of organization)?
4. How effective do you think (name of ministry) has been in achieving this mission so far?
  - a. Probe for obstacles and challenges and enablers
  - b. Probe for accomplishments
5. Describe your experiences in the past year in regards to your ministry and the work you do.
  - a. Probe: day to day work – challenges – enablers
6. I now have some general questions about civil society. What is civil society in your opinion?
7. How is civil society different now than before the revolution?
8. Did you ever see yourself doing what you are doing now?
  - a. Probe: What were the biggest pushes to get involved?
9. What are the biggest accomplishments of civil society so far in Libya?
10. Who is leading this effort?
11. What are the roles of organizations within civil society?
12. What are the biggest challenges facing these organizations?
13. Does your organization help organizations deal with these challenges? If so how, if not, why not?
14. What are the most pressing obstacles to come?

## APPENDIX D - Citizen Interview Guide

1. I'd like to start by asking you to tell me about yourself.
  - a. Probe: previous and other current occupations
2. Are you involved in any civil society initiatives?
3. I now have some general questions about civil society. What is civil society in your opinion?
4. How is civil society different now than before the revolution?
5. What are the biggest accomplishments of civil society so far in Libya?
6. Who is leading this effort?
  - a. Who are the successful organizations in your opinion? What makes them successful?
7. Civil society a year ago versus now and what do you think is going to happen by next year?
8. I have heard a couple of comments and I wanted to get your opinion on these statements:
  - a. Civil society is made up of 50 individuals right now – same people
  - b. Only those organizations led by English speaking individuals are getting funded
9. What are the roles of organizations within civil society?
10. What are the biggest challenges facing these organizations?
11. What do you think these organizations do?
12. What are the most pressing obstacles to come?

## APPENDIX E - Informed Consent Form

### Study Name:

Radical Institutional Innovation: Institutional Work, Dynamic Capabilities and the Building of Libya's Civil Society

### Researcher:

Nada Basir, B.Sc., M.Sc  
PhD Candidate Strategic Management & Policy  
Schulich School of Business, York University  
E-mail: [nbasir08@schulich.yorku.ca](mailto:nbasir08@schulich.yorku.ca)

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. I would like to talk to you today about your experiences and involvement in \_\_\_\_\_. This is part of my PhD Dissertation research which looks at innovation at an institutional level and the individuals, organizations and processes involved.

The interview should take less than an hour. I will be taping the session and taking some notes as I do not wish to miss any of your comments. I would also appreciate any documents, such as emails, press releases, and video recordings of key events that would be beneficial to this research.

I think you may benefit from participation in this research as sometimes when we reflect back on previous experiences or collect our thoughts on a topic, we can learn or understand events in a new way. You will also be a part of research that will hopefully pave the way to more research in this area and policy papers that may directly help the Libyan population.

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the relationship you may have with the researcher or the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researchers, York University, or any other group associated with this project. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

This research is confidential and no individuals or organizations will be identified without their written consent. Any information that could reveal your identity or that of your organization will be excluded from the written dissertation and any future papers or research reports that are written based on this research. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law and data will be securely stored for approximately ten years. After ten years all data will be destroyed. If the data is still required after ten years, you will be contacted for your consent. My contact information is provided above. If you have any questions about the substance of this research or this form, please feel free to contact me.

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, York Research Tower, York University.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, consent to participate in this research conducted by Nada Basir. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date