

# Constellations of Logics in Performance Appraisal: Comparative Ethnographic Cases of a Japanese Multinational Corporation

Hitoshi Iwashita  
Vietnamese German University

*This paper extends the understanding of the constellations of logics in Japanese management practices in Asia and the West. By adopting comparative ethnographic case studies in the context of a multinational corporation (MNC), it explores the cultural meanings of corporation, family, market, religion and profession logics in the subsidiaries in Thailand, Taiwan, Belgium and the US. In so doing, this paper contributes to the understanding of constellations of logics from cross cultural perspectives. Three findings are identified, and their significances are elaborated. First, the finding that the constellations of logics are somewhat distinct between Asia and the West indicates the role of cultural contexts in Asia and the West. Second, the finding that the constellations of logics are ongoing and continuously formed strongly questions one-off win or loss of logics.*

*Keywords: Japanese Management, Japanese Multinationals, Institutional Logics, Constellations of Logics, Performance Appraisal, Cross Cultural Management*

## INTRODUCTION

How are Japanese management practices conducted and interpreted? Previous research in 80s -90s answered this question on the assumption that the practices are identified as a source of competitive advantage (e.g., Vogel, 1979, Pascal and Athos, 1982; Schonberger, 1982; Oliver and Wilkinson 1988; 1992). Although its attention is paid exclusively to the transferral of best practice into the Western countries, some research raised the possibility that embodied meaning of ‘company as family’ (Kondo, 1990) in practice is resisted and rejected (Ackroyd et al., 1988; Elger and Smith, 1994; Graham, 1994; Rinehart et al., 1994). Later, on, this strand of research had ultimately concluded when Elger and Smith (2005) to characterise the practices in Japanese MNCs as a ‘hybrid’, reflecting societal effects in both the home and host countries, such as ‘different national institutions, cultures, and histories’ (p58).

Since then, however, there has been an economic and societal change in Japan such as the Japanese bubble economy burst which enables to decline with minimal growth (Keizer, 2012). Along with this change, some of Japanese management practices themselves seemed to have changed (Morris et al., 2006; Keizer, 2012; Endo, 2015). Morris et al. (2006), for example, maintained that Japanese organisations are becoming flatter and have less hierarchical structures than before, and that the idea of lifetime employment still remains but the seniority-based pay system is diminishing. Furthermore, recent research claimed that Japanese management practices are possibly more easily accepted in Asia (Abo, 2015) than the West. This change prompts a question as to how Japanese management practices are being now

conducted and interpreted outside Japan; how differently are cultural meanings attributed in Asia and the West.

In order to answer these questions, the recent theory of institutional logic perspectives (Thornton et al., 2012) and constellations of logics has been used to help to explore the meanings attached to the practices in different cultural contexts, while Goodrick and Reay (2011) have identified and elaborated constellations of logics: family, corporation, market and religion logics. Recently, some institutionalists have begun to examine plural institutional logics with a focus on agency in institutional change (e.g., Smets and Jarzabkowski, 2013; Delbridge and Edwards, 2013; McPherson and Sauder, 2013). Others adopt institutional logic perspectives in the cases of transferred practices in cross-cultural environments (Muzio and Faulconbridge, 2013; Ansari et al., 2014; Gond and Boxenbaum, 2013; Cramton and Hinds, 2014). The research of Värlander et al. (2016), meanwhile, raises the issue of geographically unique logic embedded in a non-Western country, such as India and China, which may not be consistent with that of Thornton et al. (2012).

Answering these questions from institutional logic perspectives, this paper examines how cultural meanings are embodied differently in the practices of performance appraisal in Asia and the West. Adopting an institutional logic perspective, it extends the understanding of the constellations of logics in Japanese management practices in Asia and the West. Conducting comparative ethnographic case studies, it explores the cultural meanings of corporation, family, market, religion and profession logics in the West and in Asia within subsidiaries of a Japanese MNC operating in Thailand, Taiwan, Belgium and the US.

## **JAPANESE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FROM AN INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS PERSPECTIVE**

### **Manifestations of the Idea of ‘Company as Family’ in Japanese Management Practices**

The sense of ‘company as family’ has long been recognised as a key meaning attached to especially personnel practices in Japanese MNCs (e.g., Keys and Miller, 1984; Hartvany and Pucik, 1981). Interpersonal relationships in the business context, for example, are considered as manifesting notions of ‘company as family’ (Kondo, 1990), leading to a series of performance appraisals that form a coherent cultural system in a basis of family. At the same time, the ‘company as family’ itself possibly inhibits the transferability of those practices into Western countries (e.g., Graham, 1994; Rinehart et al., 1994). In some cases, the meanings of the Japanese family, such as teamwork in a shop floor and collectivistic performance evaluation, are themselves identified and resisted. Graham (1994), for example, described that the meaning of family is recognised and rejected by American workers. These studies about transferability, however, often neglected the meaning of the family which is deeply associated with ‘area knowledge’ of Japanese culture and language (Elger and Smith, 2005). This echoes the work of Turnbull (1986) who argued that practices cannot stand alone in Japanese society and culture.

In Japanese MNCs, this family relationship manifests itself most in the personnel practices and performance appraisal (e.g., Kondo, 1990; Keys and Miller, 1984; Hartvany and Pucik, 1981). A Japanese American anthropologist, Kondo (1990) conducted an ethnographic study in Tokyo, Japan, elaborating the contested meanings of Japanese ‘company as family’. She claims that the economic ties in the small firm are far beyond the contractual obligations interpreted in the West, “entailing intense involvement in group outings, ritual obligations, and strong bonds of loyalty, gratitude, and commitment (p198)” among its family and organisational members. These practices are based on the premise that the relationships between organisational members are akin to family relationships, in Kondo’s terms, including spending non-working as well as working hours together. These constitute an seniority based performance appraisal, a lifetime and long term employment, and have been seen as Japanese management practices that have existed since the 1980s (e.g., Anderson and Hill 1983; Lincoln et al., 1978). This may still occur between a manager and his or her subordinates; and due to this family norm Japanese managers tend to spend a longer time talking to their subordinates. Through these meanings, all employees are treated as family members in their corporation which is ‘the family’ sharing ‘a common destiny’ (Kondo, 1990) and ‘collective responsibility’ (Kyes and Miller, 1984).

However, the personnel practices previously identified in the 1980s and 90s may no longer be Japanese management practices owing to the changes after the bubble economy burst in the early 1990s. Lifetime employment, for instance, is still supported by some Japanese corporations, while seniority is no longer adopted by others (Keizer et al., 2012). At the same time, performance-based pay, as opposed to a seniority-based wage, may be adopted by some Japanese corporations (ibid). Similarly, with comparative Japanese corporation studies in Japan, Morris et al. (2006) have investigated how HRM practices have changed within Japanese corporations. They argue that organisations are becoming flatter and have less hierarchical structures. They also maintain that the idea of lifetime employment still remains but the seniority-based pay system is diminishing. This confirms the point of Watanabe (2000) that ‘the seniority system is being sacrificed’ in order to keep lifetime employment, raising the possibility that there is a change in Japanese management practices.

Recently, the meaning of family in relation to economic activities turned to be interpreted very differently across Asia and the West. Indeed, the traditional Japanese literature focused on Japanese management practice in the Western countries, such as the US, the UK, Canada, and European (e.g., Oliver and Wilkinson 1988; 1992; Ackroyd et al., 1988; Elger and Smith, 1994; 2005). For example, when analysing three Japanese and one form of European ‘press shop performance’, Williams et al. (1994) reviewed the necessary conditions for ‘Japanisation’ to be possible for Western corporations while questioning how far the West is from Japan. A high level of employee commitment is associated with the social and institutional context in Japan, and on this basis Williams et al. concluded that the social and institutional context of Western management is ‘very far from Japan’, bringing about difficulties when applying Japanese management practices to the Western context. Indeed in the West, this type of family relationship tends to be identified with family firms that are actually owned by biological family members, rather than the ‘company as family’ (e.g., Edwards et al., 2006; Karra et al., 2006). This research had highlighted unsuccessful importations of this company as family notion in mainly the West.

This picture, nonetheless, is completely different in Asia. The recent work of Abo (2015) summarising empirical studies of Japanese management practices in six continents strongly indicates that Japanese MNCs are highly likely to ‘apply’ Japanese management practices to each country as an ‘Asian Standard’. As Hofstede (2010) argues, in general, Asian countries, including Japan, tend to have a high score on collectivism in managerial behaviour, and Hofstede concludes that, while Western countries, such as the US, the UK and West European countries, are in the category of individualism, Japan and other Asian countries are in a category of collectivism where individuals tend to be integrated in a ‘strong and cohesive in-group’. In Thailand, for example, Japanese personnel practices, such as that of lifetime employment, seniority and intensive socialisation are well accepted while Western personnel practices are not (Atmiyanandana and Lawler, 2003). Additionally, Collinson and Rugman (2008) connect this to the ‘relational embeddedness’ of Japanese management practices in Asian regions as well as in Japan, but not in Western regions. This embeddedness comes about partly because there is a large customer base for industrial Japanese manufactured goods in the Asian region.

This reflects the close organisational and cultural distance between Asian and the Western countries, failing to elaborate the contested and deep meanings of the practices across Asia and the West. In the next section, the institutional logics perspective is introduced and discussed as a useful theoretical frame for the remainder of the paper.

### **Constellations of Logics Across National Contexts**

The meanings of family and its relationship to economic aspects behind management practices can be further elaborated by applying the recent theory of institutional logic perspectives. Based on analysis of Western society, the institutional logic perspective was originally coined in the seminal work of Friedland and Alford (1991) and later developed by Thornton et al. (2012). Western society was initially described as ‘the inter-institutional system’ comprising social sectors, such as ‘Capitalism, Family, Bureaucratic State, Democracy, and Christianity’. This system was modified by Thornton et al. (2012), who proposed a comprehensive matrix comprising two axes: a Y-Axis of elements of logics and an X-Axis of logics of institutional orders. In this matrix, they define seven logics as Family, Religion, State, Market, Profession,

Corporation, and the newly added Community. Logics are defined as “ways of ordering reality” (Friedland & Alford, 1991, p243), the “axial principles of organization and action” (Thornton, 2004, p2), and the “rules of action, interaction, and interpretation” (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, p. 804). Logics embody practices because “they represent sets of expectations for social relations and behaviour” (Goodrick and Reay, 2011, p375). Initially, institutional logics have been largely applied to institutional change at the societal and organisational level, where one dominant logic is replaced by another among industry and organisations as ‘organisational fields’ (e.g., Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Greenwood and Suddaby, 2006; Rao et al., 2003; Marquis and Lounsbury, 2007). Later on, some scholars have begun to question the dominant literature of institutional logics and institutional change as a macro analysis in which there has been a shift from one logic to another logic. In particular, Goodrick and Reay (2011) propose ‘constellations of institutional logics’ as “the combination of institutional logics guiding behaviour at any one point of time (p399)”. Like “a configuration or positions of ‘stars’” in the sky, multiple logics can coexist, guide actors’ behaviours, and eventually be identified as patterns of cooperative and competitive logics. Waldorff, Reay, Goodrick (2013) further elaborated the mechanisms of the constellations of logics, which enable as well as constrain actors’ actions.

Unlike the examination of institutional complexity from a macro perspective (Greenwood et al., 2011), the work of Smets and Jarzabkowski (2013) aims to suggest a relational and dynamic perspective on institutional complexity by drawing on the idea of institutional work. In their understanding of institutional complexity, competing logics are not given but are constructed by actors. Delbridge and Edwards (2013) took a different methodological approach. Drawing on a critical realist ontology, they proposed a relationship between agency and structure to show how agents are oriented for events in either the past, present or future, which are coupled with different outcomes and actions. They elaborate how agency is conditioned by institutional complexity and competing logics. In a closer examination of individual agency, the work of McPherson and Sauder (2013) analyses and elaborates negotiation among actors in terms of competing logics at the individual level, as opposed to at the organisational and societal levels (e.g., Lounsbury, 2007; Marquis and Lounsbury, 2007). Observing individual negotiations in a drug court in the US, they found that, through negotiation, “actors exploit available resources to solve the problems at hand” (McPherson and Sauder, 2013, p186).

More recently, the constellations of logics, previously examined mostly in a single national context, are being adopted and elaborated across national contexts. Muzio and Faulconbridge (2013), for example, analyse how the practices of a global English law firm are mediated by local institutions in Italy, such as regulations, norms and cultural framework (Scott, 2008). This research prompts another research question of “how distinctive geographic logics combine and interact with other types of institutional logics” (Muzio and Faulconbridge, 2013, p920), assuming that geographically dominant logics are distinctive across countries. This is supported by the work of Ansari et al. (2014), which argues for practice adaptation to fit itself into a local context when transferring the practice. Other research of Gond and Boxenbaum (2013) and Cramton and Hinds (2014) is based on the cultural influence of transferring practices in a different national context, while, most recently, the work of Värlander et al. (2016) indicates that there are different constellations of logics in each country. Through an analysis of the transferral of practices into the US, India and China, they conclude that each practice at each site embodies different constellations of logics.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Interpretivism, Practice Theory, and Comparative Ethnographic Case Studies**

The purpose of this research is to understand the cultural meanings of practices through constellations of logics across Asia and the West within a Japanese MNC. The work of earlier institutional researchers (Zucker, 1977; Meyer and Rowan, 1977) would strongly imply that institutional logics need to be considered to be socially constructed. An interpretive epistemology was therefore adopted in order to understand how individual actors make sense of ‘the world as it is’, which is ‘the subjectively created social world’ (Burrell and Morgan, 1979, p28). Here, attention is given to an “interpretive understanding

of social action' rather than social forces" external to it (Bryman and Bell, 2011), thereby allowing an understanding of the cultural meanings of practices. This interpretive approach was combined with 'practice theory' (Giddens, 1984), subsuming all the levels of analysis, such as individuals, organisations and society (Friedland and Alford, 1991) into a comprehensive concept of 'practices' as an "ongoing series of practical activities (Giddens, 1976, p81)". This newly emerging approach is referred to as the 'practice turn' (Schatzki et al., 2001) and the 'practice bandwagon' (Corradi et al., 2010).

In order to fulfil the purpose of this research to understand cultural meanings in depth, a comparative ethnographic case study was adopted. Abercrombie et al. (2000, p41) define a case study as "the detailed examination of a single example of a class of phenomena".

The research is also 'ethnographic' in the sense that it adopts 'at home ethnography' (Alvesson, 2009) to understand how actors make sense of practices in the subsidiaries of a Japanese MNC. Ethnography, in general, is referred to as the "intensive empirical investigation of everyday lived cultural reality" (Foley, 2002, p472). Here, 'at home ethnography' (Alvesson, 2009) refers to "a study and a text in which the researcher-author describes a cultural setting to which s/he has a 'natural access' and in which s/he is an active participant, more or less on equal terms with other participants (p159)". This is not, therefore, a traditional ethnography, which originally stemmed from anthropology. It is applied here, however, to avoid the serious drawbacks of the traditional approach in terms of the process of conducting research, such as "being time consuming, often personally tiring, and stressful to carry out (Alvesson, 2009, p158)".

Finally, the research is also a comparative case study with an emphasis on actors' subjective interpretations since the thick description of a single case may be confined to the specific case and contexts, which may limit the validity of the research.

The criteria for case selection, therefore, included a requirement for the case to be a large multinational Japanese manufacturer with headquarters located in Japan and with overseas subsidiaries operate across multiple countries. The units of the case needed to be offices located across overseas regions, including, preferably, North America, Asia and the EU. Candidate industries are automotive, equipment and industrial manufacturers. Given these criteria, 'JapanCo', a pseudonym, was selected. This is actually one of the researcher's clients, to whom seminars in corporate training programmes were delivered, and thus the researcher is not a 'professional stranger' (Agar, 1986), having known some managers in this company for more than seven years.

JapanCo is a large industrial manufacturer in Japan with a revenue of about 200 billion Japanese Yen, and about 9,700 employees across JapanCo groups, including all the affiliates and overseas sales offices. JapanCo owns twelve major overseas sales offices across Asia, Europe and America and overseas revenue consists of around 10% of total JapanCo group's revenue.

**TABLE 1**  
**A LIST OF JAPANCO'S SUBSIDIARIES**

A list of JapanCo's subsidiaries	Country
JapanCo China	China
JapanCo Korea	Korea
JapanCo Thailand (JTHAI)	Thailand
JapanCo Taiwan (JTAIW)	Taiwan
JapanCo Indonesia	Indonesia
JapanCo North America (JUSA)	The USA
JapanCo Singapore	Singapore
JapanCo EU (JEU)	Belgium
JapanCo Philippines	Philippines
JapanCo Malaysia	Malaysia
JapanCo Vietnam	Vietnam
JapanCo India	India

Of these twelve subsidiaries, four were selected for this study: these were Thailand, Taiwan, the EU and the US. The selection of subsidiaries was based on the need to compare and contrast Asian and Western cases; but since JapanCo only has two subsidiaries in the West, JapanCo Europe (JEU) located in Belgium and JapanCo America (JUSA), these were automatically selected. The remaining subsidiaries were all located in Asia, although China and Indonesia are a joint venture business and were thus excluded. Given that two subsidiaries were chosen in the West, it would be ideal to also select two comparable subsidiaries in Asia. Since JapanCo Thailand (JTHAI) and JapanCo Taiwan (JTAIW) have similar business units for building and plant construction and were thus selected.

### Data Collection and Analysis

As an at-home ethnographer, from the beginning of data collection, I started to analyse data by observing, interviewing and recording events. Put differently, all events are apparently interpretive opportunities to understand cultural meanings through constellations of logics. My presupposed knowledge about JapanCo and Japanese management practices, which I acquired from interaction with organisational members, as well as through my professional career, greatly influenced what data was selected and interpreted.

Detail about numbers of employees, interviews and observed events are summarised in table 2.

**TABLE 2**  
**THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES, INTERVIEWS AND OBSERVED EVENTS**

Items	JTHAI	JTAIW	JEU	JUSA	Total
The number of employees	158	56	12	45	-
Interviews with locals	30	14	12	19	75
Interviews with Japanese	16	8	8	11	43
	14	6	4	8	32
Observed events	16	11	6	12	45
Formal meeting	3	1	0	1	5
Dinner & lunch	13	10	6	11	40

In particular, semi-structured and open-ended interviews were the main data collection method. As an interviewer, it was necessary to be reflexive in freely asking questions about the meanings of multiple logics, but this approach alters the role of the interviewer from being a simple data collector to an active and reflective agent (Mason, 2002). The interviews, therefore, asked directly about Japanese management practices and their meanings. Sample questions from the interview include:

- Is there any Japaneseness or Japanese management practices here? If so, what form do they take, and how are they being employed?
- Are these practices being implemented and interpreted as in Japan? If so, how?
- Are there norms of family behind these practices? If so, what are they and how are they being interpreted?

These questions further help an interviewer to be flexible in asking various questions according to comments from the respondent. 75 interviews were conducted in total and transcribed in Japanese with Japanese expatriates and in English with local employees. Out of the total, 32 interviews were with Japanese expatriates. Some interviews were conducted a couple of times with the same expatriate, each

being counted as one interviews. The length of the interviews was normally one hour, or several hours at maximum. All the interviews were transcribed and recorded.

Participant observation occurred in both formal and informal settings: corporate seminars, regular meetings, informal lunches and dinner. In particular, the corporate seminars in JTHAI were observed by the author. In total, 45 events were observed. The length of each participant observation was normally several hours.

At the beginning of the data collection and analysis phase, when JTHAI was first visited, it became apparent that certain keywords and repeated phrases concerning the family could be identified. This made it possible to frame what types of organisations informants believed themselves to belong to. Many informants in JTHAI, without being asked, clearly described themselves by saying “we are family”. Then, they reasoned that is why they were actually spending more time together during both working and non-working hours. It became evident that their family as ‘the subjectively created social world’ was interpreted through shared local meanings of practices among actors in JTHAI. This notion of family, however, was less manifested at others sites that were visited. In JTAIW, JEU and JUSA, the word “family” was little heard from the informants, and instead words and concept related to economic efficiency and professional identities were manifested. There were chances for the researcher, as an at-home ethnographer, to join lunch and dinner, mostly with Japanese expatriates, although sometimes with local employees in these subsidiaries, and to have informal conversations, encouraging a deeper understanding of constellations of logics.

In the iterative process of collecting and analysing data, data was briefly coded with practices and logics in line with the existing logics literature (Thornton et al., 2012). Initially, a category of practices emerged: customer development, work and employment, and work organisations. In particular, the practices of social events in the category of work and employment were identified to be compared and contrasted across the four subsidiaries because they strongly manifested institutional logics. Actual practices were dinner, lunch, company sponsored trips and parties, voluntary trips, working out together in the gym, and a meal with customers, etc. Some practices, for example, a meal with customers, were conducted only in JTHAI and JUSA. Five institutional logics, such as corporation, family, religion, market, and profession emerged through conducting and interpreting practices in reference with repeated key words and phrases: we are family; economic efficiency and effectiveness; religious merits in Thai Theravada, and organisational hierarchy; and professional relationship. With further analysis, it was found that some practices manifest multiple logics with different interpretations through actors’ conflicts and frustration, such as dinner and lunch in JTHAI, as will be explained later. Each associated word from the interviews and observation is described in the next section.

### **Types of Logics: Family, Corporation, Market, Religion and Profession**

Drawing on Friedland and Alford (1991) and Thornton et al. (2012), corporation, family, market, religion, and profession logics are identified within the practices of Japanese MNCs. Here, Japanese MNCs are corporations where the legitimacy of corporation logic, ‘market position’, is the top priority. Corporation logic concerns the ‘market position of the firm’ in order to ‘increase size and diversification’ (Thornton et al. 2012). The corporation logic can impose overarching assumptions onto and within economic organisations such as Japanese MNCs in relation to the market and non-market logics. Important elements of each of the logics are categorised using the ideas of ‘root metaphor’, ‘source of legitimacy’, ‘basis of norms/attention/strategy’. These elements reflect how interpersonal relationships are interpreted in practice within the corporation: root metaphor and legitimacy help to characterise the interpersonal relationship of individuals with respect to organisational practices, while norms/attention/strategy support or connect to organisational goals. The characteristics are specified in terms of logics from actors’ frames of reference. The table below is a summary of selected elements of logics from Thornton et al. (2012).

**TABLE 3**  
**DEFINITIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS (THORNTON ET AL., 2012)**

Logics	Corporation	Market	Family	Religion	Profession
Root metaphor	Corporation as hierarchy	Transaction	Family as firm	Temple as bank	Profession as relational network
Source of legitimacy	Market position of firm	Share price	Unconditional loyalty	Importance of faith & sacredness	Personal expertise
Basis of norms	Employment in firm	Self-interest	Membership in household	Membership in congregation	Membership in guild & association
Basis of attention	Status in hierarchy	Status in market	Status in household	Relation to super natural	Status in profession
Basis of strategy	Increase size and diversification of firm	Increase efficiency profit	Increase family honour	Increase religious symbolism and natural events	Increase personal reputation

The corporation logic originally stems from ‘democracy’, which Friedland and Alford (1991) assert as concerning “participation and the extension of popular control over humans (Friedland and Alford, 1991, p248)”. Later on, Thornton et al. (2004; 2012) extend this democracy to ‘corporation’ logic. This is because they view democracy as a dependent variable of institutional orders of corporations, not institutional order itself. Rather, they argue that the corporation as ‘a legal institution’, an independent societal sector, has a democratic way of management within flat hierarchies. For Japanese MNCs, the corporation logic is an overarching assumption whereby “the person becomes an employee, which equates to being under the control of managers (Thornton et al., 2012, p55)”. All the organisational practices and interpersonal relationships can be based on the corporation logic yet are not limited to it. In data analysis, the corporation logic was specified through key words, such as the influence of actors’ job titles and positions, seniority, and activities articulated for firms’ competitiveness.

The family logic concerns “community and the motivation of human activity by unconditional loyalty to its members and their reproductive needs (Friedland and Alford, 1991, p248)”. Thornton et al. (2012) add a series of elements which characterise each logic. For instance, ‘unconditional loyalty’ is its legitimacy, ‘membership in household’ is its norm, and ‘increase family honor’ its strategy. In contrast to this family logic, the Japanese version of family logic identified by other scholars (e.g., Bhappu, 2000; Kondo, 1990) tends to confirm a more extended concept of family in corporations along the lines of ‘company as family’. In Western family firms, this is not the case, with a more limited parental altruism tending to be manifested instead according to Nordqvist and Melin (2010) and Karra et al. (2006). Similarly, the work of Chung and Luo (2008) assumes that a family means a biological relationship, rather than an extended concept of companies in Taiwan. In data analysis, associated key words related to family are family and its children, father, kids, parents, and Japanese terms related to family, such as ‘*Oyabun*’ and ‘*Kobun*’, and ‘*Oyako*’. In particular, the accounts of practices using the metaphor of family were considered as the enactment of family. A direct example is that Thai managers activate notions of family by saying “we are ‘family’”.



In JTHAI, the religion logic is identified in the sense not of Christianity but Thai Buddhism. The religion logic, as originally defined, was based on Christianity (Friedland and Alford, 1991). Later on, Thornton et al. (2012) broadened this focus from the Christian religion, referring simply to a 'religion' logic, and seeking to extract the significance of religion in general. Buddhism, however, does not have a concept of God as the world creator, but instead has 'merit' – the cause and effect relationship constituting the world. For instance, in Thailand, where Theravada Buddhism is dominant, Atmiyanandana and Lawler (2003) describe positive merit as "kindness towards others, particularly the less fortunate, as having a strong influence on managerial behaviour: the ideal Thai leader is seen as more of a benevolent father than an autocrat. (p234)". In this sense, it may be fair to say that attention in Buddhism may be oriented more to surrounding people rather than God. In data analysis, this was identified through key words, such as religious merits, '*Tam Bun*' in Thai, the land of bliss, Karma, benevolence, kindness and forgiveness.

The market logic concerns "accumulation and the commodification of human activity (Friedland and Alford, 1991, p248)". In practice, it assumes that "commodity producers attempt to convert all actions into the buying and selling of commodities that have a monetary price ... capitalist firms cannot exchange unpriced human activities that may be rational for an organization or useful to individuals" (Friedland and Alford, 1991, p249). Following this articulation, Thornton et al. (2004; 2012) explore this further: for them, 'share price' is its legitimacy, 'self-interest' is the basis of norms; 'status in market' is the basis of attention; 'increase economic efficiency' is basis of strategy. Based on the fundamental operation of the corporation logic, the market logic enables actors to conduct exchange of their labour and its outcome, possibly manifesting itself in the contract of employment and job description which confirm the commercial nature of the job within the corporations. It is based on an exchange of employees' labour for their outcome, namely the salary they may get. In data analysis, the market logic is identified through key words, such as self-interest, individuality, own benefit, and economic efficiency.

The profession logic concerns professional expertise as legitimacy, rather than organisational hierarchy (the corporation logic), economic efficiency (the market logic), and unconditional loyalty (the family). It was initially developed as a logic by Thornton et al. (1999: 2004) who identified and elaborated how an editorial logic was replaced by a market logic in the higher publishing industry in the US. The work of Thornton (1999: 2004) articulated a shift of logics where personal capitalism was replaced by market capitalism, personal reputation by market position; and increased sales by an increase in profits. Later on, this editorial logic was further discussed and analysed as the profession since its root metaphor is 'profession as relational network' (Thornton et al., 2012): its 'professional expertise' is its legitimacy, 'membership in guild and association' is the basis of norms; 'status in profession' is the basis of attention; 'increase personal reputation' is the basis of strategy. In data analysis, the profession logic is identified through key words, such as professional relationship and identity, expertise, and own mission and job.

In this research, quotations from the informants manifesting logics are exemplified below.

**TABLE 4**  
**EXAMPLES OF QUOTATIONS MANIFESTING EACH LOGIC**

Logic	Examples of quotations
Family logic (Japanese family)	<p>“But a Japanese company is a family. Competition among employees is less than in an American company.... JTAIW is not Taiwanese but is Japanese because of its Japanese style” (A Taiwanese director in JTAIW)</p> <p>“If some claim that this is not my job, then I have nothing to say. But a family relationship helps others to collaborate beyond their job descriptions. The job description is just a paper to know basic responsibilities. Then, the family could help with others.” (A Thai assistant director in JTHAI)</p>
Religion logic (Thai Theravada Buddhism)	<p>“There was a request that a Thai manager made for an increase in her men’s salary while rejecting an increase in her pay, stating that her salary had been raised enough... She reasoned that her men had worked very hard for her. It is part of (Theravada) Buddhism effect, I think...” (A Japanese manager in JTHAI)</p>
Market logic	<p>“I am sales and considering only numbers. The reason why I care about profits and sales is to think about more salary and more incentive to change their life. How can we change life? That can be done by salary right? Wage, that is salary is right? If we make big numbers, that means that Taiwanese could get more salary.” (A Taiwanese director in JTAIW)</p> <p>“It is all about [sales] numbers so I can’t help but pay more [salary and sales commission] to the one who performs better [than agreed sales budget] because it will be trouble if he or she leaves [JUSA]... I cannot evaluate other than with [numbers]...” (A Japanese Vice President in JUSA)</p> <p>“Japanese tend to say that you did perform well but our corporate did not. So, sorry to say, but the salary at this time is like this [no change] although I am evaluating you highly... Japanese will accept this but [Americans] here will not... nor will they be convinced of this... [they begin to ask] why don’t you raise my salary although my performance was highly evaluated?... it leads to rather ‘demotivation’...” (A Japanese manager in JUSA)</p> <p>“[Thais] motivation is... money. Given revenue growth every year, [Thais] often ask me why it is bad to keep the status quo... [Thais] never understand, although I explained them that, given the fact that market is growing, keeping the current amount of revenue means decreasing market share... in initiating something new project, they again ask me how they can be motivated ... then it boils down to money [sales incentive]...” (A Japanese manager in JTHAI)</p> <p>“I think it can help. Yes, because now, like I said, I made an objective for myself. I said, okay, this is the target. I also said I want to sell that quantity of products; from Product A I want to sell 100; from Product B I want to sell 150, I don’t know. I have some targets for myself and I hope to achieve this. But it’s just personal motivation.” (A Belgium manager in JEU)</p>
Profession logic	<p>“[JTAIW] is not a family here but a professional [group]... we go out for dinner about once a year... I go out as my department group but not informally [for developing my private relationship]” (A Taiwanese secretary in JTAIW)</p>
Corporation logic	<p>“I had no choice but to accept his claim... he is the president” (A Taiwanese manager in JTAIW)</p> <p>“[sales incentives] are somewhat tricks so I don’t like those... They are supported by specific certain terms and conditions. So one condition favours an incentive but another may not. It is, I think, quite difficult to set up right conditions and terms of sales incentives. I am talking to a sales person based on sales incentives but we may agree on a fixed salary. [A fixed salary] is more humane.” (A Japanese managing director in JEU)</p>

## **PRACTICES OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL: BONUS, SALES INCENTIVE, AND PROMOTION**

A bonus, sales incentive, and promotion can contextually manifest the competitive relationships between Japanese ‘family’ (‘family’) and self-interest (market) on an ongoing basis. Granted, constellations of logics are contextually enacted, conflicted, and contextually mediated on an ongoing basis. However, there is some distinction between Asia and the West. In Asia, a bonus rewards collective performance (i.e. the ‘family’ logic tends to be manifested) while, in the West, a sales incentive promotes individual performance (the market logic). Nonetheless, constellations of logics are not simply prefixed but contextually enacted on an ongoing basis.

### **A Bonus as a Collective Reward: Japanese ‘Family’ in the Corporation**

In Asia, an equally distributed bonus is recognised as a collective reward for collective performance, enacting the Japanese reciprocal ‘family’ logic. In JTAIW and JTHAI where a bonus is adopted, sales performance is viewed not as an individual performance but a collective one. This logic conflicts with the market logic, however, with a strong demand for an individual bonus or salary increase from local employees.

Taiwanese salesmen in JTAIW, for example, tend to treat a bonus as a consequence of individual performance. They tend to argue for a greater bonus than that of others who, they think, performed less. For them, a bonus is expected to be distributed according to each salesman’s performance. In particular, in annual salary negotiation, this demand is put forward. A Taiwanese director explains the importance of individual salary:

... I am sales and considering only numbers. The reason why I care about profits and sales is to think about more salary and more incentive to change their life. How can we change life? That can be done by salary right? Wage, that is salary is right? If we make big numbers, that means that Taiwanese could get more salary. Japanese thinks about the benefit of Tokyo only.

This manifests sales performance as a consequence of individual self-interest (the market logic), not collective (‘family’). Facing a strong demand from his Taiwanese employees, the director favours the importance of individual performance evaluation and a salary increase according to one’s performance. A Taiwanese manager echoes the importance of salary by stating: “I created customers, and achieved big revenue, then I could negotiate an increase in salary with the boss. That is the American style. But in a Japanese company, I am not sure of if they accept it”. This tendency to argue for a salary increase continues especially among Taiwanese local employees. A Taiwanese secretary summarises this demand through her observation as follows:

There are no Japanese management features here, such as loyalty and harmony...an individual Taiwanese salesman appeals his performance to his managers but the bonus amount is almost the same as others. Finally one’s bonuses are the same as others, usually equal to several months’ salary, so they are disappointed. This occurs over and over.

This observation illuminates a confrontation between Japanese ‘family’ and market logics. There is another Taiwanese director who has worked long at JTAIW. He rather accepts the existence of the ‘family’ norm by stating that “But a Japanese company is a family. Competition among employees is less than in an American company.... JTAIW is not Taiwanese but is Japanese because of its Japanese style”. Then, he goes on to state the job security of Japanese companies because Japanese companies do not fire their employees but rather prefer long term and lifetime employment. For him, a bonus is a collective reward than individual reward. The competitive relationships are continuously formed ‘over and over’ in everyday practices within JTAIW.

This confrontation between ‘family’ and market logics, however, is contextually mediated by the corporation logic where an ultimate authority in the corporation tends to be given to ‘*Laopan*’ (president in English). Actual bonus negotiation is often escalated to the Japanese managing director (MD) because Taiwanese tend to claim a salary increase directly to the Japanese MD over the heads of Taiwanese managers and directors. In the Taiwanese business, ‘*Laopan*’ is believed to be the only decision-maker in the corporation. A Japanese expatriate comments that there is a societal effect of the corporation on Taiwanese employees by ‘*Laopan*’ because, whatever it is, they tend to eventually follow what ‘*Laopan*’ says and orders. In actual performance appraisal meetings with the Taiwanese claiming directly, Japanese MD asks “What do you think really contributes to achieving your sales quota? In other words, is your sales performance achieved solely by your own effort?”. He then tends to go on to raise the possibility of other colleagues and experienced managers’ helping to coordinate sales opportunities by communicating with the executives in the customer organisations. Finally, the Taiwanese concluded that his sales performance was not solely the result of his own efforts but rather the product of organisational efforts. Salesmen may be reluctantly convinced by this argument but it causes them considerable displeasure. One Taiwanese local salesman who claimed an increase in salary in the past declared: “I had no choice but to accept his claim... he is the president” after performance appraisal. This manifests ongoing constellations of logics: the corporation logic mediates the market logic in Asia where the authority of ‘*Laopan*’ through the corporation logic is rooted.

Of course, performance appraisal does not always enact self-interest (the market logic). A Taiwanese director confessed that he could live with his own salary while admitting the fact that the young salesmen tend to put a request for salary increase. He clarifies:

Comparing with that of my co-workers in the previous workplace, this salary cannot be comparable. It is very poor. As a young salesman’s quote, this salary is too low comparing with foreign companies such as even Japanese... But my salary is enough given the fact that I have a house in Taipei city, a wife and a daughter without house mortgage.

According to his situation with his family, the market logic does not enable him to pursue self-interest. Through daily interaction with his subordinates, this is continuously forming a competitive relationship between ‘family’ and market logics in relation to the corporation logic.

For the Japanese, this competitive relationship between the ‘family and market may look quite unusual. From the Japanese MD’s point of view, this demand is unlikely to happen in Japan because of the importance of ‘*Wa*’, organisational harmony in English. He went on to say:

... this is a point of difference between the Japanese and Taiwanese ... the Japanese, in general, will never insist on a salary increase in comparison with others ...[paused]... well, at least, I have never done this in my professional career ... because it would make me an egotist going against ‘*Wa*’ (organizational harmony in English) from the point of view of others [organisational members].

In the actual interview, after glancing at me, he added the conditional sentence “at least, I have never done [salary increase]”. His comment raises the importance of ‘*Wa*’ in the Japanese ‘family’ in performance appraisal regardless of whether one performs better or worse than do others. The market logic based on self-interest sharply contrasts with Japanese ‘family’ as the corporation.

Likewise, in JTHAI, there is a demand for salary increases among non-managerial Thai employees. Some young Thai salesmen tend to argue for an increase in their individual salary, manifesting self-interest. Unlike the demand in JTAIW for the reward of individual performance, that of JTHAI suffices in exchange for new projects or new business. For instance, in new customer acquisition, Thai local employees tend to often question why they need to expand their business by doing something new. This

type of salesmen would tend to leave JTHAI within a few years given the fact that its salary is relatively low compared to other Western companies. A Japanese expatriate describes:

[Thais] motivation is... money. Given revenue growth every year, [Thais] often ask me why it is bad to keep the status quo... [Thais] never understand, although I explained them that, given the fact that market is growing, keeping the current amount of revenue means decreasing market share... in initiating something new project, they again ask me how they can be motivated ... then it boils down to money [sales incentive]...

In order to initiate something new, they end up asking for a salary and/or bonus increase as their motivation. A Thai manager illustrates this self-interest by stating: “no commission can be an issue because it is difficult to motivate sales managers without commissions... this may be a common issue at Japanese companies”. The fact that, in the past, one Thai director with a good amount of salary never did anything challenging is consistent with the contextual enactment of the market logic. He was so comfortable with a fixed salary that he did not take proactive actions.

Notwithstanding this, this self-interest can be mediated by the enactment of the religion logic. Theravada Buddhism is actually enacted through an attempt to increase others’ salary in order to solve the emerged competitive relationship between ‘family’ and market logics. A Thai manager tends to insist on the increase of her subordinates’ salary, instead of her salary. A Japanese expatriate shares this story:

There was a request that a Thai manager made for an increase in her men’s salary while rejecting an increase in her pay, stating that her salary had been raised enough... She reasoned that her men had worked very hard for her. It is part of (Theravada) Buddhism effect, I think...

This, albeit superficially looking ‘family’, sounds like self-sacrifice in order to do good in a religious context. He went on to connect this event to Theravada Buddhism. Unfortunately, I did not have the chance to interview her. Nonetheless, the manager is believed by the Japanese to have tried to gain religious merit for herself by sharing an increase in her salary with her men. Given the fact that she devotes herself to work in JTHAI by working late, another Thai manager characterises that ‘she must deeply love JapanCo (JTHAI)’. Moreover, a Thai assistant director rather manifests the instrumental of the family relationships among his subordinates. In terms of the importance of the bonus, he asserts the existence of the family relationship and explains its instrumentality by stating that:

If some claim that this is not my job, then I have nothing to say. But a family relationship helps others to collaborate beyond their job descriptions. The job description is just a paper to know basic responsibilities. Then, the family could help with others.

He then added the bonus to a series of the family relationship in JTHAI. This demonstrates the specific geographical location in Asia where Japanese ‘family’ is accepted and in turn amplified with the religion norm, such as Theravada Buddhism.

### **A Sales Incentive and Promotion as an Individual Reward: Self-interest and Seniority**

The constellations of logics in the West can sharply contrast with those of Asia. In JUSA and JEU, the market logic strongly manifests sales incentives as a means of achieving one’s own self-interest on the basis of individual performance. Sales performance in JUSA is individually evaluated without connecting itself to corporate performance. Each customer is assigned to a respective salesman so there is no space for salesmen to share collective sales goals and collaborate together. The Japanese VP understands that sales performance appraisals cannot be conducted without the number which reflects the amount of sales commission. So performance evaluation is based only on numbers. He explains:

It is all about [sales] numbers so I can't help but pay more [salary and sales commission] to the one who performs better [than agreed sales budget] because it will be trouble if he or she leaves [JUSA]... I cannot evaluate other than with [numbers]...

The strong sense of self-interest is absolute in order to retain talented salesmen. This is quite different from JTHAI and JTAIW where performance is measured in a corporate context.

This self-interest has to be achieved through a series of performance appraisals, even for engineers. It means that a high individual evaluation has to directly lead to promotion; a salary increase in other words. A Japanese expatriate supports the view that American individuals are separated from the organisations to which they belong. He commented that "here [USA], it is quite common for people to change their jobs for a better salary". In the past, he actually conducted a performance appraisal for an American engineer, giving a high evaluation and no change in salary. The engineer was confused and demotivated, and finally left JUSA. He went on to point out the individual aspect of salary separated from the corporate performance:

Japanese tend to say that you did perform well but our corporate did not. So, sorry to say, but the salary at this time is like this [no change] although I am evaluating you highly... Japanese will accept this but [Americans] here will not... nor will they be convinced of this... [they begin to ask] why don't you raise my salary although my performance was highly evaluated?... it leads to rather 'demotivation'...

In particular, this 'demotivation' seems to be quite common in Japanese MNCs in the US. This sharply contrasts with the case in Japan where people tend to stay in the same corporation that they first entered because of the loyalty that they have for the corporation. He simply commented that "here, people do care about the salary more than Japanese do". In other words, individual performance is evaluated separately to that of the corporation. Even the salary of American local salesman could be twice that of the Japanese VP and American president according to a simple scale of sales incentive.

In JEU, sales incentives manifesting the market logic are now being mediated by organisational hierarchy (the corporation logic). Sales incentives have been adopted for sales persons in order to motivate them for acquiring new sales opportunities. However, they are now being replaced by a fixed salary because of change in sales strategy. A Japanese managing director in JEU explains that

"[sales incentives] are somewhat tricks so I don't like those... They are supported by specific certain terms and conditions. So one condition favours an incentive but another may not. It is, I think, quite difficult to set up right conditions and terms of sales incentives. I am talking to a sales person based on sales incentives but we may agree on a fixed salary. [A fixed salary] is more humane."

Although the Japanese director supported a fixed salary, there is an opposing view of supporting the concept of incentive system. A Belgium manager, albeit not sales, incentive system is necessary for everyone. He gives an account of saying that:

"I think it can help. Yes, because now, like I said, I made an objective for myself. I said, okay, this is the target. I also said I want to sell that quantity of products; from Product A I want to sell 100; from Product B I want to sell 150, I don't know. I have some targets for myself and I hope to achieve this. But it's just personal motivation.

However, a newly hired HR Belgium manager supports this view, manifesting a mixture of the market and corporation logics. The underlying assumption of this change is that "the salary scale is based on performance and seniority" according to her. She went on to imply that, although the salary needs to be raised when one performs better, salary and seniority in the corporation are to be balanced: "but we're not

obliged to [raise salary], it's not a company rule or not a Belgium law if somebody is not performing well we can give him not a raise of his salary". In line with the same assumption, in JTHAI, there were Thai two directors recently promoted: the elder one is a Director and the younger an Assistant Director. Granted, a Thai HR manager comments that "age is not clear criteria... we do not have clear criteria seniority, not the length of service". In fact, there are also "some elders who work under supervision of the young" according to her. This promotion, however, is apparently the conventional notion of Japanese seniority to reward individual performance.

Likewise, promotion in JTAIW enacts a conventional notion of seniority and length of service (the corporation logic), thereby mediating self-interest (the market logic). A Japanese expatriate director describes that "Here is [Taiwan] where age is more concerned [than other] so the organisation where the young supervises the old does not really fit in". So he tends to hire and assign the positions of managers and non-managerial employees in alignment with seniority. He confessed the importance of seniority:

[People] have different jobs, different abilities, different ages, and different family structures, so I am sceptical if only number can be criteria [in performance appraisal]... I am by no means saying or intending to mean that Japanese seniority is good yet neither performance based salary nor sales incentive is compatible with our business...

His business is in building equipment which needs teamwork and a long term relationship with customers. A Japanese MD has a slightly different view of seniority which may actually be outweighed by the length of service according to payment claims from Taiwanese employees. He has heard of requests for salary increases on the basis of the length of service, not seniority. He shared a conversation with a Taiwanese manager regarding the performance appraisal of its salesman. He stated that "well, this man is already 32 year old and has kids so said why don't you raise his salary... but [the Taiwanese manager] told me it's irrelevant". For the Taiwanese, the corporation logic is implicated only in the length of service but for the Japanese it is implicated in seniority alongside Japanese 'family. This indicates that self-interest (the market logic) enacted by promotion is mediated by seniority and or the length of service (the corporation logic).

## DISCUSSION

Two findings are identified in the series of practices in performance appraisal: the constellations of logics are ongoing and continuously formed; the constellations are somewhat distinctive in relation to geographical locations in Asia and the West; more than two logics are in play in the practices.

**TABLE 5**  
**MANIFESTED LOGICS AND PRACTICES IN JAPAN CO'S SUBSIDIARIES**

Practices	JTHAI	JTAIW	JEU	JUSA
A bonus	Family, Market, and Religion	Family and Market	-	-
Sales incentives	-	-	Market	Market
Promotion	Family and Corporation	Market	Market and Family	Market

First, the finding that the constellations are somewhat distinctive in relation to geographical locations indicates geographical contexts in Asia and the West. In Asia, such as JTAIW and JTHAI, there are a bonus manifesting the conflicted relationships between the family, the market, the corporation, and religion logics. In JAIW, Taiwanese employees tend to argue for an increase in their bonuses as their

individual performance while mediated by the corporation logic, *Laopan*. In JTHAI, Thai employees tend to claim the necessity of sales commission while are mediated by religion logic. In contrast, in the West, such as JUSA and JEU, sales incentives are strongly manifesting self-interests (the market logic) although

Indeed the constellations of logics are, to some extent, different in Asia and the West. This elaborates the geographical communities in which specific logics are rooted (Marquis and Lounsbury, 2007; Lounsbury, 2007). In Asia, the ‘family’ logic is enacted through the practices of employment. In JTHAI and JTAIW, actors tend to treat bonuses as a collective reward, prioritising group performance over individual. In particular, a Thai manager insists on an increase in salary for her men by stating that her salary is raised enough, enacting the religious merit of Theravada Buddhism. This echoes the work of Abo (2015) who argues for geographical locations that may influence Japanese management practices. By contrast, in the West, market logic is strongly enacted by performance appraisal. Sales incentives and promotion are interpreted as individual rewards while no bonus is adopted. As Abo (2015) and Lounsbury (2007) point out, the geographical location matters.

This does not mean that the geographical locations in Asia and the West automatically determine the competitive relationships between logics, however. In JTAIW, despite company trips and parties, there seem to be very few informal social events: Taiwanese tend not to go out together as in JTHAI. In JTHAI, some Thai employees make an effort to argue for salary increases when assigned a job of sales development, acquiring new customers or projects. Furthermore, the American director, who had worked at large Japanese automotive manufacturers, insists that JUSA is “an American company’ now, but however is going to be Japanese company”. Thus, actors in their contexts are deeply associated with the enactment of competitive logics, but the geographical locations do not determine the relationships between them as the situatedness of actors is discussed (e.g., Delbridge and Edwards, 2013; Smets and Jarzabkowski, 2013). These practices can be due to ‘both intentional and unintentional outcomes’ in the ‘everyday getting by of individuals’ (Lawrence et al., 2011). After all, constellations of logics and institutional complexity need to be treated as a dynamic and ongoing process of enacting institutional logics as another constellation of logics.

Furthermore, the finding that the constellations of logics are different in Asia and the West highlights the importance of ‘geographical communities’ where logics are rooted (Lounsbury, 2007). In Asia, ‘family’ logic is enacted through employment practices. In JTHAI and JTAIW, actors tend to treat bonuses as a collective reward. This echoes the work of Abo (2015) who argues for how geographical locations may influence Japanese management practice. In contrast, in the West, market logic is strongly enacted by performance appraisal. A sales incentive and promotion are interpreted as individual reward while no bonus is adopted. This rather explains the work of Elger and Smith (1994; 2005), illuminating how Japanese management practices are rejected and resisted. Although the geographical locations are deeply associated with enactment of competitive logics, these never determine the relationships among them as the situatedness of actors is discussed (e.g., Delbridge and Edwards, 2013; Smets and Jarzabkowski, 2013).

Second, by focusing on the plural logics normally discussed by institutionalists, this paper advances the ‘constellations’ of institutional logics (Goodrick and Reay, 2011) by taking into account how these plural logics interact continually. Logics are not restricted to only two competitive ones but to plural ones according to actors in context. The paper also elaborates on the situatedness of actors (e.g., Delbridge and Edwards, 2013; Smets and Jarzabkowski, 2013) in a more nuanced manner, confirming the need for the kind of ‘relational institutional analysis’ that Delbridge and Edwards (2007) argue for. Conversely, the ‘family’ norm is strategically utilised by the Thai director who want to share jobs efficiently. Practices can be due to ‘both intentional and unintentional outcomes’ in the ‘everyday getting by of individuals’ (Lawrence et al., 2011) according to the relational contexts in which actors conduct practices. After all, constellations of logics and institutional complexity need to be treated as a dynamic and ongoing process of enacting institutional logics as other constellations of logics.



## CONCLUSION

This paper aims to answer the research questions: How are Japanese management practices being conducted and interpreted outside Japan? How differently are meanings attributed between Asia and the West? The answers are that the practices are interpreted and conducted differently in different regions and that even within regions there are differences in detail. Although there are company sponsored trips and parties that manifest the family logic in the Asian subsidiaries, JTHAI and JTAIW, and just a few informal events, such as dinner and lunch, manifesting the profession logic in the Western subsidiaries, JEU and JUSA, there are in fact variations in each subsidiary. In Asia, the constellations of the corporation, the family, the religion, and the market logics are enacted in JTHAI, while only the family and the profession logics are enacted in JTAIW. In the West, the market and profession logics are manifested in JUSA while only the profession logic is manifested in JEU. This raises the possibility that not only the effect of culture and society but also the agency of actors in each subsidiary need to be considered in terms of the constellations of logics.

By answering the question, this paper provides three theoretical and practical contributions. First, the distinctive constellations of logics in Asia and the West indicate the role of cultural contexts in Asia and the West. Second, Thai Theravada Buddhism and the Japanese family logic demonstrate geographically unique logics embedded in a country. Third, constellations of logics in these specific contexts are not static but are ongoing and continuously formed.

As with all institutional studies, this research has several limitations. First, an issue of generalisability may arise because of the comparative ethnographic case studies. Although JapanCo has a long history and has operated for more than a hundred years since its incorporation in Japan, it is just one of many Japanese MNCs, and thus this case may neither represent nor be generalised to the population of Japanese MNCs. This, however, possibly expands the institutional logics approach as 'analytic generalisation' (Yin, 2009), linking findings in specific cases to a theory, which allows the ethnographic approach. Second, the use of at-home ethnography may raise issues in respect to treating the researcher as the object of study. Although any social research can never be entirely neutral (Burrell and Morgan, 1979), it is possible to be more sensitive to the ideas through careful reflection. Here, reflexivity is actively enhanced throughout the data collection and analysis process.

Potential future research concerns the relationships between logics and culture. This research indicates the significance of culture in respect to logics but has not yet elaborated on this relationship. Thornton et al. (2012) briefly touch upon 'cultural space' from the institutional logics perspective. The cultural space should really matter here, given the research in a non-Western region, such as Asia, as demonstrated in this research. This raises the possibility that there might be another version of institutional logics perspective in non-Western society which is distinctive from that of Thornton et al. (2012). In particular, family and religion logics can be further explored, especially in the Asian region.

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