STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF ARCHIVES CONTENTS: HOW NEW INSTITUTIONAL ECONOMICS BECAME INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ECONOMICS

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Abstract. The purpose of this paper is to present the methodology we have been developing to explore the topical structure of a collection of texts and its dynamic without an appropriate a priori understanding of the relevant categories and concepts. Since we believe that this methodology is particularly promising for studying the organizational and institutional phenomena thanks to relevant archives or digital tracks, we chose to focus our attention on the “archive” of the Society for Institutional and Organizational Economics (SIOE) that celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2018, as well as on the papers that were published in the journals in which the core members of the society have been publishing over the period 1998-2019. This archive comprises the abstracts of more than 3,500 papers that were presented at the 21 annual conferences of the society organized between 1998 and 2020, and about 14,500 published papers. The topic modeling of this data highlights two major trends. First, there is over time a reversal of fortune between the study of institutions and the analysis of organizational arrangement that have been being becoming dominant from the 2010’s. Second, within each main domain of investigation, a shift from a broad approach contrasting alternative orders (e.g. market vs. hierarchy, private vs. collective property), to a micro-analytical approach of mechanisms (either contractual, organizational or institutional) can be observed.