

Structure-Mechanism Explanation and the Evolving Relationships Between Structures and Mechanisms After the Big-Bang

Abstract

Structure/mechanism explanation is the core of sociological analysis. But why does it have to be? For example, why is the explanation in physics centering on laws rather than the structures/mechanisms? And what is the relationship between structures and mechanisms in sociology? Specifically, do structures determine mechanisms or vice versa, or are there any other kinds of explanations? Driven by these confusions, Professor Zhao integrates his physics, chemistry, biology, and social sciences knowledge to propose a unified model that captures a constantly evolving and complex relationship between structure/mechanism, formed immediately after the Big Bang. Based on this model, Professor Zhao will also discuss how the structure-mechanism relationship evolves, what are the patterns behind, as well as what are the model's implications for social analyses.