Rethinking Work:
Pathways and Practices in Business and Society.
Introduction to the Special Issue.

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The recent acceleration of technological change and its rapid penetration into all economic sectors means that organizations need the capability to innovate continuously and therefore to maintain, develop and adapt organizational structures, practices and behaviours (Bruni and Parolin, 2014). There is an urgent need to address questions about the scope, influence, interests and power of organizations and the potential and real benefits of these technological transformations for society. There is also a need to reflect on future avenues for research into digital technologies in organizational and human resource management (HRM).

The relationship between work practices and technology has long been studied (e.g. Barley, 1986; Orlikowski, 1992) across different disciplines and approaches, from the roboticization of factory lines (e.g., Grint and Woolgar, 2013) to the integration of information and computing technology into knowledge work (e.g. Leonardi and Bailey, 2008). Organization studies are no exception, with several papers published over the years in Studi Organizzativi (e.g. Bonti *et al.*, 2017; Martinez *et al.*, 2017; Bruni and Parolin, 2014; Butera, 2011; Grandori, 2007).

The tools and the methods through which work practices are accomplished have changed dramatically in the last decade (Hamel, 2007, 2012). Some authors (Bondarouk and Olivas-Luijan, 2014; Kane *et al.*, 2015) have shown that the integration of digital technologies, including

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social, mobile, analytics and cloud, is profoundly transforming organizational work practices, particularly the way in which companies manage work practices and HRM processes. Issues such as internal commitment to digital progress, HRM lifecycle, and talent attraction and retention are closely intertwined with ongoing digital transformation in modern organizations.

The basic tenet of this revolution is to be found in the increased potential to connect organizational actors through digital information and communication technologies, and to organize work across conventional organizations. The reliance on big data and algorithms in organizational strategies and HRM accentuates the need to explore the relationship between developments in digital technology and organizational changes. In other words, digital innovation changes how people work and use technology, so that it plays an increasingly prominent role in both the lives of employees and HRM, which seems to be affected in multiple ways.

There are at least three main reasons to focus scholarly attention on this area. First, the technological changes have deeply affected managerial strategies, organizational re-design and HRM practices. Advances in digital technologies and software platforms now allow organizations to "digitize" multiple aspects of work processes that were previously supported by analogue tools. Industry 4.0, or the fourth industrial revolution, is changing the time and space dimensions of work, extending new organizational opportunities and work designs to the whole workforce, including blue-collar workers. These include smart working, agile working, cloud computing, new virtual production, etc... Digitization also enables organizations to provide clear goals and real-time feedback to support continuous development and motivation (Sonnentag *et al*., 2008). Demerouti *et al* (2014), pointed out that the new ways of working have three key characteristics; 1) the timing of work has become more flexible and employees have more autonomy in deciding when they work; 2) employees have various options for the place of work, including the office, home, and during commuting time; 3) the new ways of working are facilitated by new media technologies, such as smartphones, and videoconferencing, offering various options for communication/networking with co-workers, supervisors, and clients. From the employee perspective, however, these changes are bringing about a growing sense of job insecurity and technological angst (Cicellin *et al*., 2015). The continuous learning path and the difficult of separating work and non-work domains could cause work–life balance conflicts, stress, and burnout, especially for those who are not 'digital natives' (Butts *et al*., 2015).

Second, the ubiquity of digital technologies has implications for work practices and the ability to see, know and control organizational processes (Alvesson *et al*. 2007). The interpretivist literature on ICT and control (Zuboff, 2015; Orlikowski, 2007), for instance, suggests that the design and the implementation of ICT might affect managerial control in two interdependent ways: managing workforce practices and controlling organizational processes and structures. Zuboff (2015) draws Information System as the electronic panopticon, underlining as it avoids face-to-face contact between managers and employees, makes work practices visible and emphasizes the division of work.

Finally, digital technologies have enabled new ways of organizing the organizational structures (Hertel *et al*., 2005). There are various ways to organize work digitally, but the overarching principle is to support and connect task-performing humans through digital information and communication technologies, and to organize work across the bounds of geography, organization and time in whatever way is desired. The emerging forms of network enterprises, holacracies, communities of practice, and new roles and professions are not mere consequences but are, or should, be a matter of joint design of digital technologies, organization and work (Bruni, Parolin, and Schubert 2015).

The focus of this special issue is the interplay between technological innovation and work practices. We have concentrated on work redesign in the various functions and activities carried out as part of innovation processes, and have discussed the fit between these practices and organizational strategies, structures, cultures and performance (Perlow and Kelly, 2014; Phillips and Lawrence, 2012). The emphasis is on the study of work practices (Gherardi, 2000; Orlikowski, 2007; Nicolini, 2012) at the individual, group, and organizational levels of analysis, and the impact of these practices on outcomes that are critical to both organizations and society. We believe that promoting theory and research development on this important substantive and methodological issue is essential, and that this view is confirmed by the growing number of contributions on this topic.

This volume contains nine manuscripts: six research papers have emerged from the open competition and careful review process, and three are invited and non-refereed contributions. The papers analyse the issue of "Rethinking Work: Pathways and Practices in Business and Society" in different contexts, using different methodological and epistemological approaches. Taken together, they show an original and relevant snapshot of the complexity of work practice redesign processes in contemporary organizations.

The content of this special issue

The six accepted papers disentangle the organization innovation issues spanning from the assessment of the organization's readiness to implement effectively new ICT solutions, to the effect of institutions, organizational and professional dimensions on the innovation adoption timing, the diversity and solidarity as drivers of social innovation, the employee's dimension in terms of contingent work and smart working and the social media diffusion.

The role of ICT for strengthening the competitiveness of SMEs and to fully exploit their potential for innovation, growth and development has been largely acknowledged in the literature (Bharati and Chaudhury, 2009; Tarutè and Gatautis, 2014). A prerequisite to exploit ICT is represented by the firm's technological maturity; as argued by Dyerson *et al.*, (2016) and Spinelli *et al.* (2013), understanding the level of IT readiness of their organization can help managers in identifying the areas needing improvement in the use of ICT. At the same time, the best of IT cannot be achieved without processes, rules and habits where sharing and collaboration play a key role; creating the right organizational climate and promoting a culture of IS usage may well enable an effective implementation, especially if accompanied by employees' commitment. In sum, it depends on the employees' commitment to knowledge creation processes (du Plessis and du Toit, 2006; Ruiz-Mercader *et al.*, 2006).

On these grounds, by taking an organizational and behavioural perspective, Tomo, in his research "Assessing the technological maturity of small enterprises through a collaborative approach" proposes a framework that allows evaluating the technological level of small enterprises considering their ICT maturity and the development of a collaborative approach. The dimension "ICT maturity" (Spinelli, 2009) incorporates the concepts of infrastructure maturity (hardware equipment) and applications maturity (software equipment) introduced by Balocco *et al.* (2006). Instead, the collaborative approach is related to the existence of a positive or negative climate in the organization.

Starting from the two models of Balocco *et al.* (2006) and Spinelli (2009), and reasoning on the relevance of the role of effective ICT users, Tomo develops a matrix, by considering two main dimensions: ICT maturity and collaborative organizational climate. This paper employs the case study methodology to explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes (Yin, 2003).

In more detail, five case studies of small enterprises are analyzed to catch the nuances emerging from different organizational models related to their

ICT maturity and to the degree of cooperation and collaboration characterizing their organizational climate, as this represents a factor enabling or threatening the adoption of IT and IS, and the reaching of specific outcomes deriving from their implementation.

This assessment would be of support to individuate the right strategies to improve/change the positioning of the firm, in terms of interventions on the ICT system or the organizational climate.

The case studies analysis consists in showing and explaining the positioning of the firms analyzed within the framework developed by the author. In doing so, it is verified the supportive role of the framework in helping managers assessing their organizations' ICT maturity and collaborative climate. This, in turn, would serve as a starting point to identify the specific intervention required by a firm to improve its ICT strategies.

ICT strategies encompasses the timing to adopt an innovation. There is little doubt about the importance that new technologies play for business model transformation and organizational innovation. As Mascia, Iacopino and Cicchetti said in their paper ""When the Time Comes": Exploring Temporal Differences in the Adoption of Medical Innovation", the problem of how to manage innovation and facilitate the implementation of new technologies appears even more salient in those sectors where innovation brings a greater social value, such as in the case of education, transportation and health care. In these industries, scholars are increasingly putting efforts to understand factors affecting the adoption of innovation, and policymakers are more and more aimed at providing novel solutions to encourage the introduction of valuable innovations.

Scholar carefully explored the antecedents and determinants of technology adoption and diffusion, (Casper and Matraves, 2003; Galende and de la Fuente, 2003; Fabrizio and Hawn, 2013; Gómez and Vargas, 2009; 2012; Hovav *et al.*, 2011; Lal, 1999; Spanos and Voudris, 2009; Traore and Rose, 2003; Baldwin and Lin, 2002). Several studies focused on the temporal differences in firms' innovative behaviors (Afuah, 2004; Bodas Freitas, 2008; Swamidass, 2003).

Nevertheless, Mascia, Iacopino and Cicchetti, in their paper, claim that little knowledge is available about the simultaneous effects of institutional, organizational and professional factors on the adoption of innovation; scant knowledge is available about factors influencing when firms decide to adopt an innovation.

Therefore, they explore how regulatory, organizational, and professional factors jointly affect the time elapsed between different organizations' decisions to adopt a new technology, a minimally invasive robotic surgical

system. Particularly, they considered the adoption pattern of the Da Vinci surgical system.

They explored the adoption of this technology in the Italian National Health Service, a highly-regionalized healthcare system in which substantial differences exist in the way single regions regulate the possibility for organizations to adopt new medical devices and equipment

The adopted methodology is based on a pair comparison (dyadic approach), therefore the empirical analysis aims at pointing out the difference between two adoption patterns in terms of policies and regulatory frameworks, organizational similarities and proximities.

The characteristics of the regulatory environment in this industry strongly influence organizations' decisions to introduce, adopt and use a given technology (Dopson *et al*., 2002; Ferlie *et al*., 2005; Rye and Kimberly, 2007). A consistent body of literature show how policies and regulatory frameworks at regional and local level seem to similarly affect temporal patterns of adoption (Casper and Matraves, 2003) (Achillaidelis and Antonakis, 2003 (Hashimoto *et al*., 2006 (Tediosi *et al*., 2009); basing on these premises the authors developed their first hypothesis about the positive relationship between the rapidity in adopting the medical device and the institutions environment (H1).

Imitation phenomena and the role of similarity (or homophily) have been considered in the exploration of antecedents that accelerate adoption behaviors. In this vein, the authors second hypothesis is about the influence of organizational attributes similarity on the innovation adoption timing (H2).

The process of innovation has been clearly intended as a social and learning process, where interaction is a relevant source of innovation (Coleman *et al*., 1957; Weterings and Boschma, 2009). Extant research suggests that the adoption and diffusion can be characterized as "a temporal process of social contagion" between a non-adopter, an "individual ego," and an "alter" who has adopted the innovation (Angst *et al*., 2010: 1220). Social contagion is more likely to occur when the "ego" and the "alter" are proximate actors. The general assumption, in this vein, is that the more proximate two actors are (geographically H3a and socially H3b), the stronger the effect on diffusion behaviours and therefore closer the innovation's adoption times.

Empirical evidences based on the case study (Da Vinci surgical system adoption in 2012) support H2 and H3a, providing useful information for healthcare managers and decision makers at the local, regional, and national levels. First, greater awareness and knowledge of interdependencies among

organizations and characteristics of institutional environments could aid the appraisal of collaborative and competitive relationships among organizations adopting a new technology. Second, this information is useful for the implementation of strategic actions to enhance technological competitive advantage as well as introduce a given technology or, in contrast, to avoid the undesirable adoption of a medical innovation.

The other four research papers focus on the workers' management issue related to the innovation strategies.

Nowadays the organization environment is enriched by many types of diversity that create new forms of solidariety needing to be properly managed also as social innovation's drivers. The Bizjak, Faldetta, Sicca article "The Role of Solidarity in Diversity Management Practices: A Challenge for Social Innovation in Organizations" aims at analysing to what extent the issue of solidarity in marginalised groups is connected to managing diversity, in order to foster social innovation, meant as the development of HRM practices that contribute to creating value for individuals and society (Mulgan *et al.*, 2007; Scapolan *et al.*, 2017; Lazazzara, 2015).

Therefore, the distance between diversity management and solidarity could be considered to be representative of the distance between marginalised and dominant groups. Indeed, if solidarity, at the interpersonal level, could transform the cohesion among groups in conflict with the organisation, the distance could be even more emphasised, leading to a negative cycle.

In order to investigate this distance between the two concepts, a group of seven public and private bodies (all part of the same LGBTIQ+, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexual and queer communities, inclusion committee) belonging to the same UK County have been involved in the research, collecting both documents and interviews concerning equality and diversity policies.

In order to analyse a discourse critically, the method followed analyses both text and context (Fairclough, 1992; Phillips and Hardy, 2002), with the aim of understanding how the set of interactions between organisational members and the social world takes place (Fairclough, 1995, 2005).

The data collection was carried out over six months, during which the authors participated in meetings and events organised by the committee; they collected 55 policy documents to analyse and they conducted three semi-structured interviews, with the aim of surrounding data analysis with the narrative of human experience.

In their work, authors analysed official documents about diversity policies and these documents belong to the following anonymised

organisations: the LGBTIQ+ Committee; the university; the police; the fire and rescue service; a social work service; a multinational; and a charity.

All the materials have been analysed using the CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) approach to highlight, from a macro-social perspective, power relationships and practices of resistance, in the shape of inclusion, discriminatory practices, and resistant behaviours.

This study shows that solidarity and diversity are still practically distant in the organisations that have been analysed. Solidarity originates from interpersonal relationships and is related to group cohesion, and this is what is missing in the organisational context.

The authors suggest that the findings have implications for HRM practices. Firstly, they advocate to combine the strategic and the interpersonal levels, in order not to deny inclusion and fair practices to marginalised groups. Secondly, they underline how the promotion of cohesion and solidarity is not always the way of improving inclusion in the organisation. Thirdly, to be effective diversity management practices have to be directed to the overall organization. If they are addressed to marginalised groups only, they might not be successful.

The need of flexibility in the organization introduces innovation in the worker contracts and boosters the growth of flexible work accommodations (Perlow and Kelly, 2014). One of the most used work flexible arrangement is the contingent work (Polivka and Nardone, 1989); consistent with the growth in contingent employment, there has been significant increase in the number of studies investigating the effects of contingent work contracts on the organisational behaviour of workers (Ogbonnaya *et al.*, 2017; Consiglio *et al.*, 2017).

Metallo, Agrifoglio and Ferrara, investigate in their paper "Understanding the Moderating Effects of Work Status on the Links between Social Exchange, Psychological Contract Fulfilment, and Job Satisfaction" the moderating effect of the work status (contingent or permanent) on the relationship between social exchange and psychological contract, and job satisfaction. Basing on the relevant literature on the addressed topic, they develop five main hypotheses tested on data collected from 237 employees working in one plant of an Italian well-established food company. Their findings confirm their hypotheses suggesting that work status has a multifaceted influence on job satisfaction, suggesting future innovation in worker contracts.

Another example of organizational innovation on worker life has been introduced with the smart working that gives to the workers flexibility and

autonomy in choosing their spaces, work schedules and the tools they use, along with an increased individual responsibility for the results.

This represents a challenge for the managers that, on the one hand, have to face with to a loose of control since the workers are outside the physical organization boundaries, on the other hand, with the novel forms of surveillance created by the ICTs tools that, enabling remote working, simultaneously incorporate specific traits that allow managers to monitor their employees even more radically (Brocklehurst, 2001). Therefore, some scholars have focused on how organizations can manage remote working effectively (Staples *et al.*, 1999, Chen and Nath 2005 and 2008). "More broadly, nowadays there is some debate as to whether this way of working can really open up new possibilities for workers to make autonomous decisions in the regulation of their work, or whether, on the contrary, it increases managers' control over work processes, by reducing the actual autonomy of workers (Brey, 1999; Vendramin and Valenduc, 2016)".

Roberto Albano, Ylenia Curzi, Tania Parisi, Lia Tirabeni in their paper "Autonomy, control, and discretion in smart working dwell on the controversial arguments about the effect of smart working on workers' performances arguing that the conflicting results – increased versus reduced autonomy of remote workers - might largely depend on the misleading definition of autonomy the scholars adopt. Therefore, they propose a framework for the organization personality based on the distinction between autonomy (the capability to produce one's own rules and manage one's own process of actions and decisions) and discretion (the capability to act and make decisions within a range of predetermined alternative actions and decisions on the basis of previous and heteronymous rules). To answer to their research question, they conduct a factor analysis of some variables drawn from the 6th wave (2015) of the EWCS[1], considering a subsample of four industrialized countries (Germany, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom) to measure the consistency of the four types coming from the proposed framework in two groups of interviewed workers: mobile workers - a proxy group of smart workers - and non-mobile workers (also called "traditional") based on the respondents' perceptions. The main objective of this study is to find an empirical answer to the question of what mix of autonomy and discretion tends to characterize the experience of mobile workers as compared to that of non-mobile workers. The results of the

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[1] The European Working Conditions Surveys (EWCS) is a periodic survey, where the units of observation are workers, carried out at five-year intervals in European countries

present study indicate that mobile work is most frequently perceived as a way of working that requires a relatively autonomous organization personality rather than a mainly autonomous one. This signals that, in our sample, mobile workers simultaneously experienced both a sense of discretion and a sense of autonomy, rather than of pure autonomy.

The organization must pay attention to workers' behaviour also outside the firm's boundaries. In fact, employees often act as a company's ambassadors as the company message, its culture and its values are considered more credible when they come from actual people (e.g. employees).

Social media brings a new way to communicate with a pervasive nature that cannot be neglected by the organization. Indeed, organizations have been changing their work practice due to the rapid advancement of social media (Dreher, 2014); they can avail the opportunity to get benefits from social media both internally and externally. Thus, for example, externally, organizations started using social media to crowdsource innovative ideas on how to improve their service delivery, quality or to increase transparency regarding their operations (Tursunbayeva *et al.*, 2017), while internally, organizations started using social media to quickly integrate employees into organizational culture or to increase their engagement by creating a sense of community (Goldwasser and Edwards, 2014). Organizations are represented on social media not only by the official company pages, but also through the personal accounts of their employees or their private social media activity, even if some times they couldn't be aware of this.

The empirical case study presented in the Di Lauro, Tursunbayeva, Antonelli and Martinez' paper explores how data from employees' personal LinkedIn accounts can be used to measure how they manifest organizational identity, and the roles that their seniority of service, type of contract and age play in this. LinkedIn, with more than 530 million users (LinkedIn Newsroom, 2018), is the world's largest professional social network on the Internet. The selected Case Company is located in Italy.

A created bespoke measure, on a scale of 0-10, of organizational identity intends to register how strongly employees feel a sense of belonging to the Case Company and project their organizational identity through their personal LinkedIn accounts. This produced a figure aggregating 5 variables that capture the extent to which employees project their organizational image on their personal LinkedIn profiles

The results don't support the authors' hypotheses, and they propose some reasons to explain this; employees might also perceive LinkedIn as an instrument for individual networking and not for identifying or representing

the organizational identity of their employer. Thus, employees may potentially aim to use LinkedIn for exploring new job opportunities and not for demonstrating to others their belonging to some particular organization; however, they couldn't overlook the effect of their choice on their organization.

The Case Company, as a consequence, addressed the emerging need for explaining social media use management practices to employees, planning ad hoc activities.

These activities helped to explain to employees how to use LinkedIn for professional and personal purposes, as well as the importance for the organization of the organizational image that they project externally via their personal profiles. As a result, 7 months after the first data collection (and only 2 months after the aforementioned activities), screening of employees' public LinkedIn profiles demonstrated that employees made a more aware use of LinkedIn.

The invited article by Luca Solari and Edoardo Della Torre is also focused on organizational innovation. However, instead of approaching this topic from the point of view of academic debates, they explore the most recent practitioners' literature on designing new organizational forms. Their assumption is that the practitioners' perception about new organizational form can help understand new organizational forms as part of the experiences people have in their life. By analysing three different models coming from this stream of literature: the agile organization (Aghina *et al*. 2018); the teal organization (Laloux 2014); and holacracy (Robertson 2015), they identify some common features. Solari and Della Torre highlight that all those models share an infrastructure based on teams; they allow teams to develop multiple roles and interact on the basis of a spontaneous order; and they require higher order intervention for being coordinated. The success of those models in the practitioners' literature indicates, in their opinion, that a novel organizational form is emerging.

Solari and Della Torre also analyse the social environment underlining how it is now characterized by values related to belonging, esteem, and self-realization. Moreover, the organizations can rely on technological infrastructures able to coordinate work across space and time. Based on this scenario they hypothesise that a novel form of organization - where liberty takes the place of control, cooperation instead of competition which substitutes task with a sense of collective action - has space to emerge. Based on the analysis of the contemporary forms of organization described by practitioners and consistent with recent trends in society and technology,

Solari and Della Torre propose the emergence of a novel organizational form.

Their contribution endorses this organizational innovation and provides an analytical framework to interpret it. As Solari and Della Torre claim, the characteristics of this novel form of organization are flexibility in processes and roles to adapt to the so-called VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity) world by increasing its capacity to suit by granting more discretion to the employees. When reflecting on the role of management in this novel organizational form, Solari and Della Torre advocate, both for practitioners and scholars, the abandonment of some of the common assumptions related to a rational sequence of decision-making acts to be able to point at the discovery of new options for the company.

Differently from the Solari and Della Torre's article, the second invited contribution of this special issue is a book review that helps extend the very conception of innovation. The long review by Alessandro Mongili aims at discussing the book "Critical Studies of Innovation. Alternative Approaches to the Pro-Innovation Bias" edited by Benoît Godin and Dominique Vinck (2017). Considering the importance that innovation and technology have in organizational discourse, this contribution wants to unpack the concept of innovation beyond the common assumption, and to contrast the neutrality of socio-technical phenomena.

As Mongili pointed out, the contribution of the book is manifold. It offers a reconceptualization of the very concept of innovation; an analysis of the phenomena that are excluded from the current concepts of innovation; and a theoretical proposal, called NOvation, directed to develop a more comprehensive approach to socio-technical phenomena.

The book aims to challenge the pro-innovation bias, which is based on the shared belief that innovation is always good. It implies, as Mongili highlights, the reconfiguration of the very concept of innovation as a planned process that follows a rational vision. The authors characterize it as a process not always with an outcome and able to include political aspects (conflict, power, and interests) in socio-technical processes.

The book dares the common assumptions of innovation claiming for its re-signification the ability to include what the editors call the 'orphans' of the mainstream.

The first 'orphan' is the concept of imitation. Godin highlights with the discussion of some classical studies how imitation is crucial in understanding uses, the diffusion, and the articulation of technology. Despite the diffusion of the innovation of the socio-technical processes, originality has been considered the centre of every consideration of innovation, the role of

imitation has been marginalized in contemporary public discourse. A second 'orphan' is incremental innovation, which concerns changes to parts of an unchanged technological system, or device. Other 'orphans' are change as the withdrawal or the non-addition of elements. As Mongili highlights, these subtractive innovations are very common in the food industry, where some elements are withdrawn by changing the content and the structure of the products.

The authors advocate for the inclusion of those orphans in the very concept of innovation. They propose the concept of NOvation, within the purpose that considers change without paying a causal relevance to the outcome. The aim is to develop a more comprehensive framework of innovation able to include also heterogeneous processes of regulation, use, maintenance and repair, and standardization within socio-technical phenomena. As Mongili underlines, despite having been often neglected by the mainstream, these phenomena deserve a central position in the research field and, we deem, justify the consideration of organizational scholars.

Finally, the "*La Narrazione nelle Scienze Sociali*" is a new Italian edition of the famous 2004 book by Barbara Czarniawska, *"Narratives in Social Science Research. Introducing Qualitative Methods*", recently published by *puntOorg*. The review of the new edition of Czarniawska's text included in this special issue aims to highlight and weave together two issues: i) the innovativeness, relevance and topicality of Czarniawska's contribution to the debate in social sciences, and in organizational studies in particular, and ii) the reasons that encouraged *puntOorg* to propose a translated edition, interpreted and enriched with reflections around the author's proposal for the use of narrative as a research tool. Czarniawska's work can be interpreted as a milestone in the growing interest in organizational studies for object narrations, and also as a fundamental step in the growing legitimization of the methods applied to narrative materials. The review, therefore, enriches the special issue by highlighting how the work of Czarniawska has been important from the epistemological and methodological point of view in the field of sociological and organizational studies in Italy.

In summary, we hope that readers enjoy these articles as much as we have. We think this special issue offers different and interesting perspectives on the issue of technological innovation and work practice redesign, stimulating the ongoing academic and practitioner debate. These papers discuss a variety of topics, theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches, reflecting the diversity that exists in this field. What is also apparent throughout these papers is that this area remains relatively under-researched. We therefore hope that readers will identify new avenues for

further investigation as a result of this special issue and will continue to develop and expand the evidence base for HR in the digital age.

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