

## Editorial: Towards a Critical *Intradisciplinary* and *Interdisciplinary* Approach in Humanities

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The *puntOorg International Journal* (pIJ) with the present issue reaches its sixth year of publication, thus further confirming the approach adopted from its very first issue: to play the role of an oxygen tank for academic debate in the international scientific landscape, bolstering primarily **intradisciplinary** research. By this, we as the puntOorg international research network of researchers mean a type of approach to knowledge that moves vertically and, hence, in depth, as a solid and necessary (but not sufficient) basis for activating and reaching an **interdisciplinary** (and, thus, horizontal) academic dialogue.

This approach is a critical feature of pIJ and, more broadly, the puntOorg international research network in all its articulations: from our *punto org book series* to *puntOorg – The Notebooks*; from the section *puntOorg – poetry and literature* to other important ‘meeting points’ of the network.

Applying **intradisciplinary** rigour as a starting point for **interdisciplinary** work has a twofold outcome: on the one hand, it is in line with the processes of increasing horizontal specialisation of academic knowledge production work in all economically developed countries; on the other hand, it is a necessary defence against the risks of cheap and low-cost interdisciplinarity. **Interdisciplinary** research work is sometimes at risk of becoming idle chit-chat for the lack of solid **intradisciplinary** foundations. This could lead to the failure of the very concept of **interdisciplinarity**, that is, the ability to communicate – through the exchange of *Weltanschauung* among different disciplines – perspectives that would remain unheard of, by retaining only the *intra* perspective. This ‘intra-inter’ dialectics allows us to welcome into pIJ areas of investigation (indicated in the ‘About the journal’ section of the website) that are historically kept separate in official academic taxonomies. pIJ’s approach is not new: quite the opposite. It is an approach embedded into a millenary characteristic of the humanistic approach, based on the attitude of confrontation and a dialectical-debating approach in the processes of knowledge construction. The humanistic approach indeed differs from the scientific one because it privileges the logic of argumentation (i.e., plausible/improbable), as opposed to the logic of demonstration, based on the reassuring true/false binarism.

Therefore, pIJ moves perfectly in line and in the furrow of the Humanities tradition: we use methods that are mainly referred to critical thinking and speculative tools. Our methods have a significant historical value (every social fact in our approach has a historical connotation), and therefore, they are constantly questioned and confuted. For this reason, if on the one hand we rely on the power of the dialectical-debating method, on the other hand, we do not give up the fundamental dialogue with those predominantly empirical approaches, produced by research based on a reductionist epistemology, typical of natural sciences, such as Physics, Genetics and Neuroscience.

Naturally, we are aware of the risk of such an approach, in the context of international humanities and social science journals: the risk of giving up precisely that horizontal specialisation of academic research work previously mentioned. Nevertheless, we believe that precisely that intra-inter dialectic I was proposing can allow for both rigour and intellectual breadth, without falling into amateurism, into the Hobbist approach that does not suit international academic debate. In other words, on the basis of a constructivist epistemology that sees in Karl Weick's seminal book *The Social Psychology of Organizing* (1979 [1969]) the pioneering approach to organisation, we wager on the possibility of constructing a vision of the world of research 'through the eyes of the other' – *à la* von Foerster.

The present issue of pIJ comprises six papers, opening with two contributions (respectively, by Domenico Napolitano and Lorenzo Fattori) on the topic of disability. This is a crucial matter within the debate started by the *puntOorg International Journal*, thus contributing to a better understanding of the concept of *inclusion*, considered here as the opposite of *integration*.

Inclusion occurs through the solicitations that those who occupy public roles or, more generally, are in a position of power received from those at the margins, if and to the extent to which they are able to stimulate a reinterpretation of the prevailing practices of the government of social and political processes. Therefore, the construct of inclusion is capable of 'imposing' a reconstruction and redefinition of the dominant assets typical of the hegemonic classes which, as such, tend towards self-reproduction. Integration provides, on the contrary, invariant frames, asking and, sometimes, imposing those at the margins to change themselves so as to be precisely integrated. The puntOorg international network regards inclusion as a theoretical device for the re-organisation and rewriting of vocabularies, discourses (*à la* Foucault), procedures, institutions, to the point of being able in some cases to remove the causes of exclusion. This way of understanding the construct of inclusion therefore implies, by definition, the existence of the 'organisation-construct': in other words, we can include, or we can exclude, or we cannot include, only if there is a place (real or virtual) with respect to which there are boundaries, vertices, bases, centres. The fundamental aim of the puntOorg approach, then, is the following one: whatever the forms of organisation or organising, as well as whatever view we cast on organisational action, we all need organisations as well. We all need walls (physical or virtual) to think, to act and to 'be together', since walls 'contain' us, both in the sense that they contain our social actions as they develop over time, and in the sense that walls function as psychological containment, a surrogate for the functions of containment that nourish our childhood and persist throughout our adult lives. Thus, our organisations (but also our organising), with their walls (visible or invisible), satisfy an urgent need for objectivity and containment, *à la* Bion. And in order to satisfy this need for objectivity, we all (and each of us) give up some of our subjectivity (and maybe, even our power?). If this statement is plausible, then our participation in organisational and in organising is, in some sense, a movement towards a centre, a summit, a base, in any case, a sprint towards a defined point in time and space. Nevertheless, if this reasoning stands, then it is plausible as well that once we reach and occupy a desired point in time and space, we have the opportunity to discover (or, better, rediscover) and learn from the marginal and liminal contexts we have abandoned or given up on. Therefore, 'to include', in the sense of the creation of inclusion that I have discussed previously, can also be a way of re-appropriating those 'quotas of subjectivity' that we have handed over to our organisations, in the name of those processes of 'objectification' that we all need. In short, inclusion must be seen as the recovery of pieces of our subjectivity.

Starting from this way of understanding inclusion, Domenico Napolitano's paper, "Reuniting Speech-Impaired People with Their Voices: Sound Technologies for Disability and Why They Matter for Organisation Studies", proposes an analysis of sound and voice technologies for speech-impaired people as sites of knowledge production about disability. The contribution focuses on the case of Google's project to reunite speech-impaired users with their voices using voice cloning technology, an evolution of speech synthesis that allows for the reconstruction of the sonic and timbral characteristics of a single person's voice. Addressing both the narratives and representations – which reveal a medical model of disability as an external flaw to be cured through technology – and the material practices and operations enacted by those technologies – which highlight epistemologies of human variation, embodiment and accessibility built into the software –, the paper argues that disability as a social construct is co-constituted between those levels. In this regard, Domenico Napolitano's work proposes a socio-technical model of disability theorisation that unites techno-scientific knowledge, cultural values, images of the user, material operations and organisational practices. From this perspective, the paper argues that the study of disabilities would benefit from the contributions and insights coming from organisation and media studies in order to reveal the constructedness of disability and able-bodiedness, and the role of media technologies, institutions, and representations in producing and upholding – as well as potentially challenging – such constructions.

By analysing a different empirical context, the paper "Disability: Between Mobility and Organisational Inclusion" by Lorenzo Fattori confirms the same way of understanding the concept of inclusion: several charters of rights in Western societies recognise a specific right to mobility, but for some citizens, it may actually be difficult to travel freely. People with disabilities, in fact, often encounter technical or organisational problems that prevent them from enjoying this right. Lorenzo Fattori maintains that ensuring mobility is fundamental for the organisational inclusion of people with disabilities. Since the early 1990s, in Italy, many legislative provisions have been drafted to improve the possibilities of travelling for people with disabilities; the author thinks that it is legitimate, after thirty years, to ask at what point we are today. Lorenzo Fattori, therefore, proposes to carry out a specific study on the functioning of transport systems from the point of view of these individuals to explore the possibilities of improvements. Thanks to this study, the author evaluates whether further interventions are necessary, regarding not only the legislative framework but also, and above all, the actual possibilities of mobility offered by transport systems, starting from the railroad, which was the first, in the 1980s, to begin to offer specific services for people with disabilities.

By adopting the same epistemic framework within the construct of inclusion, Serena Sbrana and Adelia de Miguel, in their paper "Sexual Fluidity and Attitudes towards Bisexuality", shift our attention as readers from the matters related to disability to those of sexual fluidity and attitudes towards bisexuality. The research presents an instrument to assess sexual fluidity changes in attractions and sexual orientation identity over time. It further examines whether experiencing sexual fluidity is related to specific cognitions, attitudes and beliefs among sexually and non-sexually fluid individuals. Participants (435 Spanish young adult students, 310 females and 125 males) completed an online form that assessed demographic data, sexual orientation, sexual fluidity, and attitudes towards male and female bisexuality. An empirical sexual-fluidity factor is therefore isolated: women scored higher than men ( $d = .68$ ) and bisexual people higher than homosexual ( $d = 1.74$ ) and heterosexual ( $d = 1.40$ ) groups. The scholars also underline gender, sexual orientation and sexual fluidity differences in attitudes

towards male and female bisexuality. Indeed, the data analysed by the authors demonstrate that women consider male and female bisexuality more stable than men ( $d = .29$  &  $d = .34$ ); sexual-fluid people show higher positive attitudes towards male and female bisexuality ( $d$  ranged  $.29 - .51$ ) than the non-sexually fluid group; and bisexual individuals score higher in male and female bisexuality attitudes than heterosexual individuals. This study confirms previous research, which showed that female individuals were more likely than male ones to have fluid sexuality. The paper further highlights that attitudes towards bisexuality are not a simple matter: they are affected by an intricate intersection of gender, sexual orientation and sexual fluidity factors.

In line with the inclusive thinking approach previously discussed, the theme of identity is central in the paper "Narrative Identity Constructs and Effects on Performance in the Field of Sports" by Paola Briganti, Luisa Varriale and Stefania Mele. The paper discusses matters linked to identity with a particular interest in the field of sports. The numerous and challenging changes and pressures in our society (be they related to new technologies, socio-demographic processes, financial and economic crisis, organisational reshaping, societal values changes, and other aspects of our contemporary society) have significantly affected how individuals live. Indeed, people need to completely rethink and reshape their own ways of behaving so as to be able to face many challenges, mainly linked to the expression of themselves and their own identity, which needs to conform to specific societal and cultural values. It is not easy to keep and express our own identity in a contemporary society characterised by high pluralism and multiculturalism, where particularly the new generations need to feel accepted by the world and do not often follow their authentic way of being and behaving. For this reason, narrative identity constructs have been receiving increasing attention by scholars and practitioners trying to search for and identify the most effective ways for individuals in any setting to describe themselves, achieving the best performance and high levels of well-being in everyday life. In the sport context, the debate on this issue is still open, emphasising the effects of narrative identity constructs on the athletes' performance. The explorative study performed by Paola Briganti, Luisa Varriale and Stefania Mele adopts a qualitative methodology and uses a manual content analysis technique in order to investigate narrative identity as a possible effective path for individuals to face their everyday life challenges, trying to keep up with their strong values and their own way of being and behaving. The purpose is to analyse the identity issue through the narrative identity constructs with direct and indirect connections to the sport setting, mostly athletes' performance, thus investigating the relationship between specific topics (i.e., presence/absence of purpose and meaning, positive/negative self-view, positive/negative relationships) for athletes involved in sports competitions outlining their way of describing and talking about themselves. The results of this study outline that individual characteristics significantly affect the athletes' storytelling style and sports performance. These findings can support coaches and personal trainers, as well as athletes, to identify and implement effective practices for improving their narrative identity, such as practical training and educational programmes for their self-awareness.

The last two papers adopt a 'scientific' approach, in the sense of being 'demonstration' rather than 'argumentation' oriented. In this, they act as sparring partners to two alternative ways of proceeding in academic debates. The first paper, "Where Physics Meets Biology", is by Mario Nicodemi, who proposes an interdisciplinary approach within the hard sciences, one of the most advanced in the world and with a significant social impact, especially for the treatment

of many diseases that we have hitherto considered to be 'rare'. Therefore, the boundary between Life and Physical Sciences currently includes the strategic research field where the wealth of data produced by new quantitative technologies in molecular biology naturally meets theoretical physics' advanced analysis and modelling tools. For its profound scientific implications and huge potential impacts in biomedicine, this combination of approaches is attracting substantial interest, and this paper briefly reviews some of the developments in the field.

The last paper, "Integrating Big Data Analytics, Systems Thinking and Viable Systems Approach Towards a Shift from Individual to Collective Intelligence and Collective Knowledge Systems" by Stefano Armenia and Francesca Loia, provides a model for managing external and internal knowledge in order to support the viability of the organisation (system) in the longer term.

As in previous issues of pIJ, closing the present one is a book review on the masterpiece by Jonathan Sterne, one of the most prominent scholars in media archaeology, cultural studies and sound studies. His talent, actually, resides right in the ability to merge those three fields of study in a coherent and brilliant way. With his third book, *Diminished Faculties: A Political Phenomenology of Impairment* (Duke University Press, 2021), Sterne takes a step further and converges his research background into the territory of disability studies. In this outstanding work that moves between theory and autobiography, the author starts from his own personal vocal impairments deriving from his thyroid cancer to reflect on the ways sound technologies for speech impairment and hearing impairment can be at the same time enabling and disabling when considered in the materiality of their design and the practices they enact. The book thus represents a cultural, archaeological and political journey that is valuable to anybody who wants to engage with the issue of disability in media and reflect on how crucial it is for organisations and accessibility.

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Readers are invited to critically react to this editorial. Their comments will be published in the forthcoming issues of the *puntOorg International Journal*.