

Remembering Barbara Czarniawska (1948-2024)

Professor Barbara Czarniawska passed away on April 7, 2024, after a period of illness. An internationally renowned organization theorist with extraordinary career and scholarly achievements, Barbara Czarniawska opened the boundaries of Organization Studies by offering a constructivist, narrative and network-based understanding of *organizing*.

With immense gratitude, Tecnoscienza remembers Barbara Czarniawska as part of the International Advisory Board, where she supported and advised the journal from its inception in 2010 until 2017. Many among us have had the opportunity of knowing Barbara Czarniawska personally, thus witnessing firsthand her defining traits – her generosity, insatiable curiosity, sharpness, and unwavering willingness to engage in intellectual discourse with colleagues, regardless of their academic standing or level of experience.

While her work received widespread recognition and numerous awards – such as through membership of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences and the Wihuri International Prize in 2003 for her contributions to the “cultural and economic progress of mankind”, among other prestigious acknowledgements – we wish to honor her way to practice and conceive scholarly work. This aspect was probably the most important to her readers and to herself, as she had a unique ability to anticipate what matters for social research and turning these insights into outstanding research programs, all while amusing the reader with a sense of humour that plays seriously with concepts and disciplines.

As scholars of Science and Technology Studies (STS), we particularly value Barbara Czarniawska’s relentless efforts to foster a dialogue between STS and Organization Studies. In this regard, her book *Translating Organizational Change*, co-edited with Guje Sevón and published in 1996, stands out as especially significant. The book brought fresh perspectives from the Sociology of Translation, offering new ways to understand organizational change. As always, Barbara Czarniawska’s goals were ambitious. With this work, she transcended both structuralist and intention-based theories by framing organizational change as the emergent result of multiple translations. This groundbreaking perspective allowed the effects of change to be seen as unpredictable and co-produced by complex networks of actors, blurring the lines between planners and executors, ideas and objects, transformation and stability.

At the same time, her work also aimed to challenge and provoke STS scholars, encouraging them not to settle into preconceived concepts and representations of reality. Noteworthy in this regard are the article *On Time, Space, and Action Nets* (2004) and the book *A Theory of Organizing* (2008), where she developed the concept of *action-net*. This theoretical construct was aimed to strip down expectations towards the organizational phenomena under analysis, for instance, by not assuming that interactions among groups of actors will necessarily result

in the formation of a network with an own agency. Barbara Czarniawska's critique was directed at the tendency of scholars, who followed the pioneering work of Bruno Latour and Michel Callon on "actor-networks", to generate analyses that validate this concept and the overall Actor-Network Theory (ANT) approach. In her later publications, Barbara Czarniawska delved deeper into the dialogue between ANT and organization theory, offering a reinterpretation of Latour as an "accidental organizational theorist" (2014). The latter, in turn, viewed organizing as a "mode of existence" (2012) directly inspired by Czarniawska's work.

Finally, a special mention is due to Barbara Czarniawska for her methodological contribution which has provided an immeasurable stimulus to qualitative researchers exploring organizational and innovation processes that are increasingly dispersed in space and in time. Her reflections on narrative methods as well as ethnographic ones – with particular reference to shadowing – have become a landmark over the years for analyzing processes reproduced by actors situated in different places and who act with different timing and priorities. Barbara Czarniawska's work has significantly enriched the study of emerging heterogeneous networks by offering precise methodological guidance, effectively addressing the often-cited critique of Actor-Network Theory's lack of detailed methodological indications for empirical work.

In remembering Barbara Czarniawska, *Tecnoscienza* joins the thoughts of all colleagues around the world who had the privilege of meeting her and drawing inspiration from her work, experiencing firsthand her unique intellectual and human qualities. We will miss her and miss her already.

Tecnoscienza Editorial Board