

## Concluding remarks

### Narrative processuality and future research avenues for counter- narrative studies

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*Concluding remarks: narrative processuality and future research avenues for counter-narrative studies*

Ann Starbæk Bager, Klarissa Lueg and Marianne Wolff Lundholt

In this concluding chapter we will sum up some of the main themes and debates in this book and look at future research avenues.

The chapters in the handbook clearly emphasise contemporary research on counter-narrative representing a vital, diverse, potent and promising field of study. The handbook features an impressive commitment by scholars from various research fields (e.g., from organisation and business studies, from sociology, from literature studies, and from political science). Evidently, there are many diverse approaches to and applications of the of concept counter-narrative, depending on the particular research field, ‘objects’/topics of study as well as on theoretical, philosophical and empirical orientations. Nevertheless, there are innovative and similar trajectories or threads of thought that we will do our best to sum up here, knowing full well that we cannot embrace, and give sufficient credit to, all of the profound and inspiring nuances and discussions brought up, and initiated, in the book.

Common to perspectives adopted in this handbook is,

1) their stand on challenging more traditional BIG story approaches to canonical stories and narratives, including the beginning-middle-end (BME) viewpoint tuned to coherence, clear-cut plots, and narrative structures (Bager, 2019),

2) their criticism of merely text and product-oriented perspectives not taking contextual circumstances into account, but redirecting focus to narrative processes and the interaction and relationships between various narrative resources, and

3) them favouring social constructivist and postmodern assumptions over structuralist and functionalistic rationalities.

For this reason, the contributions in this handbook are part of moving the traditional narrative field toward studying the complexities and contradictory aspects of social life, such as the struggles between resistive and controlling forces in and between various social groups and contexts by studying a *diversity* of narrative genres and representations. In this respect, counter narrative studies are inherently critically oriented towards taking for granted knowledge but aim at inquiring into how and which knowledge systems and forms gain dominance over others in social processes and at laying bare the implications of this for various groups, communities and contexts.

From this critical, social constructivist and pluralistic purview, the various authors discuss and challenge conceptualisations and studies of narratives and counter narratives from different theoretical, methodological and empirical standpoints. We will comment on some of these debates in the chapter at hand.

The chapter is structured in six parts. First, we explain how the handbook represents a review of the last 16 years of studies on counter-narratives. In this section, we comment on how the perception of the relationship between narratives and counter-narratives has changed over time and how various scholars in the handbook contribute to enhancing earlier conceptions. The discussion reveals a change of course within counter-narrative studies: a strict narrative/counter-narrative duality gives way to narrative context sensitivity and processuality.

In section two we look at the most represented theoretical and analytical perspectives that various chapters draw on to deal with narrative processuality, polyphony and complexity and discuss their implications for narrative and counter narrative studies.

In section three we sum up some of the analyses in the handbook that reveal how narrative struggles play out and how some rationalities and master narratives gain dominance over others in

diverse contexts (such as higher education and European politics). In this section we argue how the turn to narrative processuality, for instance through the analogy of narrative ecologies as coined by Gabriels (2017), provides a contemporary framework and language enabling counter-narrative scholars to discuss societal change as ongoing dynamics between power/control and resistive forces on many levels in society spanning from the global to the local.

Section four comprises a review and a discussion of a range of methodological challenges and pitfalls within studies on (counter) narratives. Issues of this kind are raised in various chapters in the handbook across its seven subsections. We look at chapters that nuance and rethink narrative theories to meet some of the challenges and pitfalls. Then we turn to discourse studies from which numerous authors in the handbook draw inspiration to add conceptual and analytical rigour to the reflection and analysis of narrative/discursive processes.

In section five we discuss ethical and ideological concerns that the handbook gives rise to. We further discuss the potentials of taking a narrative and storytelling activist perspective where narrative scholars are actively involved in studying and helping new narrative structures along in situated practices.

In section six we present our concluding remarks and we outline avenues for future research. Among other things, we invite (counter) narrative scholars to intensify empirical attention to processuality, to interaction, and to multimodal and temporal multiplicity.

### **Review of the last 16 years of counter-narrative studies**

The handbook comprises a review and nuancing of the last 16 years of studies on counter-narratives and it provides insights into contemporary and important studies of the dynamics between resistive and controlling forces in various social contexts. In particular, Bamberg and Wipff (in this handbook) in their chapter on *Re-considering counter-narratives*, from a

retrospective position, review central texts that have played an important role in putting counter-narratives on the agenda as a significant and promising research topic. Similar to other chapters in the handbook (such as those authored by Bager & Lundholt; Bamberg & Wipff; Hyvärinen; Johansen; Lueg, Graf & Powel; Rehnberg & Grafström), they refer back to the publication by Bamberg and Andrews (2004) entitled *Considering counter narratives*. This publication proposed the concept of counter-narratives as an innovative way to reflect on and inquire into issues of resistance and control in diverse contexts. From then onwards, counter-narratives developed as a new, promising concept and research avenue for narrative scholars.

Back then, Bamberg and Andrews posited that “Counter narratives only make sense in relation to something else, that which they are countering. The very name identifies it as a positional category, in tension with another category” (Bamberg & Andrews, p. x). This assumedly dichotomic relationship between counter-narrative and dominant, hegemonic or master narratives has been expounded widely, for instance by another key publication that is diligently referred to throughout the handbook: this handbook’s predecessor *Counter narratives and organization* by Frandsen, Kuhn and Lundholt (2017). Here, the authors positioned the study of counter-narratives into a particular context - the organisation - and proposed more nuanced and complex ways of grasping the dichotomic narrative/counter-narrative relationship.

In Frandsen, Kuhn & Lundholt (2017), the concept of counter-narratives was unfolded and examined in order to challenge more traditional approaches to narrative studies within organisations. Here, diverse takes on counter-narratives were addressed as ways and means to study “how some narratives gain dominance over others; how narratives intersect, relate to, challenge and reinforce each other; and how actors ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ organisations co-construct narratives.” (Frandsen, et al., 2017: 2). The concept of counter-narratives was presented as an alternative way of re-telling stories about the complexities inherent in organisational life that are being increasingly

emphasised in contemporary organisational studies (Bager, 2019). One of the main arguments was that some, more traditional narrative scholars tend to overlook the complex, power-infused and often contradictory aspects of organisational life. Research into counter-narratives was highlighted to enable scholars to depict some of the political and social complexities and tensions faced in organisational life (Frandsen, et al., 2017).

The authors discussed a binary relationship between narratives and counter-narratives in the sense that dominant narratives have the power to shape individuals and organisational worldviews, identities and values while the master narrative can be destabilised and negotiated through counter narrative processes. However, they complicated the strict dichotomic relationship in various ways, such as counter-narratives being viewed as a challenge to dominant narratives that can also themselves be countered by other counter narratives in complex ways (Frandsen, et al., 2017).

Bamberg and Andrews were already aware of such duality issues back in 2004 as they stated that "... what is dominant and what is resistant are not, of course, static questions, but rather are forever shifting placements... the discussion of counter narratives is ultimately a consideration of multiple layers of positioning" (Bamberg & Andrews, 2004, p. x). From these trains of thoughts, both publications invited further scrutiny and critical discussion of the potential of counter-narrative studies and this handbook is evidence that such debate has been pertinaciously taken up by numerous authors representing various research fields and communities.

### *Beyond a strict narrative/counter narrative duality and towards narrative context sensitivity and processuality*

The nuancing debate on narrative/counter narrative duality is taken up by numerous authors throughout this handbook, which suggests that scholars are studying how narrative resources are drawn on by certain actors in particular representations, contexts, times and situations. These

studies challenge the assumption of narratives/counter narratives as close-knit dichotomic pairs, which is often taken for granted, and show how narrative processes interact in less dualistically structured, more creative and much messier and entangled ways.

Hyvärinen (in this handbook), for instance, rethinking the position of rigid dichotomy from a theoretical perspective by revisiting Brunerian theory, proposes investigating how narrators creatively draw on diverse master and counter-narratives in particular contexts.

A similar view is applied by Johansen (in this handbook). Departing from studies of how Danish craft breweries construct collective organisational identities in autobiographies, Johansen challenges the narrative/counter-narrative duality and suggests that the inter-relation between the two notions is better reflected as centripetal and centrifugal processes of counter narrativisations.

On the same note, Bager and Lundholt (in this handbook) invite us to study the dynamics between organisational narrative structures and representations in organisational change processes (cf. crystallised forms of knowledge and situated organisational story efforts in order to investigate aspects of complicit and countering forces and control vs. agency mechanisms)

Obviously, numerous chapters in this handbook represent a conceptual shift from studies of narrative/counter narrative dualities to studies of narrative processes of counter narrativisation (Johansen, in this handbook) or to the dynamics between diverse narrative recourses such as between narrative representations/structures and the small stories that circulate in situated practices (e.g. Bager & Lundholt; Bamberg & Wipff; Markussen & Knutz, in this handbook).

Several authors in this handbook (e. g. Holmgren & Strunck) propose thinking of the relationship between different kinds of narratives in terms of fluidity in which the connections between narratives and matters of dominance are constantly negotiated and (re)positioned. Hence, counter narrative studies are based on how such processes of (counter) narrativisations or (counter) storying position themselves in relation to each other in a mix of resistive and countering forces.

Counter-narratives are not positive, conflictual or straightforward phenomena per se

In continuation of the critical review of the narrative/counter narrative dichotomy, several chapters contest that counter-narratives are positive phenomena per se working in favour of minorities. Such chapters align with Rasmussen (2017) regarding how early studies of counter narratives have emerged within critical humanistic methodological bodies that favour suppressed and marginalised groups, often with an emancipatory quest. Here, counter-narratives are often examined from a minority viewpoint that “tends to exclude complex power struggles in and around organisations which may exhibit more messy empirical configurations than the dichotomy allows for” (Rasmussen, 2017, p. 171).

As an example, Nurminen (in this handbook) discusses counter-narratives as serving to enable radical and extreme online communities in relation to the radical masculinity movement’s use of counter-narrative strategies. The author demonstrates how such online groups and participants utilise counter-narratives to further their anti-women ideology. The practical use of counter-narratives thus works in subtle ways not always in favour of, or benign to, marginalised groups.

On another note, Borland & Shuman (in this handbook) draw attention to counter-narratives being deployed by people in power, especially as heritage discourse. Their case study unveils how heritage projects masquerading as counter-narratives serve crucially to protect an exclusionary white heritage discourse by purporting to be one narrative among many.

On a third note, Holmgren and Strunck (in this handbook) argue from a critical discourse and legitimation perspective how a bank’s master and contesting narratives in a post-merger process in a Danish bank live side by side in harmony. Thus, counter-narratives are not always a negative



and destructive phenomenon in opposition to master narrative structures. They argue that such studies are a way to gain a deeper understanding of how narratives either hamper or support organisational strategies.

Rehnberg & Grafström (in this handbook) address how counter-narratives can emerge from surprising sources. From their studies of discursive struggles in the media landscape in times of radical reorganisation, involving negotiations of what is considered journalism, they show how counter narratives in media texts are worked up as strategic devices by those that are representing and defending the master narrative as part of a defensive act.

These chapters, (and other chapters in the handbook), prove that narrative processes are indeed messy, tensional and contradictory affairs that provide important glimpses into identity creative processes and power-resistance dynamics in various contexts.

They further underline that we ought to study narrative/counter narrative processes with an open mind and not merely from a minority viewpoint as well as from any other pre-disposed outlooks. As such, all chapters in the handbook share an interest in dynamic, complex and context-sensitive approaches to studying narrative representations and/or processes. In other words, the question about counter-narrative being emancipatory, progressive, or liberating, is up for empirical scrutiny. Narrative processes are indeed polyphonic, complex, and unpredictable affairs - leading us to discuss important issues of ideology and ethics, in relation to counter narrative studies, later in the chapter.

### **Narrative inquiry – from diverse analytical, theoretical and methodological orientations**

How do narrative scholars deal with issues of narrative processuality, complexity, entanglement and polyphony? Across the seven sections in the handbook, scholars turn to a range of theoretical and methodological bodies in order to work up narrative research designs. Some

perspectives are oriented towards theoretical and conceptual issues, while others focus on working up context-sensitive analyses of diverse narrative processes. In the following we will sum up some of the most significant perspectives which are most represented in the handbook, and we will discuss their implications for narrative and counter-narrative studies. We will start by outlining important elements from the two most central frameworks: storytelling organisational theory and the narrative practice approach. Thereafter we turn to aspects of Bourdieusian field theory and the sociology of knowledge approach to discourse.

### *Storytelling Organisation Theory*

Several chapters link up to storytelling organisation theory (SOT). SOT has evolved, mainly, within the works of Boje (2011). His and other SOT scholars' works offer a strong ontological view of organisational narrative and storytelling practices and invite us to grasp organisations as continuously being (re)constituted through a variety of intense, chaotic, and ambiguous storytelling practices (Bager & Lundholt, in this handbook; Boje, in this handbook; Svane, in this handbook; Rantakari & Vaara, 2017).

Boje and other SOT scholars prompted the much-cited division between narratives and living stories. Whereas narratives are made through retrospective sensemaking and represent crystallised forms of knowledge (often found in organisational strategy work), living stories are situated sensemaking efforts taking place in concrete encounters. Living stories are messy, tensional affairs that embed a manifold and often contradictory set of voices and narratives/discourses (Jørgensen, 2011; Jørgensen & Boje, 2010). Boje is also the originator of the concept of the antenarrative conceptualised as a bet on the future which he presents as the bridge between narratives and situated living stories. The antenarrative approach also opens up an optimistic door

for the creation and facilitation of new and more comprehensive narrative structures, to which we will return.

The concept of antenarrative is taken up by authors in the handbook (such as Lueg, Graf & Powell). Further, Svane combines the concept and other insights from SOT with Hegel's dialectics from which the author deduces four middles of storytelling. From a theoretical point of view, Svane proposes these middles as important managerial tasks in organisational practices and processes and thereby advances earlier work (such as Svane, Gergerich & Boje, 2017).

Boje draws on an extensive compilation of methodological and theoretical perspectives relevant to what he terms antenarrative inquiry strategies (Benjaminian dialogical foretelling method, Heideggerian dialectic of 'negation of the negation' forenotions, Bakhtinian architectonic dialogism, Deleuzian rhizomatics, Butler's antinarrative and a Baradian sociomaterial antenarrative inquiry into actor routines and material actants). From this complex methodological tissue, he inquires into issues of sustainability and the Kolding pyramid, and he demonstrates how antenarrative strategies can work as parts of a storytelling inquiry method.

As stated by Bager and Lundholt (in this handbook), Boje's extensive body of work has provided important contributions to and a solid theoretical platform for counter-narrative studies, even though he just recently adopted the term. Earlier studies reflected concepts such as *hegemony* (i.e. privileged voices taken for granted or too subtle to be acknowledged (Boje, 2001, p. 35) and *story coercion* (i.e. the [un]conscious efforts to create universal meaning; Boje, Luhman, & Baack, 1999). From these, SOT scholars have studied ways in which dominant groups control others as well as ways in which local stories (cf. *microstoria*; Boje, 2001, p. 55) or living story webs (Svane et al., 2017) resist narratives.

Central to SOT is an anchoring in Bakhtinian thinking which is also evident in several other chapters in the handbook (such as Bager & Lundholt; Meretoja; Svane). The massive inspiration from Bakhtinian thinking will be continuously discussed throughout the rest of this chapter.

*The narrative practice approach: counter narrative as multiple layers of (re)positioning*

Another central perspective that is heavily drawn on in the handbook is the narrative practice approach (NPA) that has mainly emerged from the works of Bamberg in his developments of the small story approach (Bamberg, 1997, 2004a), from the works of Geogakopoulou, as well as from co-authored publications (Bamberg & Geogakopoulou, 2008; Geogakopoulou, 2007, 2019). NPA has carried out narrative analysis in the direction of studying local identity formations as played out in situated practices through inquiring into multiple layers of positioning. It also had an important impact on the field of social psychology and identity research, as it was part of turning traditional identity studies into local meaning-making and the social co-production of professional identities (Bager, 2019).

The analysis starts off by studying *small stories* which are aligned with SOT's conceptualisation of *living stories*: narrators in the here and now use story efforts in the unfolding and co-creation of identity and meaning-making. Small stories represent how people work up stories to juggle claims about who they are that are hearable both as complicit with and as countering dominant discourses or narratives. Analysing small story efforts can reveal elements of positioning work and identity creation that would otherwise have remained unnoticed (Bamberg & Geogakopoulou, 2008). According to Bamberg and Geogakopoulou (2008), small story analysis offers a window into what they term the micro-genetic processes of identities as 'in the making' or 'coming into being' (Bamberg & Geogakopoulou, 2008, p.3). This turn towards practices and

processuality is an important part in contemporary narrative studies as represented in the handbook (Rantaki & Vaara, 2017; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2019).

To NPA scholars, narratives and counter-narratives are not stable entities that people carry around and activate in certain situations unaffected by contextual circumstances. Rather, what counts and can be analysed as counter-narratives is worked up in co-creative processes of small story efforts between all participants involved, including the researcher in researcher-designed practices (e.g., interview settings). Also, the inspiration from Bakhtinian polyphonic and entangled thinking plays an important role. In this line of thoughts, the subject's meeting and entanglement with the co-present and distant others as well as alien perspectives affect meaning-making and the co-creation of identity and thereby the emergence of counter narratives (Bager, 2016, 2019; Bamberg & Wipff, in this handbook; Bakhtin, 1986, 1993).

NPA involves a three-layered positioning model. The model is inspired from discourse psychology, ethnomethodology and conversation analysis that invite scholars to inductively look at what takes place in interaction as the starting point of analysis of and reflection on identity work. This situated outlook represents an alternative to looking through deductive categories and searching for coherent life narratives. As Bamberg and Wipff (in this handbook) state, the NPA signified a shift from the analysis of narratives as texts or personal memories (i.e., as parts of people's or organisations' interior resources) to empirically analysable discursive activities taking place in interactions. Such analytical moves are, amongst other things, based on the argument that there tend to be crucial gaps between how people narrate themselves and their actions and what they actually perform in local situations, thereby underpinning ethnomethodological heritage.

Furthermore, NPA reflects a sort of middle position between structural and performative approaches to narrative studies as the model leads us to look at both interactional and content-oriented dimensions of narrative processes (Bager, 2019; Bamberg, 1997).

These situated and performance-based orientations and their implications explain why several authors in the handbook turn to NPA to deal with issues of narrative processuality and context sensitivity. It further allows the narrative analyst to span dimensions of concrete situated narration and the broader narrative and discursive structures that are regarded as surrounding and impacting on situated identity creative practices.

As an example, Bager and Lundholt (in this handbook) combine storytelling organisation theory (SOT) and NPA and apply small story analysis to the study of organisational identity creation in change processes in a Danish bank. The analysis is accomplished through the three levels of positioning model. The final step uncovers which broader narrative and discursive structures the organisational narrators link up to and make relevant in the co-production of professional identities. Applying this model makes the societal, organisational, historical and cultural backdrop of discourse formations (in relation to both societal, organisational and narrative structures) part of the narrative analysis (Bager, 2019; Bager & Lundholt, in this handbook). The analysis example of interview data shows traces of how bank counsellors experience identity dilemmas as an integral part of the processes of changing the bank's master narratives to a new and more streamlined one. The authors state that the studies of dynamics between organisational discursive narrative structures and representations and the small story efforts provide an important glimpse into professional identity struggles in times of change that can help us navigate and design more comprehensive organisational change processes.

The NPA outlook also nuances the traditional quest for studying dynamics between narrative and counter-narrative resources. In this quest NPA invites us to look at how complicit and countering stories are entangled and natural parts of identity processes and of the creation of new narrative and counter-narrative structures. In NPA, small stories are seen as important sense-making activities that play out in a messy compilation of countering and supportive voices that local

narrators co-create and invoke when making sense of self and others (cf. human, non-human, present and distant others) in situated practices.

#### *Inspiration from Bourdieu's field theory*

Other authors in the handbook link up to Bourdieu's field theory to discuss and show struggles between hegemonic field logics (e.g. Jensen & Ernst; Uhlendorff; Lueg, Graf & Powell). For instance, Jensen and Ernst conclude that combining narrative with Bourdieu's conceptual triad offers an innovative and valuable framework for reflecting narrative time and space in organisational processes.

Lueg, Graf and Powell contribute to contemporary Bourdieusian field studies, and to neo-institutionalist approaches by analyzing hegemonic narratives of the academic field (see also Lueg 2018). They suggest that contemporary university governance discourse is suspended between two poles: the Humboldtian perspective, favoring professorial power and authority relations, and the managerial perspective, subordinating faculty under market considerations. They propose bringing together Boje's notion of ante-narrative and the Bourdieusian notion of field struggle (Bourdieu, 1988, 1998): moments of ante-narratives were (and are) being used to secure professorial group privileges. The fight over privileges and ownership, the narrative clash was prone to be won by strong, external forces, that is, the managerial narrative.

#### *Inspiration from the sociology of knowledge approach to discourse*

Keller (in this handbook) introduces the sociology of knowledge approach to discourse (SKAD). Keller runs through an impressive gallery of sociological and discourse-based thoughts that inform the SKAD school and discusses its relevance to counter-narrative studies. One of the main points is that the field of discourse studies and in particular studies favouring the broad

societal and historical dimensions of discourse (e.g. Foucauldian inspired studies of discourse formations) represent a general contextualisation for the analysis of narratives and counter narratives, to which we will return.

So, various theoretical (and methodological) frameworks are required in order to deal with issues of narrative and counter narrative processes and structures in various contexts. What ties these perspectives together is an aspiration to study how narrative struggles play out. Such studies are closely tied to power and hegemony and share an interest in how certain narratives gain dominance over others and how narrative struggles develop. In the following, we will posit some examples from the handbook on such narrative struggles in which certain master narratives gain dominance over others. We will return to the multileveled character of narrative studies and processes later in the chapter.

### **Counter narrative studies point towards “hegemonic” agendas and diverse narrative ecologies**

Some chapters show how neoliberal master narratives tend to overshadow other narratives by foregrounding certain knowledge systems in favour of market values, instrumentality and individuality (cf. masters of own faith). These neoliberal master narratives tend to background and threaten more social/collective-oriented knowledge systems and narratives. For instance, Lueg, Graf and Powell (in this handbook) study narrative struggles in higher education and discuss how contemporary governance discourse is stretched out between two poles. These two poles are the Humboldtian, favouring professorial power and authority relationships on the one hand, and the managerial perspective, subordinating faculty to market considerations and continuous evaluation at the other. The authors elaborate on how a neoliberal managerial agenda seem to permeate European universities, thereby backgrounding and threatening the Humboldtian purview. They further discuss elements of elitism inherent to both, the Humboldtian and the managerial narrative.



In another context, Schünemann (in this handbook) looks at European discourse and shows how earlier counter-narratives have become dominant narratives on the political systems, gained ground and have become central themselves. The author discusses how earlier left-wing Eurosceptic counter narratives have taken dominant positions within European governments and thereby on the European political scene in general as many Eurosceptics have occupied central positions within their political systems or even made it into government office.

These and other chapters in the handbook (e.g., by Prien) illustrate how the concepts of *master narrative* and *counter-narrative* can be employed to understand ongoing societal change in many areas. Such evolutionary narrative processes involve indeterminacy and unpredictability in the interplay between dominant and counter narratives in various tension-filled practices detectable in diverse narrative resources.

Authors in the handbook (e.g. Rehnberg & Grafström) point to the analogy of “narrative ecologies” to explain such dynamics. The term ‘narrative ecologies’ was coined by Gabriel (2017, p. 220) as denoting “spaces where, by analogy to natural ecologies, different elements and populations of narrative emerge, interact, compete, adapt, develop and die”. To Gabriel (2017, p. 222) narratives and counter narratives “can be thought of as co-constructing elements of narrative ecologies”, and further proposes that “different types of narrative ecologies can be viewed as fostering different configurations of narrative patterns”. Gabriel’s (2017) narrative ecology analogy stems from studies of organisational narrative practices from which seven types of narrative ecologies are mapped out (narrative temperate regions, deserts, monocultures, mountains, marshlands, jungles, narrative allotments and gardens). Numerous chapters in this handbook prove that such diverse types of narrative ecologies are to be found in various contexts on diverse levels throughout society. As argued earlier, some narrative ecologies are played out wherein narratives and counter narratives co-exist peacefully side by side resembling Gabriel’s metaphor of *narrative*

*monocultures*. Other narrative ecologies are more characterised by ambiguities and conflicts, coming closer to *narrative jungles*. A recurring trajectory of thought in the handbook is that the characteristics and effects of narrative processes are to be mapped out from diverse narrative resources in situated contexts.

As such, the narrative and discursive struggles that are reflected throughout the handbook can be understood as a rejection of a rather simple narrative/counter narrative duality in favour of narrative ecologies (Gabriel, 2017, p. 220). We believe that the acceptance of narrative processuality and diverse types of narrative ecologies is a promising and interesting contemporary framework from which we can study and critically debate ongoing societal change consisting of dynamics between power/control and resistive forces and its effects in diverse contexts.

### **Methodological challenges and pitfalls within narrative studies**

An ongoing debate in the handbook is the discussion on theoretical and methodological challenges and pitfalls within (counter) narrative studies. Bamberg & Wipff (in this handbook) draw our attention to blurriness in much master narrative literature. Other authors point to the fact that the existence and characteristics of a master narrative often lack analytical justification as well as documentation and are more often presumed and are therefore rather speculative affairs (e.g. Hyvärinen, in this handbook). Some posit a range of problems concerning lack of transparency in narrative literature together with theoretical and conceptual vagueness. Others posit that the literature on narrative structures often have little anchoring in narrative theory, which leads to confusing and varying use of terms and lack of clear definitions. Others focus on a lack of clear accounts of how to analyse narrative data (Fage-Butler) whilst others focus on how counter narrative analysis strategies can help narrative scholars and social scientists in general to present empirical data in more nuanced ways (Müller & Frandsen, in this handbook). The various chapters

provide possible enhancements and solutions from diverse perspectives and we will now turn to some of these.

### *Nuancing narrative theories*

Some of the handbook's authors turn to theories within narrative studies to challenge and sharpen their conceptual and analytical outlooks. For instance, Hyvärinen's (in this handbook) rethinking of Brunerian narrative theory from a theoretical perspective which tones it to embrace analysis of narrative processuality in the terms of how narrators draw on diverse master and counter narrative recourses.

Klinge, Carlson and Kahle combine Bamberg's (2004a) works on counter narrative with Schütze's (1983) idea of text structure analysis, more specifically by drawing on Schütze's distinction between the text genres of narrative, argumentation, evaluation and description. They thereby reconstruct counter narratives via text structure analysis and argue how different forms of counter positioning affect not only the content but also the actual textual structure of interviewees' accounts.

### *Inspiration from discourse studies (l. 2)*

It is worth noting that numerous authors in the handbook turn toward discourse studies in order to address and overcome methodological, theoretical and analytical vagueness in their (counter) narrative analyses. In the following we will discuss the inspiration for and relevance to discourse studies together with how narrative scholars in general can benefit from some of the metaphors, models and analytical tools which some discourse scholars draw on to deal with issues of, for instance, discursive processuality and the multilevelled nature of discourse.

It's no surprise that narrative scholars, also numerous authors in this handbook (e.g. Bager & Lundholt; Bamberg & Wipff; Fage-Butler; Holmgren & Strunck; Keller; Prien), increasingly turn to discourse studies as an obvious avenue to find inspiration for how to deal with methodological, conceptual and analytical vagueness within (counter) narrative studies. First of all, the field of discourse studies has close affinities with counter narrative studies and as Keller (in this handbooks) posits, discourse represents a general contextualisation for the analysis of narratives and counter narratives. Discourse studies also take a critical stance toward formations of discourses in which some power/knowledge systems gain hegemony over others (Bager & Moelholm, 2019). These discursive mechanisms and struggles are aligned by several of the handbook's authors with narrative-generating processes that tend to naturalise and legitimise certain power and knowledge structures in society (e. g. Bager & Lundholt, in this handbook; Bamberg & Wipff, in this handbook; Keller, in this handbook, Prien, in this handbook).

Secondly, studying discourse is aligned with studying processes (Bager, 2019; Heracleous, 2017) which mirrors the narrative turn towards processuality.

Thirdly, various strands of discourse studies have a rich experience and well-developed methodological bodies for applying concepts for close analysis of manifold empirical representations related to diverse levels and processes of discursive configurations.

### Multiple layers of narratives and discourses

What becomes evident throughout the handbook is a demand to study narrative processes in relation to multiple levels of narrative practices and meaning making. In the introduction (Lueg, Bager & Lundholt, in this handbook), we proposed distinguishing between micro, meso and macro levels of narrative inquiry and the relevance of studying the interplay between narrativisations on

these multiple levels. This line of thought lives on in many chapters in the handbook (e. g. Bager & Lundholt; Bamberg & Wipff, Keller; Lueg; Graf & Powel).

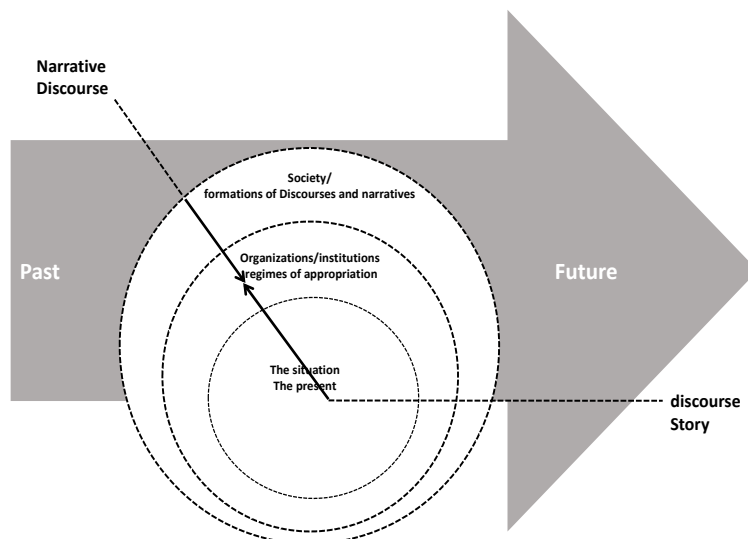
Within discourse studies, there is a long and highly relevant tradition of thinking in terms of discourse on diverse levels that resembles the division between master narratives and living or small stories. Like master narratives, Discourses (with a capital D) point toward cultural evolutionary knowledge-creation processes in which some Discourses, understood as knowledge forms/systems, gain more ground and thereby tend to overshadow and background others. Similar to living or small stories, discourses (with a lower-case d) reflect situated meaning-making activities in which actors co-construct discourses and meaning (Bager, 2019). It is widely accepted that the Discourse/discourse levels are dialectically entangled in various subtle ways: the historically congealed Discourses affect and are drawn on and made relevant in situated contexts and the emergence of situated discourses impact broader discursive structures (Horsboel & Raudaskoski, 2016; Gee, 2004, Iedema, 2003). Discourse studies are increasingly, and in various degrees, analysing how such discursive processes and dialectics are played out by looking at a range of discursive resources and data types (Bager, 2019; Nicolini, 2009a, 2009b).

Alvesson & Kärremann (2000) outline four levels of organisational discourse – micro, meso, macro and mega - and discuss how diverse discourse scholars tend to foreground certain layers and discursive dimensions in their analyses. These four layers have been widely cited within (organisational) discourse studies and have helped scholars add precision according to their focus on certain levels of discourse as well as positioning within the field of discourse studies in general. We believe that narrative scholars can benefit from such positioning activities to meet some of the methodological blurriness addressed in this handbook.

Bager (2019) elaborates a relevant three-layered model to illustrate the interrelatedness and entanglement between diverse layers of Discourse/discourse and narrative/story as part of an

embodied discourse-based narrative analysis methodology. This methodological framework combines aspects from the narrative practice approach (NPA) and storytelling organisation theory (SOT) which underlines its relevance to this handbook. We believe that the model can inspire (counter) narrative scholars regardless of their inspiration from discourse theory in order to add precision to discussions on dynamics between diverse narrative representations, levels and features.

Figure 32.1: Multiple layers of Discourse/discourse and narrative/story (with inspiration from Bager, 2019):



The model is composed of three layers of discursive/narrative dimensions that are shot through by entangled discursive and narrative features: The outer layer represents the societal level of narratives/Discourse that embed the historical crystallisation of formations of Discourse/narratives. The inner layer illustrates concrete situations in which discourse/living or small stories are worked up and co-created by situated participants. The middle layer reflects institutional or organisational Discourse and narratives and involve how these play out in a mix between elements from the outer societal layer and the inner situated layer.

Figure 32.1 also displays how narrative and discursive meaning-making is housed in a time-space continuum recognising how *temporal multiplicity* plays an important role when we continuously (re)create identity, stories/narratives, and discourses (Bager, 2015, 2016; Bakhtin, 1982; Cunliffe et al., 2004). Voices, discourses, and stories are made up by participants in situated practices that draw on a diversity of voices/Discourse/narratives from outside and inside of dialogic events - from the past and the present and in anticipation of the future (Bager, 2015; Bakhtin, 1982, 1993). The diverse layers and timely configurations are all reflected as parts of overall narrative meaning-making and identity-creation processes.

#### Methodological metaphors of zooming in-and out and a toolkit logic

The model is accompanied by the methodological metaphors of *zooming in and out* together with a *toolkit logic* (Nicolini, 2009a, 2009b). The former invites scholars to zoom in and out between the diverse layers of narrative/discursive processes and the latter to activate multiple theories and perspectives in the process of analysis. The toolkit logic follows the rationale that in order to reflect the multilevelled, polyphonic and complex aspects of narrative/(D)discursive processes one must have a broad toolbox with a compilation of theories and concepts that reflects aspects on all of three discursive/narrative levels.

Bager emphasises that the model is an analytical construct and it's obvious that discursive/narrative processes do not play out in clear and tidy ways as the illustration may show, which is in accordance with key points in the handbook. Nevertheless, the model can help narrative scholars add precision according to which layers are under scrutiny in certain parts of the narrative analysis and from there discuss its entanglements and relationship to other narrative layers and elements.

The model's layers have the potential to be tailored to specific studies reflecting diverse layers of narrative practices and processes. Put in relation to the various chapters that link up to NPA, their analyses start by zooming in on the inner layer in agreement with the three-levelled positioning analytical model. From narrators' local positioning and small story activities and its content-oriented characteristics (positioning level 1) together with the interactional dimensions (positioning level 2), such analyses zoom out and discuss how the local small story efforts relate to broader narrative/discursive levels (positioning level 3). The model (Figure 32.1) invites the analyst to zoom out on broader narrative elements in relation to the institutional or organisational settings and further out to narrative structures on societal level in order to reflect and straddle the local and global aspects in the narrative analysis. From such zooming in and out activities, we achieve the basis for the discussion on narrative counter-narrative dynamics and its effects.

The Foucauldian-inspired analyses in the handbook mostly zoom out on the outer layer of the model and discuss how certain historically created discourse formations consisting of certain master narratives are subjectivising people in certain directions (e.g., Prien). An argument made in several chapters in the handbook (e.g., by Keller; Prien) is that the Foucauldian perspective does not reflect situated narrative/discursive meaning-making in local settings together with its multimodal characteristics. Therefore, these analyses need to take other perspectives into account (cf. a toolkit logic) in order to extend the Foucauldian perspective to study how discourse formations on a historical and broad societal level subjectivise participants in concrete situations (Bager, et al., 2016; Bager & Moelholm, 2019). SKAD is a perfect example of how a compilation of discursive tools is applied for close analysis of a wide range of empirical representations straddling all three levels, as shown in Figure 32.1 (Keller, in this handbook).

Holmgren and Strunck mainly zoom in on the inner layer (Figure 32.1) and study linguistic structures using a combination of critical discourse analysis and legitimation. As a means to support



precision in the narrative analysis, they analyse how linguistic features of identity work in interview data with middle managers on recruitment policies and practices in a post-merger process in a Danish bank. From there they zoom out on the organisational layer and discuss how contesting narratives co-exist peacefully alongside the master narrative that the bank wishes to implement. They conclude that the approach contributes to a deeper understanding of how narratives either impede or support organisational strategies.

Jensen and Ernst (in this handbook) argue for similar ideas as they seek to achieve a multilevelled theorisation of narrative processes by drawing on Bourdieu's affiliated field theory. They link the narrative micro analytical level of everyday practices (inner layer in Figure 32.1 ) with the macro analytical level of the wider field (Layer 2 + 3 in Figure 32.1), through Bourdieu's concepts of field, habitus and capital.

In Markussen's and Knutz's (in this handbook) analysis of family narratives concerning incarcerated fathers and their children in the challenging prison context, they argue for a theoretical and analytical distinction between personal, family and master narratives. The three-layered model (Figure 32.1) can be tailored to reflect such theoretical and analytical distinctions and helps provide precision in the analysis.

To sum up, the model and the division between several layers of narrative and discourse can help narrative scholars add precision according to which narrative levels they zoom in and out of in diverse stages of their analyses. More importantly, it can help facilitate discussions on which diverse narrative (and discursive) perspectives and theories are drawn on in order to reflect and discuss dynamics between diverse levels of (counter) narrative processes.

However, we should be careful in making such assumptive categorisations of levels prior to actual studies and analyses as, for instance Latour, reminds us that the micro elements are to be found in the macro and vice versa. We suggest that the levels emerge in the process of performing

analysis according to what becomes relevant in analyses of concrete narrative representations and processes (cf. the NPA three positioning model).

### *Diverse counter narrative strategies for gathering, analysing and representing data*

Several chapters in the handbook address methodological issues of data gathering and decoding processes from plurivocal and pluralistic counter narrative perspectives.

Müller and Frandsen (in this handbook) problematise the accessibility to data from which counter narratives can be derived in respect to 1) what researchers are able to gain access to and 2) how researchers make sense of the data in the process of analysis. They argue that counter narrative scholars may design the research process in a way that increases the sensitivity towards counter narratives. As part of this quest, they propose ethnographically inspired studies of “deep hanging out” with references to Geertz (1998).

The authors discuss the potential of bringing three diverse counter narratives analysis strategies to complement traditional categorising and coding strategies; what they term “common sense coding”, which many social scientists rely on when making sense of empirical data. They argue that such common-sense coding might limit the possibilities for analysing social situations involving various participants, interests, viewpoints, perceptions, and experiences, as the laws of logic do not easily apply. They discuss the theoretical and methodological implications of a counter-narrative perspective and illustrate how it enables scholars to analyse and represent empirical data in more nuanced ways that embrace narrative ambiguities. Their counter-narrative strategies involve looking at aspects such as untold stories and deconstruction, multiplicity and ambiguity, together with tensions and paradoxes (Müller & Frandsen, in this handbook)

They focus on organisational data and stress its inherent ambiguities, for instance how the management in a particular organisational setting can both help and exploit employees at one and the

same time. Furthermore, they portray how employees can both be motivated and de-motivated at the same time. Such ambiguities are supported by other analyses in the handbook that also link up to NPA (e.g. Bager and Lundholt; Bamberg & Wipff). Such analyses prove how polyphony and paradoxes mark the ongoing simultaneous presence of contradicting truths (Fairhurst, Cooren, & Cahill, 2002).

Avoidance of drawing out common sense analytical findings and performing (counter) narrative tautologic studies

We applaud the proposal to think of alternative ways of gathering multiple data types and applying diverse counter narrative analytical strategies which match the turn towards narrative processuality and the analytical involvement of multiple narrative levels, representations and features. However, we see a need for narrative scholars to critically reflect on how we design such processes, from which ideological perspectives and with what aims.

If we for instance design our narrative data collection and analytical manoeuvres toward unveiling and addressing narrative/counter narrative dynamics, we need to consider how we avoid performing “tautologic narrative studies”, in the sense that we merely justify our theoretical and ideology-saturated assumptions and thereby risk only finding what we are looking for. If we for instance assume that certain master (counter) narrative dynamics are repressing certain groups and minorities that we favour in accordance with our ideological assumptions, we may very well risk looking for situations and narrative representations that support such assumptions and support counter narrative strategies that have the potential to shake and transform such repressive narrative structures into what we assume to have the potential to become more egalitarian and comprehensive ones. A similar discussion is well known in literature that addresses

war games within organisational culture studies (e. g. Martin & Frost, 2011). Here, the authors debate how diverse strands within culture studies are performing tautologic analyses and data representation in their battles regarding which perceptions of organisational culture is the best suited. For instance, scholars that represent an integration perspective tend to look for and foreground data that confirms univocal and harmonious organisational cultures whose values can be shared by all organisational members (cf. an organisation *has* a culture). Whereas representatives of the differentiation or fragmentation culture perspectives tend to find and spotlight data that supports their basic assumptions of how organisational cultures come about and are maintained – the former foregrounds data that posits organisational cultures as shared within subgroups and teams. The latter enhances data that depicts organisational cultures as consisting of ambiguities and paradoxes and shows that organisational culture cannot be shared but is performed through processes involving multiple and often contradicting interpretations and continuous negotiations of meaning (cf. organisations perform cultures).

This discussion complies with the arguments in the handbook that draw connections with Rasmussen's (2017) critique of how traditional counter narrative studies tend to be favour and support minorities and suppressed groups as an inherently positive feature. Because from which rationales and basic assumptions are we to decide which narrative/counter narrative structures we ought to support? And which ones are we to oppose? And are narrative scholars the ones to decide on such issues anyway? Such question raises important questions concerning narrative ethics.

The emancipation paradox and the Achilles heel of narrative polyphony

The questions and studies as brought forward in this handbook prove how counter-narratives can play out in unpredictable ways. This new focus calls for a debate on issues of (counter) narrative

ideology and ethics. Earlier in this concluding chapter we provided examples for the unpredictable positioning of counter-narratives: they *can* be viewed as favouring suppressed minorities, but they may also favour extremist groups. They may work in favour of those in power, and they may be representing dominant master narratives, and serve as a means of control. Moreover, they can in some instances be reflected as diverse narrative ecologies such as, for instance, narrative jungles or at other times as harmonious narrative monocultures.

Such analyses tap into what can be seen as the Achilles heel of narrative polyphony. If we, first, propose plurality and if we, second, propose that repressed voices or collectives take a more central position within society, who is to decide which voices are to be silenced and which ones are to be fostered. As Bakhtinian thinking is massively represented in the handbook, it is obvious to take these considerations into account. A Bakhtinian ethics of dialogue invites us to foster the centrifugal and diversifying forces of social life, and to contest centripetal and monologising forces that historically tend to close down diversity (cf. non-alibi in being and answerability; Bager et al., 2016; Bakhtin, 1993). Nevertheless, when forms of counter-narrative knowledge are fostered in order to suppress monologising master narratives, we cannot predict the effects of the new emerging ones even though we anticipate more comprehensive and less repressive narrative structures. Such points call for reflexivity and critical awareness in designing data processing (e.g., data collection, decoding and representation).

The discussion triggers aspects of what scholars address as the emancipation paradox (Bager & Moelholm, 2019; Clegg et al., 2006). The emancipation paradox points toward how some dialogic-oriented scholars tend to push their own theoretical and methodological idiosyncrasies onto the people they are researching on or with. For instance, the discussion can be seen within participatory studies such as Action Research (AR) or Organisational Discourse Activism (ODAc) and other participatory approaches in which scholars take performative researcher positions. In such

participatory studies, scholars carry out research together with co-researchers and contribute to a change in local practices and/or communities (Bager & Moelholm, 2019). Here, scholars call for critical reflexivity and awareness of which ideological means and ends researchers are serving and in whose favour. A basic idea in AR and ODAc is the ambition to involve co-researchers in the field of study to co-produce important decisions and inductively co-develop theories in the research process based on everyday experiences and forms of knowledge. In such studies it can be an ongoing element to try to avoid giving voice to participants or collectives that do not wish to be emancipated or benefit from emancipation.

More scholars in the handbook reason for more participatory and performative narrative methodologies in which innovative and more involved relations between researchers can be tried out (such as Bager & Lundholt; Boje; Markussen & Knutz). In such participatory narrative studies, scholars and co-researchers can discuss and negotiate how inquiries and studies of (counter) narratives can help foster change of narrative practices on diverse levels and co-produce new narrative structures and engage in closer, more practice-based and less researcher-controlled researcher-researched relationships.

So, we argue that narrative scholars ought to watch their step and not glorify the use of counter-narratives on a preset liberating and emancipatory agenda and we invite them to engage in the practice of critical reflexivity to try and avoid the pitfall of the emancipation paradox in a desire to critically address the Achilles heel of narrative polyphony.

### **Summing up and outline of future counter narrative research avenues.**

Several of the handbook's discussions and analyses of narrative practices and processes prove how a binary and clear-cut division between narratives and counter-narratives does not suffice when looking at various narrative processes. Central to these discussions is the proposal to

study narrative and storytelling practices and processes in its contextual embeddedness together with how diverse participants render narrative resources (such as dominant/master narratives, counter narratives, antenarratives, small stories, living stories etc.) relevant in and across particular representations, situations, times and contexts. Here, a key aspect is that pointing out implications of and the dynamics between narrative and counter-narrative (or counter story) structures and representations must be a matter of context-sensitive analyses that reveal the many ways in which various countering and complicit narrative resources interact, collide and sometimes co-exist.

The narrative and discursive struggles reflected throughout this handbook can be understood as turning away from a rather simple narrative/counter-narrative duality in favour of narrative ecologies (Gabriel, 2017, p. 220). We believe that this turn to narrative processuality and diverse types of narrative ecologies is a promising and interesting contemporary framework. Narrative scholars can capitalize on this framework by critically debating ongoing societal change, dynamics between controlling and resistive forces, and the effects of these processes.

Throughout the handbook, a range of narrative methodological challenges and pitfalls are addressed concerning issues of theoretical, conceptual and methodological vagueness and imprecision in (counter) narrative studies. In this respect, numerous theoretical and methodological perspectives are employed in the reflection on and debate of such challenges and in the desire to overcome them in various ways. What binds these works together is their shared focus on narrative processuality, context sensitivity and a demand to study narrative processuality according to several narrative (and discursive) layers.

Multiple frameworks are provided that invite narrative scholars to study centripetal (unifying) and centrifugal (diversifying) forces on several narrative levels found in a variety of data types in society spanning from the global to the local – spanning societal, political, institutional, organisational and more or less informal and digital communities and practices. In many chapters

we argue that in order to study overall narrative meaning-making and knowledge-producing processes, we need to consider their multilevelled, polyphonic, multimodal and multiple temporal features. From here, narrative scholars can engage with how the narratives and/or stories people (and material, nature) enact unmask structures of power and ideology that shape our communities and tend to foreground some rationalities and knowledge systems at the expense of others. Such analyses thereby allow us to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics behind emerging master narratives – not least counter-narratives – in transforming narrative ecologies and social arenas. The handbook thereby proves the potential and rigour of applying counter narrative strategies to reflect various issues of power-control mechanism throughout society.

#### *Future counter narrative research avenues*

Analyses and points in the handbook together with recent activities within the broad field of narrative studies (as conducted by the Center for Narratological Studies) point toward several interesting future avenues for research. In the following, we will firstly, briefly summarize our invitation for narrative scholars to engage with and try out new practices of critical narrative reflexivity. Secondly, in an attempt to turn this into an applicable endeavour, we propose approaches favouring narrative activism that moves beyond a descriptive approach. Finally, we will propose further studies of narrative processuality in respect to issues of narrative temporality, multimodality and sociomateriality.

#### Critical narrative reflexivity

The unpredictable and subtle nature of (counter) narrative processes and its implications for practice also invites narrative scholars to carefully consider ethical and ideology-saturated issues. For instance, we appeal to narrative scholars to engage in critical reflexivity concerning how to



design, collect, handle and represent data in order to avoid drawing out common sense analytical findings and to avoid the pitfall of performing tautologic narrative analyses that risk supporting the narrative scholars' preset idiosyncrasies and merely finding what they are looking for. Moreover, we propose critical awareness and methodological transparency on how narrative scholars deal with the Achilles heel of narrative polyphony and seek to avoid the emancipation paradox so that narrative scholars do not push their own idiosyncrasies onto the people and practices that they are researching into or with.

### Narrative and storytelling activism

We can see how narrative scholars are increasingly turning toward narrative activist approaches in the sense that (counter) narrative inquiries are used to fuel changes in local practices. This tendency is visible in CNS activities such as our annual conferences together with recent and ongoing publications. The topics of the last two conferences have among other things highlighted discourse activist approaches where narrative scholars engage in fostering a change in practices such as in organisational contexts.

Some of the perspectives have linked up to Boje's (2005) work with narrative therapy, centring on helping new stories along (e.g. Boje's work with helping veterans overcome war traumas and PTSD issues; Bager & Lundholt, in this handbook). In this respect, Boje, Larsen & Bruun (2017) are developing the concept of true storytelling that centres on helping new organisational stories and antenarratives along in relation to matters of sustainability. Other perspectives have linked up to discourse studies and the new approach of organisational discourse activism (ODAc; Bager & Mølholm, 2019). As mentioned earlier, it might not be down to narrative scholars to decide which forms of narrative knowledge we ought to give voice to and which ones we should tone down. In the

aforementioned narrative and storytelling activist approaches, the research participant(s) are involved with taking such important decisions.

### Narrative multimodality and temporal multiplicity

Discussions in the handbook propose further studies that resemble recent suggestions on future narrative studies concerning issues of multimodality and temporal multiplicity (Bager, 2019; Rantaki & Varaa, 2017).

In regard to narrative multimodality, several chapters touch on issues of data accessibility and the potential of gathering diverse multimodal data types in order to reflect and analyse (counter) narrative processes. Jensen & Ernst (in this handbook) use a range of data types in their analyses of organisational post-merger (counter) narrative processes. Bager & Lundholt (in this handbook) argue that in order to really understand issues of organisational change processes in contemporary times of technologisation, narrative scholars must also take material, digital and other multimodal aspects into account in narrative analyses, a point which is also supported by the main theoretical bodies that are represented in the handbook. In Bakhtinian thinking, NPA, SOT, Bourdieu's field theory as well as SKAD narrative processes are enmeshed in embodied and multimodal ways of co-performing narrative structures which also calls for narrative analyses that take such multimodal aspects more into account.

A few chapters mention temporal features of (counter) narrative processes but they do not study such aspects in detail. In line with many of the approaches represented in the handbook, narrative temporality is moved away from strict and functionalistic beginning- middle-end assumptions where universal temporal features can be deduced. Instead, the handbook taps into more complex ways of perceiving narrative timeliness, where multiple temporal features are entangled and present in every situation (Bager, 2016, 2019, Cunliffe, et al., 2004). As mentioned in

relation to the three-layered model, in line with Bakhtinian thinking, situated narrative practices always embed temporal features from the past, re(configured) in the now in anticipation of future narrative responses.

With this handbook, we hope to contribute to further conceptualisations and detailed studies of narrative multimodality, multiple narrative features and their implications for social practices.

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