EDITORIAL

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Biographical notes:

David M. Boje is Regents Professor in Management Department, New Mexico State University. He is an international scholar in areas of storytelling and antenarratives in organizations. He holds an honorary doctorate from Aalborg University, and is considered godfather of their Material Storytelling Lab. He is considered the godfather of the Material Storytelling Lab founded by Anete Strand. He is founder of Tamara Journal of Critical Organization Inquiry. He has published 21 books and 141 journal articles, many in top tier journals such as Management Science, Administrative Science Quarterly, Organization Studies, Human Relations, Academy of Management Journal, etc. His newest book is Organizational Change and Global Standardization: Solutions to Standards and Norms Overwhelming Organizations. In a forthcoming article "Two Theories of Counter-Narrative Communicative Constitution of Organizations and Storytelling Organization Theory" (in *European Journal of Cross-Cultural Competence and Management*) he develops a conversation between Communicative Constitution of Organizations (CCO) theory and Storytelling Organization theory (SOT).

Marianne W. Lundholt is Associate Professor and Director of Center of Narratological Studies in the Department of Design and Communication at the University of Southern Denmark Kolding. Her areas of research include narratology, counter-narratives and organizational communication. She has recently co-edited the volume *Counter-Narrative and Organization* published by Routledge (2016) in collaboration with Professor Timothy Kuhn (University of Colorado Boulder, USA) and Postdoctoral Researcher Sanne Frandsen (Lund University, Sweden).

This special issue aims to provide readers with a deeper understanding of the nature of counter-narratives and their capability to stabilise and destabilise an organisation, especially in cross-cultural environments. There is a rich tradition of studying narratives in fields of communication, organisation and management research. However, counter-narratives and their impact on international dimensions of organisational behaviour have so far not been given any attention.

With the current growing business environment characterised by increased global competition, organisations need to focus on global strategies and management approaches from an intercultural perspective. For organisations to prosper, dominant narratives about management, employees, strategies, identity etc. need to be revisited, challenged and to some extent countered within an intercultural frame. Counter-narratives can thus become a useful tool for making tensions within

intercultural business salient, as they may contest or negotiate dominant narratives which hinder the organisation from benefitting from cultural diversity.

Each of the papers in the special issue is framed by aspects of narration analysis and assumes different theoretical positions. In "The Power of Myth, the dialectics between 'elitism' and 'academism' in economic expert discourse", **Jens Maesse** illustrates how cultural change is induced through the creation of myth. Although Maesse refrains from applying the concept of counter-narrative explicitly, his understanding of myth can be interpreted as an effective counter-narrative to the previously dominating perceptions of the role of science in society. The concepts of 'elitism' and 'academism' are analyzed as sources of political power and social legitimacy, and opposing views on the excellence orientation in economics and the inherent quality of academic work are made transparent.

In the article "Counter-narration with numbers: understanding the interplay of words and numerals in fiscal storytelling" **Robert Gephart** examines how numbers are given meaning in and through storytelling. With the use of narrative-rhetorical analysis, Gephart uncovers sense making practices used to construct meaning for quantitative, financial, and temporal numbers in texts and finds that numbers are important and prevalent in organizational storytelling. The paper contributes to the literature on counter-narratives by showing the importance of numbers and quantification in counter-narrative storytelling and shows that numbers and stories are interdependent features of narration that work together to make numbers meaningful features of persuasive of storytelling.

In "The Destabilizing Effect of Equivocal Ethical Counter-Narrative" **Thomas Pittz** examines the destabilizing effects of an ethically corrupt counter-narrative within a nonprofit organization through a longitudinal qualitative research approach. The research focuses on determining whether embedded organizational tendencies – unbeknownst and tacit within the organization – unwittingly contribute to radical and revolutionary organizational change. The results suggest a refined taxonomy for describing destabilizing organizational change and make practical contributions to nonprofit literature. Based on the results of the study and the integration with other theoretical contributions, applications for practice and an agenda for future research are proposed and discussed.

In "Counternarrative and Antenarrative Inquiry in Two Cross-Cultural Contexts", **David M. Boje, Marita Svane, Erika Gergerich** develop a theory of antenarrative practices. The contribution is based on the definition of antenarrative as the field of forces before, between, beneath, bets, and becoming occurring in the reduction of diverse living stories of Self to hegemonic narratives and counter-narratives. The study presents two case studies of ways antenarrative processes accomplish the hegemony and resistance occurring between dominant narrative and counter-narrative. In the first case dominant cultural narratives of homelessness are resisted by counter-narrative theatrical performances. The second case explores narrative, counter-narrative and antenarrative inquiry into a cross-cultural merger between two companies. Both cases contribute to show how the storytelling world is interplay of dominant narratives and their counter-narratives, and the undercurrent of antenarrative processes.

Each contribution provides important insight into the nature of counter-narratives within their various contexts.