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Abstract

This chapter is based on a study carried out as a narrative collage – a research method aimed at the collection of fictive narratives from a chosen group of social actors concerned with a certain idea or phenomenon (Kostera 2006). The researcher asks respondents to compose a story on a given topic or beginning with a given sentence. I have asked a number of different social actors with various organizational experiences, students, researchers, management practitioners, and artists, from different countries, to write short fictive stories beginning with the phrase: “The big banner by the entrance proclaimed: ‘Happy New Year 2021!’ A group of students entered campus and looked around. Adam spoke first: ‘Don’t know about you, but I...’.” The stories are to be between 1/2 and 3 pages A4, any genre, any plot or plots, wherever imagination takes their authors. They are welcome to invent further characters, add context, place and detail. I read and interpret the stories, looking into the ways in which the authors use or approach characters, plots and archetypes, and in particular the idea

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of the university as envisaged in the story. The complete process does not offer any general theories or even local models about how reality works; instead, if it is carried out well, it throws new light on a part of the cultural context of organizing located within domain of imagination. Imagination is also a reality, even if it is not material. It has its laws and its rules, and can be regarded as a mental space where innovative and creative thinking can take place, and thus where potential for change originates.

(HRK / Abstract übernommen)

Signature

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