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Performative Narrative and Actor-Network Theory – A Study of a Hotel in Administration

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International Journal of Organizational Analysis

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Abstract 197

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Introduction

The hegemonic (dominant) narrative of most organizational settings is described in a top-down, static and stable way with the organisation portrayed as a macro-actors. We address calls for more NA studies to consider how a conflicting narrative comes to be mobilised (Holstein et al, 2018: 66) and how a network of internal and external stakeholders reshape the trajectory of the organisation (Vaara et al, 2016: 549). Several authors (Hitchin, 2014; Gond et al, 2016) have also called for performative studies that draw upon ANT. We weave together NA and ANT to demonstrate socio-material networks, power relations, and the representation of other voices in accounts. Combining ANT and narrative is supported by others (Czarniawska 2004) and consistent with their views our study highlights the problematization, bottom-up and dynamic relations of a localised organisational performance. 'Greymare House', is a small UK hotel placed into administration by 'International Bank' deciding to call in the overdraft facilities due to a change to its own business model. Greymare House, went through administration and came back from the brink to re-establish itself as a going concern. This paper draws upon employee interviews, documentation and observations to explore unfolding events. By combining NA with ANT it allows us to reject dualisms (human/nonhuman, macro/micro) and follow actors and relationality. This enables the development of a deeper understanding of organisational behaviour beyond the hegemonic simplification and sanitization of many accounts.

Hegemonic Narrative

Hegemonic narrative dominates an organisation's practices and narrative and tends to deny other voices. Organizations tend to be portrayed as objective, rational, and pursuing progress. There is nothing wrong with this but the presumption is these goals are the sole preserve of those 'determining' strategy and there is an assumption hegemonic narrative speaks for all other stakeholders (e.g. employees, customers, investors) and represents their interests. However, by examining other voices we are able to open up alternative views and perspectives.

Performation, Narrative and ANT

Gond et al (2016, p. 448) identified a range of approaches to performativity and called for future studies to combine approaches. ANT was particularly singled out as a way of

developing performative narrative. Similarly, Hitchin (2014, p.70) suggests that ANT adds to NA with its interpretation of sociomateriality, relationality, hybridity [possibilities for problematization and counter-enrolment] and translation. She calls for further use of the NA-ANT combination and one area we focus on is the power relations issues of stories "empowering, marginalizing, and dominating tales". We heed both these calls by combining NA and ANT in studying a performance. NA and ANT work sympathetically together (Kaplan et al, 2004, p. 437). In performativity an NA-ANT combination shows "how macropictures are drawn, [and] micro studies problematize the taken for granted" (Czarniawska 1998, p.49).

Traditionally performance is portrayed as humans performing surrounded by material (nonhuman) props. However, ANT's approach to performativity attempts to encompass *everything* in a performance, human or nonhuman (Law and Singleton, 2000). Callon (2007, p. 330) prefers the term *performation* emphasizing performance as an outcome from nonhumans and humans relations. Performation is "the process whereby sociotechnical arrangements are enacted [performed]..."

ANT explores relationality between actors, and the rejection of the micro-macro distinction. NA does so through understanding how networks of interests are produced. An example of this "narrative network analysis" hybrid is suggested by Holstein and Gubrium (2012, p.219) who map actions connecting various human and nonhuman actors. We see considerable benefit from ANT's rejection of the micro-macro dualism which allows us to follow actors of all sizes wherever they may take us.

In our performation we adopt ANT's rejection of dualisms (micro-macro, human-nonhuman) and account for human and nonhuman actors, some present some absent, some macro some micro. Macro actors (e.g. multinationals) are merely micro-actors seated on a series of stabilised (black-boxed), unproblematic arrangements and capable of enrolling other actors to act like a single entity (Callon and Latour, 1981). In ANT there is no difference between macro and micro actors as relational logics apply at any scale. ANT calls these human-nonhuman network configurations "generalized symmetry" (Callon, 1986) and it is the relations between these actors that are important rather than actors themselves.

Broadly speaking ANT is material-semiotics where it maps material (between things) and semiotics (concepts) and assumes that many relations are sociomaterial 'entanglements'

(Orlikowski, 2007: 1439). Fuller accounts of ANT can be found elsewhere (e.g. Michael, 1996).

ANT has already influenced our performative narrative through rejection of dualisms but it also provides an analytical lens through its approach to power relations and examining events from "the bottom upwards and outwards" (Fox, 2000, p.858). Here we are interested in the ANT tenets of *problematization*, *interressement*, *enrolment* and *translation*. In our case the tenets are important because they are fundamental in network analysis *Problematization* (Callon, 1986) occurs when a stable situation is destabilized and is the first stage in a series of actions by which an actor makes itself indispensable to others. *Interressement* is described (Callon, 1986, p. 207-8) as the "actions by which an entity attempts to impose and stabilize the identity of other actors it defines through its problematization". This is "achieved by interposing oneself between the target entity and its pre-existing associations" (Michael, 1996, p. 53). In ANT, power is not a possession, but involves *enrolment*, a mutual process of "capturing" as well as "yielding" (Latour, 1986, p. 173) to form an "arrangement of assent" (Michael, 1996, p. 53). Finally, *translation* is the means whereby one actor gives roles and voice to others and sets itself up as spokesperson for the newly enrolled network.

Macro actors are often portrayed as stable but they are always open to problematization, reversible and uncertain. Stability is maintained by processes and manoeuvres designed to uphold the status quo. Humans and nonhumans are the effects of this performance, regardless of its stability (Gherardi and Nicolini 2005). It takes considerable work to maintain a network over time in a way actors see their aspirations continuing to be met and choose to remain enrolled in the network (Callon and Latour, 1981, p.297). Stable networks can be problematized so this "web of relations only hold[s] if they are enacted [or performed], enacted again, and enacted yet again." (Law, 2008, p. 635). From an ANT perspective this means a network is problematized because actors see their interests are better served by enrolling into an alternative network configuration. This approach to power relations is also consistent with NA where it might be seen as placing a "bet" (Boje and Saylors, 2014, p.202) on an antenarrative fragment that may in future supplant hegemonic narrative. This view of power relations as a dynamic process is recognized in studies of performativity beyond ANT (Harding et al, 2017).

Our study is interested in how a conflicting narrative comes to be mobilised and how a network of stakeholders reshapes the trajectory of the organisation. From an ANT perspective narrative is not an innocent description, instead it might allow for the introduction of change

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through problematization or stabilizing existing performances (Law and Singleton, 2000). Similarly in NA, by considering other versions of events and "antenarratives" (Boje, 2001) we get behind hegemonic narrative to allow for new strategies, future directions, resistance to existing ones, and mobilization (Vaara and Tiernari, 2011). As such antenarratives "could change grand narratives" Boje et al (2016, p. 392).

Methodology

We use a single case study involving interviews, observation, customer feedback and documentation collected over 5 years with an NA-ANT overlay offering deeper meanings from experiences. We conducted three in-depth interviews with 'Bertie' at different stages of the research project. In total he was interviewed for 7 hours by two different researchers. The third author, with no prior knowledge of events or the organisation culture conducted 6 in depth interviews with employees from different parts of the business. This allowed for different impressions to be coordinated and to test original thoughts. Observations were carried out over the period by each of the research team and ranged from first impressions of the hotel and employees to mystery shopping style visits to reception, the restaurant and bar. We captured more than 450 customer comments from hotel review websites as well as the responses and a range of press cuttings and internet stories.

There are issues with NA as Gabriel (2000, p. 151) suggests. The most likely are selective use of narratives to promote preconceived ideas, seeing stories as facts, and insisting second hand observations can be viewed objectively. However, the fragments of our narrative here were identified and pulled together after the research process was concluded and distance was created by engaging the third author later for the employee interviews. We do not believe narratives should chronicle events as facts but instead we see them as emplotments. As such we have adopted Czarniawska's (2000: 9) approach to NA which focuses on the three stages of emplotment – (i) *identification of the characters*, (ii) *identification of specific events* and (iii) *an interpretive theme or sensemaking stage that subsumes events and links them into a meaningful sequence*. In this way NA is not a factual pseudo-scientific chronicle or reconstruction of events (ibid.) but more a rendition of how events were perceived (Webster and Mertova, 2007, p.3). We see our role as researchers as taking fragmented antenarrative events, putting them together and capturing the full array of characters (Vaara, 2016). The fragment itself first emerged in an article we noticed in the Press that the Hotel was going into administration and rumours we heard locally that Bertie had gone bankrupt.

We were two years into our study at that stage and worried about whether we would be able to complete it. After a respectful gap we interviewed Bertie again and unprompted he started to recount events. From our data at the conclusion of the 5 year research period we were able to use Czarniawska's emplotment approach as we could identify characters and key events. Sensemaking, themes and meaningful sequencing and our ANT analysis came much later.

We employ ANT's approach to dualisms in the characters we identify, in the telling of the narrative and as a thematic lens to give a deeper level of analysis to the narrative by exploring power relations, problematization and reconfiguration of networks. By weaving together NA and ANT into a Narrative Network Analysis approach we are concerned with following the actor to unlock the significance of a phenomenon and the power relations issues that surround it (Hansen, 2011, Olesen and Eskelinen, 2011). At this point ANT and antenarrative are woven together by exploring performativity and power relations.

Greymare House – Narrative Network Analysis

We adopt Czarniawska's (2000) three stage emplotment approach: (i) identification of the characters, (ii) identification of specific events and (iii) an interpretive theme and meaningful sequencing.

i.   Identification of Characters (in Order of appearance):

Greymare House: an old UK hotel in a small rural market town.

Bertie: the Hotel owner.

Customers: a varied group of people, some are 'regulars' who know Bertie and the Employees. Around 60% of Customers are motorcyclists (see Bikers below). Two Customers ultimately become investors. In this short fragment Customers have a largely peripheral role although their custom is critical.

Employees: are not one individual but they are enrolled into Bertie's network because it can deliver continued employment and excellent development.

International Bank: has its headquarters outside the UK. Once Greymare House is in administration its main concern is to sell the hotel to recover money lent to Bertie.

Administrator: engaged by the Bank to manage the business and to affect its sale.

Hotel Expert: a former hotelier now working as a consultant. Engaged by the Administrator to run the hotel along with Bertie and get it prepared for sale.

Sales Agent: Engaged by the Administrator to advise on and affect the sale of the business and show buyers around the property.

Buyers: interested in purchasing the Hotel. A varied group but with the key goal of purchasing the hotel and returning a profit.

Bikers: 60% of the Hotel's Customers and in this narrative they are a spectre, casting a shadow but not physically present and still key actors in the plot.

Derelict House: situated in the shared rear car park at Greymare House and owned by Bertie.

Brewery: a key actor with a major influence but only has a part at the end of the narrative

ii.   Identification of specific events:

Greymare House – Setting the Scene

Greymare House, is a coaching inn built in the 1700's on what was a major UK horse drawn coach route. The Hotel was in poor repair when acquired by Bertie and his family, needing a new roof and refurbishment. Bertie bought the Hotel with a 100% mortgage and the new roof effectively added an additional 20% on top of the mortgage The Hotel is 'listed' (historically important) so refurbishments must meet specific building regulations which is prohibitively expensive. The initial outlay used all the family's available funds and refurbishment has been an ongoing process when funds allow.

Most online Customer comments refer to the state of the Hotel. This ranges from suggesting it has an 'old world charm' and is 'loveably quirky' to it being 'run down' and 'in need of major refurbishments and refits'.

The pre-exiting relationships between Bertie and his Employees were strong. In employee interviews we identified employees generally had long service in a sector which generally has high turnover. The key drivers for this appeared to be: a strong training and development ethos (e.g. all employees trained and encouraged to get qualifications), employees included in changes (e.g. all employee tasting events for new menus, beers, wines), empowering employees to be responsible and use their initiative (e.g. decisions made on shift, front of house and reviewed afterwards, trusted to get things right) and a performance culture based

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on praise and development for the future (e.g. learn from to improve for next time). All employees, unprompted, mentioned Bertie's open door policy and said they were encouraged to raise issues promptly to resolve them and that Bertie spent much of the time listening to them. The overarching atmosphere was described as "one big family", "one team" and "more friends than bosses". The pre-existing relationships between Customers and Bertie/the Employees were also strong with much repeat business. Bikers were well catered for with motorbikes garages and Bertie's innovative route planning service. Online reviews repeatedly mention "friendly", "helpful", "knowledgeable", employees for whom "nothing is too much trouble". All this created a shared narrative between the three actors (Bertie, Employees, Customers).

Administration

The business is seasonal making money in the summer, relying on the bank overdraft in the winter and then making profit and paying off what is owed in the summer again. However, Greymare House was placed into administration by the Bank deciding in January to call in the overdraft facilities as the Bank changed its own business model.

Bertie was asked to see the Manager at the Bank and was told "despite being the best hotel on their books he [the Bank Manager] had been told from headquarters that in 3 months' time the overdraft facility would be cut for Greymare House along with 53 other hotels and restaurants in the region." Bertie had no means to repay the overdraft so the business was placed in administration.

However, Bertie "took a chance that day". As the Bank had told him he had a good business and kept apologising to him he said "alright if I am [your] best hotel then let me run the show for you. Presumably you know I run it as a good operation. So I will run it for you for nothing and then I will understand what this is all about and if it gets sorted out then fine. Any other guy would run it into the ground because…lock the door, staff go, take the money out, everything else goes down rapidly." The Bank Manager made a telephone call and then agreed as long as Bertie was prepared to work under the supervision of a Hotel Expert appointed by the Administrators. So Bertie agreed.

At this stage Bertie was unclear if he could recover ownership of the Hotel, how he might do so and what administration really involved.

The Hotel Expert

The next day Bertie met with the Administrators. They told him they were happy for him to stay. The Hotel Expert, appointed by the Administrators duly arrived at Greymare House. The Employees, as well as Bertie, were not impressed with the 'demeanour' and 'attitude' of the Hotel Expert. The Expert told the management team that he had 'lots of experience of the hotel business' and that he had 'been in administration seventeen times and declared bankrupt on three separate occasions'. Bertie was incensed and in what he described as "the lowest point in [his] life" he "physically man handled the [Hotel Expert] and threw him down the steps [out of the hotel] and [he] told him to bugger off." The Administrator telephoned immediately to say that the Hotel Expert wanted to call the Police but instead, the Administrator summoned Bertie to a meeting.

At the meeting Bertie said the Administrator could telephone the Police if they wanted as he should not have behaved like that. But Bertie told the Administrator what the Hotel Expert had said about administrations and bankruptcies. Bertie said "[He was] running the show there, [He would] run it for [the Administrator] and be [their] hotel expert". So the Administrator employed Bertie for a token salary. It was agreed that the Administrators could visit weekly but in a fortnight this became an update by telephone. So Bertie was running the Hotel and most Customers were unaware the business was in administration. At this stage the power relationship is still very much in the favour of the Administrator as Bertie is effectively an employee working towards the sale of the Hotel.

Employees

Bertie called a meeting with the Employees. He explained that he had no idea what was going to happen but that he had "been able to force them [the Administrators] to [allow him to] run the hotel for the foreseeable future on their behalf. But for them to understand [he] was not the current owner." Bertie reassured them that they could choose to leave and he would try to support them to find jobs elsewhere but that things were insecure. However, if staff wanted to stay they needed to know he would "be doing [his] best to help [them] and the business". Bertie ran the Hotel for the Administrator for just over 12 months and in that time none of his staff chose to leave.

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In order to maintain motivation levels Bertie told them he would fight to get the Hotel back and he did not want the Administrators to pull the plug on him and the Hotel because they thought Employees were not committed or might be sabotaging the business by underperforming.

Bertie had always advocated training for his Employees and had a strong reputation for development in the wider community in the 3 years before administration. Bertie also recruited employees who struggled to get work elsewhere and, along with his Employees, he would nurture these new employees. Interestingly most Customer feedback comments (apart from those about the Hotel building) relate to the attentiveness of Employees who are 'all extramilers' which is testament to Bertie's approach to training and management and a sign of the pride Employees have in their work.

Bertie's regret during this period was not being able to spend money on training. However, through a government agency he managed to negotiate funds to train two young staff and he continued to do in-house training himself.

Bertie has a track record of being open with his Employees and wanting to treat them fairly. For example, training them with future proof skills and a genuine open door policy. Whilst this meeting undoubtedly acted to keep employees enrolled in Bertie's network the key driver appears to be about openness with the Employees as still Bertie had no idea if he could recover his Hotel ownership.

Buyers, Bikers and the Derelict House

The Sales Agent had told the Administrators that the best sale price could be achieved by keeping the Hotel running. This point in the narrative is a pivotal moment in the ANT power relations mapping as Bertie is already responsible for the day-to-day operations and by giving this advice the Sales Agent had effectively recommended to the Administrator that enrolment in Bertie's new network configuration was the best way for them to achieve their target entity of a profitable sale of the Hotel.

The Hotel was on the market for £900,000 and with monies owed to the Bank and Administration fees Bertie would have been left with around £100,000 depending on the sale price. But he wanted 'his' Hotel back. The seasonal nature of the Hotel meant Buyers were unlikely to buy in mid-summer as they would not make money over the winter months to

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survive. Bertie surmised there was a chance he could re-acquire the business if he could find investors. There were some interested Buyers at various stages during the year.

Bertie identified four reasons why the business did not sell: (i) the price was too high for a business in administration as Buyers would assume something was wrong with the Hotel; (ii) Buyers were told how loyal Employees were to Bertie and how much he spent on training; (iii) Around 60% of Customers were Bikers and Buyer's perceptions of Hell's Angels and violence were not dispelled; (iv) the Derelict House in the rear car park (owned by Bertie not the Administrators) shared its access road with the Hotel and various potential purposes were outlined to Buyers (e.g. a blacksmith's workshop, or a building plot for a Biker's bunk house).

Buyers were welcomed, given a guided tour but subtly discouraged by a series of perceived problems. As Bertie himself recounts "buyers asked [him] if Bikers had fights in the hotel and [he] told them yeah one or two but it is to be expected". Motorcycles can cost up to £50,000 and thus Bikers who could afford them were usually well paid professionals who were interested in touring the area rather than fighting.

The Sales Agent was wise to some of these attempts by Bertie and contacted the Administrator to insist that Bertie was told to leave the Hotel when a Buyer was due to come round. So Bertie left the Buyers in the capable hands of his loyal Employees. So Employees would tell the Buyers about the various plans for the Derelict House and as Buyers were leaving the Hotel the Employees would say Bertie could be telephoned later, so most Buyer did. In ANT terms the power relations are contested and re-contested at various points in this event. Bertie is effectively enrolling and re-enrolling the Administrator by rallying the services of other network actors such as the Employees, the Hotel and the Bikers. But full translation is not completed at this stage and it is a precarious or unstable antenarrative network configuration

Bertie is Back

After a year Bertie was able to pull together a coalition of two Customers and the Brewery to back him as investors and shareholders who did not want or expect a quick return on investment. These two Customers liked staying at the Hotel and had done so on several occasions and had heard rumours that the Hotel was on the brink of closure. By enrolling the two Customers and the Brewery into the new network Bertie was in a position to stabilise the

new antenarrative network configuration and to end the narrative he was able to buy the Hotel back at a reduced rate from the Administrators.

iii.   Interpretative theme and meaningful sequencing:

Bourdieu (2010) argues there are pre-existing elements of a network and actors have life trajectories and bring social capital/learning with them. When Bertie came to the UK and bought the hotel he left his pre-existing networks behind and only two actors pre-date Bertie's arrival (Hotel and a few employees). Bertie did not leave behind his learning and experience. So where does this network begin? We prefer Gulati and Srivastarva's (2014) idea, influenced by Bourdieu, which leaves space for *acquiring* - creating a new tie where there was nothing pre-existing - alongside *activating*, *altering* and *adjusting* pre-existing ties.

ANT focuses on how the network came into being and became problematized so a new configuration emerges. Therefore we believe the network begins as Bertie, with International Bank's financial assistance, buys Greymare House. At this stage there were no pre-existing ties. When the Bank called in its overdraft the network was problematized (destabilized) and a new network configuration begins to emerge with a series of new ties (*acquiring*) alongside various adaptations of pre-existing ties.

The initial problematization caused by the Bank's change in overdraft policy involved a hegemonic narrative which: silences the UK Bank Manager who tried to challenge; it ignores alternative stories; and the potential job losses of the Employees. However, by highlighting localised events we unearth Bertie (a micro actor) formulating a new network by placing an antenarrative "bet" with the promise in future to meet the interests of other actors. Bertie took "a chance" when first told the Hotel was to be placed into administration and was allowed by the Administrators to run the Hotel. In addition, the Sales Agent's advice to the Administrator that the Hotel could be sold for more if it remained operational, meant Bertie was able to achieve interressement. He interposed himself between the target entity (successful operation and sale of the Hotel) and pre-existing associations. This can be clearly seen in figure 1. Our use of thicker lines to denote new ties enables us to show how pre-existing network configurations are influenced by a number of new indirect relationships (*acquiring ties*) and actors combined with adapted relations from the original network which are used, in Actor-Network terms, for the purposes of enrolment or re-enrolment into the new network configuration.

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Figure 1 About Here

This enrolment was strengthened by Bertie's insistence the Hotel Expert be removed. This event meant the Administrator identified Bertie as the best bet to achieve their interests of a profitable sale. So the Administrator yielded and Bertie captured the network to re-arrange the order of assents.

Employees remained loyal to Bertie as he explained his goal was to keep the Hotel and they could see their longer term interests were better served being enrolled in Bertie's network. The enrolment of the Employees also allowed the Sales Agent to be partially side-lined as Employees were prepared to assist in preventing the sale to interested Buyers. Translation was not fully achieved at this stage but by discouraging the Buyers, a sale could not be affected.

Translation was complete when Bertie persuaded new investors (Customers and Brewery) to enrol into the network. The investors could see the long term potential of the Hotel and their interests were met. The Administrators and International Bank were persuaded to sell at a reduced price to Bertie's network. All actors appear to have benefited from the sale with the exception of some potential Buyers and the Hotel Expert. But as ANT suggests, new network configurations are not an "innocent" process.

Discussion

By identifying a "fragment" (Boje, 2001, Vaara et al, 2016) we were able to provide a localised account of how an antenarrative created a new network configuration, initially involving resistance (Harding et al, 2017) and ultimately resulted in change to the grand narrative (Boje et al, 2016). Such localised accounts themselves are hard to generalize from but their generalizability is perhaps better served by a collection of similar accounts, by theoretical generalizations and through the use of such case studies in teaching managers and scholars of organization studies.

Theoretically our contribution highlights the inherent messiness and dynamism of organizations and the complex web of power relations (Law, 2008). Hegemonic accounts and mainstream research tends to chronicle narrative in a relatively static, stabilized and pseudo-scientific process. Whilst our emplotment highlights relations between actors the real benefit of this Narrative Network Analysis combination is in analyzing power relations and being able to tell our story upwards and outwards (Fox, 2000). In the three hundred year history of Greymare House this fragment is a mere pin prick, as it is to macro actors such as

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International Bank. However, there is undoubtedly room for further studies using this approach if we are to uncover how conflicting narrative accounts come to change the trajectory of hegemonic narratives.

In our narrative placing a "bet" (Boje and Saylor, 2014) on a prospective antenarrative Bertie wrote the first page of a new narrative. Ultimately this bet paid out but it was arrived at by forming a new network configuration. The network was initially unstable and this involved interressement and enrolment whereby actors were assured and reassured their interests could still be met by the new network configuration to maintain enrolment until the translation finally stabilized this new configuration.

Through the application of a performative narrative we ensure the focus is on actors (Hansen, 2011) and through ANT we have rejected the dualisms of human/nonhuman and micro/macro. This use of ANT allowed seamlessly movement between macro and micro actors to explore relationality. The Hotel with its leaky roof is instrumental in Bertie's high borrowing at the outset. The Derelict House (along with the (absent) spectre of the Bikers) assisted in maintaining enrolment into the counter network and antenarrative. Along with the micro-macro interplay between actors such as Bertie and International Bank.

Our account attempted to heed the call to combine different strands of thinking on performativity (Gond et al, 2016) and use ANT in doing so (Hitchin, 2014). Rejecting dualisms enables a different rendition of the narrative. By exploring relationality and how a network is performed we were able to consider how a conflicting narrative came to be mobilised (Holstein et al, 2018: 66) and how a network of internal and external stakeholders reshaped the trajectory of Greymare House (Vaara et al, 2016: 549).

Conclusion

Employing Narrative Network Analysis (NNA) created a performance from a fragment of longitudinal research data. By intertwining the emplotment approach to NA and ANT's rejection of dualisms allowed us to explore a localised performation. This NNA enabled a deeper, dynamic, reading of organisational behaviour and we have given presence to an antenarrative that would otherwise go untold or be absent from accounts.
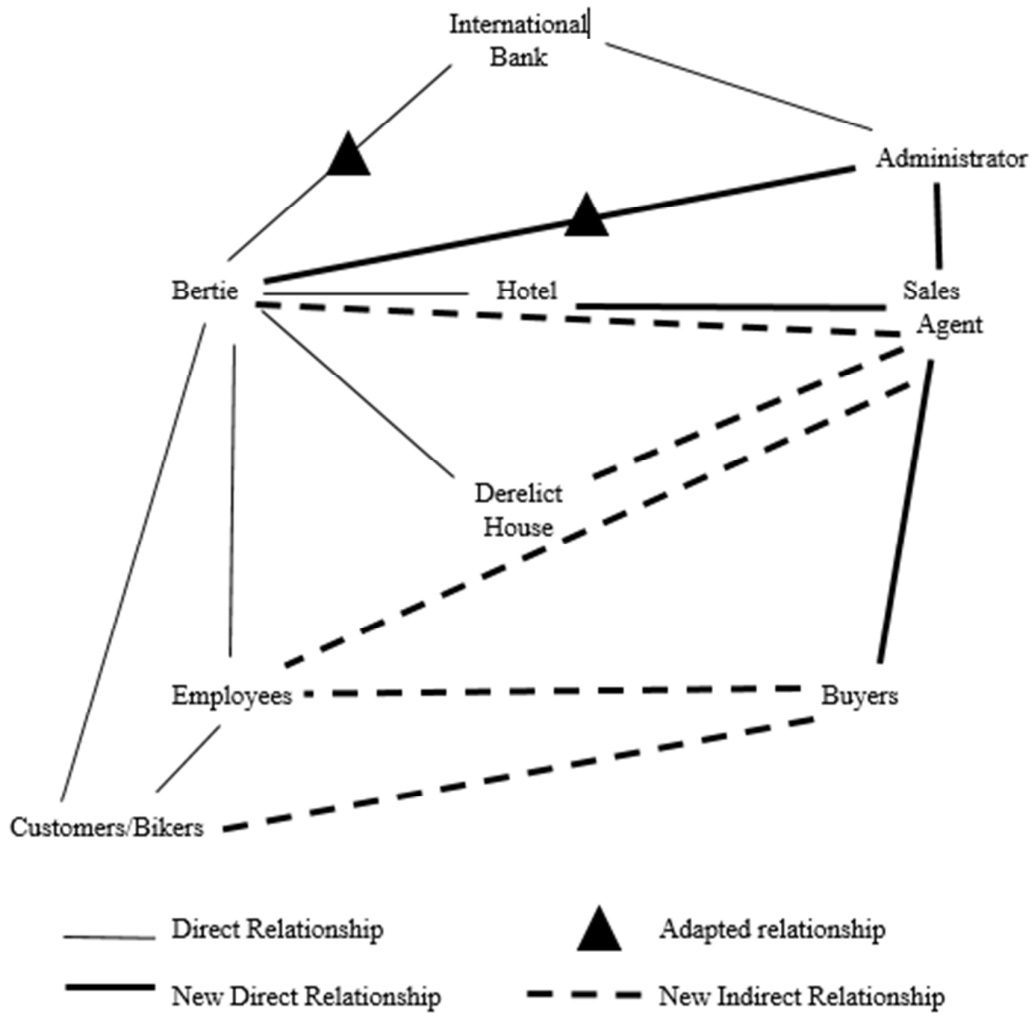
We addressed the calls for more NA studies to consider how conflicting narrative comes to be mobilised (Holstein et al, 2018: 66) and networks of internal and external stakeholders might reshape the organisation's trajectory (Vaara et al, 2016: 549). Our research attempts to

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provide a nuanced understanding of how a conflicting narrative came to reshape the hegemonic narrative. We evidence how an owner manager engages a new network of humans and nonhuman actors. Our study provides a contribution to our understanding of how an antenarrative bet is developed across a network of stakeholders and evolves into a new direction for an organisation. Such accounts are still rare and considered to be at the margins of the mainstream hegemonic narrative which seems more intent on producing simplistic models that are said to be universally applicable. We call for more such studies that problematize taken for granted macro pictures and hegemonic narrative by surfacing conflicting narratives. In this way we will enhance teaching and organisational understanding.

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