
RULES, POWER RELATIONS AND CONFLICTS

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT IN
A HOTEL IN NORWAY AND A HOTEL IN PALESTINE

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SUMMARY

A conflict between one of my former employers and a former colleague of mine made me curious to find out what leaders and employees do to solve conflicts. It also got me wondering what employees know about their rights and what labour unions do to help employees when the employees are in a conflict with their leaders. It also made me question if leaders and employees even use the law or labour unions when they are in conflicts. My curiosity on these questions resulted in a comparative qualitative study, with participant observation, of the work environment in one hotel in Norway and one hotel in Palestine. By comparing a hotel in Norway with a hotel in Palestine, I got to see things from another perspective and it also opened up for me to see beyond my taken-for-granted views of my own country Norway.

With the use of organizational theory I have looked at the two hotels' organizational forms and their significance for the work environment and for the leaders and employees time and opportunity to communicate. I found that both hotels could be viewed as mechanistic organized when it came to hierarchy, division of labour and empowerment and that time and opportunity to communicate was more important for the work environment than the hotels' organizational form.

I have with the use of organizational theories and theories of sociology of law looked at what significance the institutional environment had for the leaders and the employees in the two hotels. I have found that the leaders and employees took some of their rights and duties for-granted and that the two hotels had become isomorphic with the legal institution. I also found that the employees in Norway created their own rules in the different departments and through this the different departments could be seen as small semi autonomous fields. In both Norway and in Palestine I also found "living law". The management had created rules that were inconsistent with and also violated the law in the two countries, but neither the leaders nor the employees in the two hotels knew that these were violations. Both hotels can therefore be seen as semi autonomous fields. Because of time and opportunity to communicate the employees in Palestine had a common knowledge about rules and norms, the law and the labour union while the employees in Norway had more specific knowledge or no knowledge at all depending on what department they belonged to. I also found that in Norway almost none of the employees were members of the labour union while in Palestine almost all the employees were members of the labour union and they were also active users of the labour union.

I was also interested to see what significance the power relations in the two hotels had for how the leaders and employees solved conflicts. I have found that the employees with the least opportunities are using resistance strategies while the employees with more opportunities to much less degree resists. In both Norway and in Palestine they solve conflicts through negotiations and settlements. At the same time I have found it was much easier for the employees in Palestine to negotiate with their leader than it was for the employees in Norway. And again this was related to the fact that the employees in Palestine had time and opportunity to communicate.

I have found that the organizational form not necessarily is the most important factor to create a good work environment. Creating time and opportunity to communicate can be much more important. This holds true also when it comes to knowledge about law, rules, norms and labour unions and also when it comes to solving conflicts.

Keywords: Ethnographic design, participant observation, work environment, organizations, institutional environment, power relations and conflicts.

Title: Rules, power relations and conflicts - a comparative study of the work environment in a hotel in Norway and a hotel in Palestine.

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ATTACHMENT: Extracts from the Palestinian Labour Law 2000

1. INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTION

My interest for workers rights, opportunities and power relations originates from my own work experiences in the service industry in Norway. I once witnessed a conflict between a colleague of mine and our employer. It made me see that small strategic actions in a company can have huge consequences for the individual employee in relations to their job but also for their private life. It got me to question how aware people are over the fact that their actions (and also use of power) can result to unintended consequences that can be undesirable and problematic for others. It got me interested to research what kind of rights and opportunities employees' have, especially when they are in conflicts with their leaders and/or employers. It also made me curious to look more into how employers/leaders and employees communicate and also how they handle conflicts. The conflict I witnessed made me question if rules are always followed? Will employees who are members of a labour union always get help if they need it? What kind of help do they get? Do the employers and employees use the law if there is a conflict? Do companies create and have their own rules? And if they do, is it always consistent with the existing laws? Maybe employers and employees use other things as means to solve or get out of a conflict? Like their power and positions, social norms or social mobility. These questions resulted in my wanting to do a study of the work environment in a company in the service industry in Norway, more specifically in a hotel.

Prieur (2006) writes with reference to Bourdieu that the social world is socially and historically constructed, which means that there can be things that people see as "given" and therefore take it for granted instead of questioning it. Since I am from Norway and especially since I wanted to do a study in a field that was familiar to me there was a high chance that I could take some things as given and for granted and be influenced by my own experiences. I therefore found that it was best to do a comparative study of two hotels where one of the hotels was in an unfamiliar society. I believe that comparing my own society with an unfamiliar society could give me new perspectives and ways to look at my own society.

Prieur (2005) writes;

"The distance to the familiar can provide better chances to the observation and help to produce an epistemological break with the implied, false understanding, with common sense understandings, which Pierre Bourdieu in so many contexts has highlighted as one of the most important obstacles for scientific understandings" (Prieur 2005:136) (my translation - MT).

The unfamiliar society I selected for my study was Palestine (The West Bank). The reason for this was because Palestine has a very plural law system that stands in a stark contrast to the

Norwegian law system.¹ I thought it would be interesting to find out what significance the different institutional environments had for the employees in the two hotels. I also thought it would be interesting to see if Palestine had laws that regulated work environment. And if not, see if there were other things, as social norms and/or power relations, organizing and regulating the work environment. I was also curious to find out if they had labour unions and if so what significance the unions had for the employees. It would be interesting to see how people, living under extreme conditions and constant conflicts, solved conflicts. I also wondered how the relationship between the employer and the employees was in Palestine and also what opportunities and limitations Palestinian employees face. These questions in addition to the above mentioned questions resulted in my research questions:

- What significance has the institutional environment, organizational form and power relations for conflicts, the work environment and for how leaders and employees communicate and solve conflicts in a hotel in Norway and a hotel in Palestine?
- Can a comparative study of the institutional environment, organizational form, power relations, conflicts and the work environment between a hotel in Norway and a hotel in Palestine give new insight to how leaders and employees communicate and solve conflicts?

With the institutional environment I mean: law, rules and norms and labour unions.

To answer my research questions I found that the most appropriate method to use was an ethnographic research design with participant observations in a hotel in Norway and a hotel in Palestine.

It is important to state that I have taken the Palestinians perspective in this paper and that there is an ongoing conflict between Palestine and Israel. I am therefore aware that others can disagree with some of the things I present. When I refer to Palestine in this study I mean the West Bank² unless otherwise is stated.

¹ See chapter 3.

² See chapter 3.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

In chapter 2 I will show why I selected two hotels, what method I used and how I conducted the study. I will also discuss some ethical considerations in addition to saying something about my role as a scientist. In chapter 3 I will give an overview over the labour history and the two countries legal system and laws, I will also say something about identity and religion in the two countries. In chapter 4 I will give an overview over the structures, settings and positions in the two hotels and discuss the two hotels organizational form with the use of organizational theory. In chapter 5 I will show what the employees and leaders in the two hotels knew about law, rules and norms and labour unions and discuss this in the light of organizational theory and theories of sociology of law. In chapter 6 I will with the use of power, resistance and conflict theory show what types of power relations there were in the two hotels and also that different power relations led to different conflicts and ways to resist. I will also show that power relations and the organizational form had significance for how the leaders and employees in the two hotels solved conflicts.

2. SELECTION AND METHOD

I will in section 2.1 discuss if it is meaningful to conduct a comparative research between two different cultures and argue why I selected the two hotels. In section 2.2 I will discuss the use of ethnographic studies and time. In 2.3 I will discuss language issues. In section 2.4 I will discuss my observation methods and the time I used in the two hotels. In 2.5 I will show and argue why I chose to conduct some interviews in addition to do participating observation, especially in Palestine. In 2.6 I will show and discuss ethical considerations. In 2.7 I will in short say something about storing data and in section 2.8 I will discuss my role as a scientist.

2.1 SELECTION FOR A COMPARATIVE RESEARCH IN DIFFERENT CULTURES

Since was going to do a comparative research of two hotels in two different countries and cultures I found it important to look at other scientists' thoughts and experiences regarding comparative studies in two different cultures. Sivesind (1995) claims that in his comparative study of one factory in Norway and one in Germany found that there were cultural differences. Even though I was not going to look directly for cultural differences I found Sivesind's (1995) argumentation and advice of importance for my research.

Sivesind (1995) accounts for the convergence hypothesis and the non-convergence hypothesis. Where he writes that the basic assumption in the convergence hypothesis is that “(...) *the industrialization process leads societies to move on the same path toward modernity and that this process breaks down traditional differences between them*” (Sivesind 1995:38). The non-convergence hypothesis claims that there is a growing sensitivity to the multiple paths for industrial modernizations. This hypothesis is reflected and drawn from comparative studies of organizations that are made between different countries and shows that such sensitivity can be divided in to three groups; institutionalist, culturalist and scepticist. New institutional theory argues for that organization becomes isomorphic with its environment and the reason why similar organizations in different societies have different structures can be found in their institutional environment. The culturalist group represented by Philippe d’Iribarne argues that the decisive factor is cultural difference along historical roots. Sceptics argue that “*culture pervades everything and therefore explains nothing*” (Sivisind 1995:40).

Sivisind (1995) and others who have conducted similar studies have found cultural differences. I also believe that it is possible. At the same time culture is abroad concept. Since I had limited time to conduct my study I have specified my research questions look at laws, social norms and labour unions which all can be seen as parts of the culture. At the same time they can also be seen as different institutions in the society. In this way I follow new institutional theory by looking at different institutional environments and its effects on the two companies in two different societies. I agree with the institutionalist’s argument that different structures may be found by looking at what features of the institutional environment organizations adapt to. At the same time I also believe that one has to look at which ways organizations use the institutional environment, because organizations are not passive receivers of it.⁴

I follow Sivesind’s (1995) argumentation that one should select actors in similar organizations with similar structural positions and see to what extent they behave differently and/or similarly. I believe this also is important if one is going to look at how the institutional environment can affect employees in a company. By finding similar companies and actors in similar structural positions it makes it easier to see if they have the same institutional environment and also to see if they act differently or similarly in response to it. And also to see if there are other things they act and respond to.

³ Sivesind (1995) refers to Hamilton and Biggart 1992, p. 2010

⁴ See chapter 5.

THE PROCESS OF FINDING TWO COMPANIES – THE SELECTION OF TWO HOTELS

I started to search for companies that were identical or at least similar to each other in the two countries. I needed to find a company in Palestine where the employees or some of them spoke English. I therefore thought it was best to find a company in Palestine first, since the language problem could narrow down the selection of companies. I contacted the Palestinian committee in Norway which was helpful and got me in touch with a Palestinian living in Palestine, Adel Yahya, who is the director of PACE (Palestinian Association of Cultural Exchange). I asked Yahya if he knew of any companies in Palestine where the employees spoke English. Yahya suggested a hotel for me and got me in touch with a hotel manager in Palestine. I contacted the hotel manager and told him about my research and asked if I could do my research in his hotel and he approved.

When I found that I was going to do research in a hotel I decided that I also wanted to look at different departments in the hotel. I thought it would be interesting to see if knowledge about legal rules, rules and norms and labour unions varied between the departments. In addition to see how the communication was between the departments and also inside each department. I had therefore made up my mind before I started to contact hotels in Norway that I wanted to do observations in three different departments, the housekeeping, the reception and the kitchen/restaurant.

I began to search on the internet after similar hotels in Norway. I started to contact the ones I found by e-mail and told them about my project and that I wanted to do observations in three different departments. Many of them never responded, others told me that they thought my project sounded interesting but that they did not have time at the moment. I was getting nervous that I would not find a hotel in Norway that was willing to participate. After some worrying weeks I got a positive answer from the company director in one of the hotels I had e-mailed.

The company director, Knut was interested in my project and asked me to come for a meeting with him and the hotel manager. I was anxious before the meeting and worried that I was going to say or do something wrong that would change Knut's mind and jeopardise this opportunity. It had been very time consuming to search for a hotel in Norway. Since I only had received negative responses from the other hotels I almost felt that this was my only chance and that it was very important to convince them. When I came there the hotel manager was on sick leave. The market director was there instead as a representative for the hotel

together with the company director, Knut. I told them about my research and how I was planning to do it. During the meeting, Knut seemed to approve of my research. But at the same time Knut told me that I had to have another meeting to convince some more people in the hotel before I could get a final answer.

The second meeting was going to be with the hotel manager, leaders of each department and one of the employees' who was representing the labour union and the employees. I e-mailed the hotel manager, Toril, and arranged a second meeting. The day the meeting was going to take place I met Toril in the reception of the hotel. She was very accommodating and I had a good feeling about the upcoming meeting. Toril took me to a meeting room in the hotel where I met the leaders of the three different departments and the union representative. During the meeting I explained about my research and how I was planning to do it. They all seemed interested and positive about it and at the end of the meeting they all said they wanted to be a part of my research. I made an agreement with the housekeeping manager, Maria that I was going to start my observations in Maria's department and we agreed on a date. In section 2.2 I will discuss use of time and what role to take in an ethnographic field study.

2.2 ETHNOGRAPHY AND TIME

Since my interest was behaviour in a workplace the most appropriate method to use was ethnographic research design and to do participating observation Creswell (2007) writes with reference to Harris;

"Ethnography is a qualitative design in which the researcher describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviour, beliefs and language of a culture sharing group" (Harris, 1968) in Creswell 2007:68).

My research was for a master paper I therefore had limited time to carry it out. I planned and made an agreement with the company director in Norway, Knut and the hotel manager in Palestine, Saed that I was going to observe for one month in each hotel. Johannessen, Tufte and Christoffersen (2010), write that ethnographic studies are done over relatively longer periods of time (2010:85). Wolcott (2008) questions if an ethnographer always must spend months and months in the field in order to claim ethnographic validity and argues that ethnographers need to adopt a matter-of-fact attitude towards time. In Album (1996) study of patient cultures he used all from two weeks to three months and found that this was sufficient.

I believe how much time one need depends on what the research is about but also on the researcher's ability to limit the research. Wolcott writes; *"An ethnographer embarking on a project that might take years to conduct could end up with no ethnography at all. Time alone cannot guarantee ethnographic accomplishment"* (Wolcott 2008:178).

As a researcher one can choose to take on different roles in the field, one can be a participant, nonparticipant or take a middle position (Creswell 2007). As a participant the researcher takes part in the same activities as those who are being studied. When one is a nonparticipant one only passively observes. As a participant one can take on a trainee role;

"The advantage of a trainee role is that it puts the researcher in a training situation, offering insight to the field and making it easier for the researcher to ask naive questions" (Johannessen, Tufte and Christoffersen 2010:126) (MT)

I planned to take a trainee role. There were several reasons for this; Firstly, I was going to look at employees with manual jobs and it was possible to take a trainee role. Secondly, in the meeting with the leaders in the hotel in Norway I got the impression that the employees worked under some time pressure and from what I understood it was better for the leaders that I took a trainee role to not get in the employees way and 'waste' their time. Third, I also hoped that it would make the leaders and employees trust me and see that I respected them and their work. However, one cannot foresee what one may meet in the field. Several times I had to change and adapt my observation strategy because of the work tasks but also because of language problems. Before I go into detail about how I conducted the observations I will show how I dealt with the language problems in the two hotels.

2.3 LANGUAGE

The employees in Norway spoke Norwegian, English, Swedish or only their own language. In the housekeeping they spoke English, Norwegian and some only their only language. Five of those I talked to spoke Norwegian but few of them spoke it fluent, four of them spoke English. In the reception they spoke Norwegian and Swedish. In the kitchen two spoke Norwegian. The other employees in the kitchen only spoke their own language and little or no English. I tried to communicate with the employees who only spoke their own language. But I found that it was too difficult to explain my purpose of being there with the use of body language and signs. I could not find other employees who spoke their language and could translate for me. It probably would have been meaningful for my study to be able to talk to them. I wondered what they knew about their rights and how they experienced the work environment. I never got an answer to that.

In Palestine there were seven people who spoke and understood English. Four understood some English and six employees only spoke Arabic. When I arrived at the hotel in Palestine it was of great relief for me to find out that all the employees had in advance been explained and told why I was going to be there. Despite this I struggled the first day I was observing in the housekeeping department because the housekeeping employees only spoke Arabic. It was difficult not being able to understand them. In the beginning there was a lot of awkward silences, I pointed at things, and the housekeeping leader, Rami pointed at things and we misunderstood each other. Rami also once took me to one of the hotel rooms and called down to the reception and gave me the phone so I could explain through the receptionist what I wanted. It had just been a trivial question and I said to the receptionist that I would come back to them later. I thought for myself that this was going to be some really long days if we did not manage to communicate better.

Rami and I had a short coffee and cigarette break in the staircase. Rami took up his phone and started to write different numbers on it. Rami told me with the use of his phone his age and how many children he had. This gave me an idea. I went to my room and got my laptop, since the hotel was online, I thought I could try to communicate with the employees by using Google translate. To my relief it worked, and we could ask each other simple questions and give simple answers. I felt that we finally communicated. Google translate could probably also have been useful with the employees in Norway. However I discovered after asking the employees who spoke English that Google translate did not always translate things correctly. It did not really matter at that time because the important thing was that it gave us a way to communicate and socialize and it created a better relation between us. It is important to say that I did not use Google translate for scientific reasons, when I needed to ask employees about things that were relevant to my study I got the other employees to translate.

The employees in Palestine were also eager to teach me Arabic. I wanted to learn and I picked a few words and sentences during my stay. The fact that I was interested in learning and learned some words also helped to create better relations with the employees. Eventually I was even able to pick up some of the things that they were talking about. Google translate and learning Arabic helped me to communicate better with the employees. At the same time I do not believe it would have been possible to conduct this study in Palestine if I had not found a company where some of the employees spoke English. I also believe that since all the employees had been explained properly why I was in the hotel also made it easier to

communicate with them because our communication was based on a common understanding of why I was there and the context around it. In the next section I will show how I conducted the observations in the two hotels and how much time I used.

2.4 OBSERVATION METHODS AND TIME

NORWAY

I made an agreement with the leaders that I was going to use one week in each department in Norway. At the same time I told them that I might need more time but also that I could end up using less time. It differed how long I stayed in each department.

I spent five workdays and one weekend in the housekeeping department. On average I spent four hours with eight employees in the housekeeping department, both full time workers, part-time workers, call-substitutes and one of the housekeeping assistants. I always started my observations the same time as the employees started work. All the employees in the housekeeping department worked alone. I followed each one of them and helped them with their work tasks while we were talking. I was together with the same employee till lunch time and had lunch with them. Some of the days I ended the observations after lunch other times I asked other employees if I could be with them or went to find employees that had told me that they wanted to participate.

In the reception they had three different shifts, day, evening and night shift. Normally they were two people on the day and evening shifts and one on the night shift. In total there were eleven people working there, five of them full time and six of them part-time. I wanted to look at how it was to work in the different shifts and also to talk to as many of the employees as possible. The first day I did two observations, from 09:00 to 12:00 and from 18:00 to 21:00. The other three days I came in between two shifts, 13:00 to 17:00, 21:00 to 00:00 and from 23:00 to 01:00. Almost all the employees wanted to participate and were interested in my study. I realized that it was not possible for me to take the same active trainee role as I had done in the housekeeping department. The receptionists' main work tasks were to check in and out guests and to register bookings in a computer program designed for this. It would have taken me some time to learn the program and they would also have had to give me access to it. I therefore decided to take a more passive role and to only observe what they did and talk to them.

The first day in the kitchen the assistant chef, Erlat showed me around and told me how it was to work there. I was again prepared to take a trainee role. I asked Erlat if there was anything I could do and I hoped that I could get some work tasks where I could be together with the employees. I soon realized they were short of staff in the kitchen. This was mainly because the former chef, Lars had recently quit his job. In addition some of the employees were on sick leave and some were on vacation. Erlat was the functioning chef during my observations. Since they were short of staff I ended up standing mostly alone in the room where they prepared the cold food, see section 4.1.4. I was sat to cut vegetables, cakes and to make sandwiches. I was in the kitchen approximately six hours the first two days. The third day I felt that I was working there as the others. I did not feel that I got anything out of being there and decided to end my observations. At the same time I felt that I had not got all the information I needed. I therefore wanted to try to find the former kitchen chef, Lars who had been working there and ask for an interview with him, which I got.

PALESTINE – STAY IN THE HOTEL FOR TWO MONTHS?

I needed to learn about the Palestinian country and culture I therefore decided to stay in Palestine for two months. When I was searching for a place to stay in Palestine, the hotel manager in Palestine offered me to stay in the hotel to a very low price. I thought this was a very generous offer and I was very grateful. However it was important for me to consider what impact and consequences staying there could have for my study. First it could be a risk of getting too close to the employees and second how would the employees separate between me as a guest in the hotel and a researcher? Prieur (2005) refers to Hammersly and Atkinson (1987), who argues that;

“(...) closeness creates understanding but too much closeness is a risk, because it can mean, that one uncritical takes the informants perspective (go native) and loses the distance that is necessary for the later analyses” (Prieur 2005:138) (MT).

Prieur (2005) also refers to Goffman (1989) who argue for a full participation and that a researcher should also be exposed to the same conditions, physical and bodily, as those one does research on. Prieur (2005) writes that several factors make it impossible to follow Goffman's recommendations. But she agrees on his ideal about a far-reaching participation. Prieur (2005) further writes that it would not have been possible for her to conduct interviews in Mexico if she had not done participant observations. Because Prieur's (2005) participation made the informants trust her and it also gave her a greater understanding of them. She also

writes that the farther away you are from home the greater the need is for a broader gathering and collection of data.

I had never been to Palestine before nor to any other Arabic country. The culture and language were therefore new to me. To get to know and understand a new culture takes time. In addition I knew that some of the employees in the hotel only spoke Arabic. I therefore believed that it was going to take more time to get to know the employees and gain confidence in Palestine than in Norway. I therefore found that the best thing to do was to stay in the hotel. When it came to my role as a guest and a researcher I decided that I was going to keep my status as an observer throughout the whole stay.

Even though I was going to have status as an observer in Palestine I also wanted to do the same thing as I had done in Norway. My observations can therefore be divided into two parts in Palestine: planned participant observations and general observations. Since I did both at the same time the first weeks, it can be questioned if the employees understood that I was observing them the whole time I was there. I will first give an overview over how I did the planned observations and then I will discuss if the employees understood if I was observing the whole time.

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION IN PALESTINE

I started with participant observation in the housekeeping department the second week I was there. I observed for four days and about four hours each day I always started my observation at the same time as the employees started to work. I had planned to take a trainee role as I did in Norway. But it was difficult in the beginning due to lack of verbal communication. I tried to help them the first day but they signalled to me that I did not have to. After “Google translate” we started to communicate better. The third day they I felt that they were more used to having me around and they also started to let me help them. They always started together at one floor but they cleaned the rooms alone, when they were finished with one floor they all moved up to the next floor. They invited me to have lunch with them every day and also to sit together with them when they had cigarette and coffee breaks in the staircases.

The hotel manager, Saed told me that I was free to talk to the receptionists as much as I wanted in the evening and night shifts. I took this as a signal that the hotel manager preferred that I did that rather than being in the reception and observing them. I believe this was because Saed was concerned for the guests’ privacy. The receptionists were very helpful with

general questions I had, about the hotel, but also about their culture and society from the first day I arrived. They also translated and explained things to me when I was observing in the housekeeping department and in the kitchen. Since I stayed in the hotel I saw and talked to the receptionist every day on my way in and out of the hotel and through this I also got to see how they were working. Later in my stay I also had interviews with two of the receptionists and I got to sit behind the reception counter with them.

The week after I had finished observations in the housekeeping department I started my observations in the kitchen. I observed in the kitchen for three days. The first day I came at 09.00. I tried again to take on a trainee role and to help out in the kitchen. But it did not work. One of the chefs was a bit disappointed with me for not knowing how to cook, especially since I was a woman. I therefore soon ended up only observing and talking to them. The two next days I varied between observing and talking to the chefs, the waiters and also the employees who worked with the dishes. Ahmed, one of the employees doing the dishes, only spoke Arabic. When I tried to talk to him he always said “no English”. I therefore spoke more with the other employees in the kitchen. However I did not want him to feel off and that I was not interested in his work. The third day I asked with the help of some of the other employees if I could help him, to show that I was interested in what he was doing. Ahmed was excited and happy about showing me his work and he also tried to teach me Arabic. During my whole stay the leaders and employees always invited me to eat and to drink Arabic coffee with them and to sit and talk with them when they had breaks.

OBSERVING DURING MY WHOLE STAY

Wolcott (2008) writes that his experience is that even though people may become accustomed to having an observer present they never become oblivious to it, especially if the observer reminds them about their presence and their purpose. I believe that the employees understood that I was observing the whole time I was there. There are several reasons for this. I was the only woman being around them in the hotel for nine weeks and I was therefore easy to notice. I got confirmations several times that the employees were aware of that I was observing and my reasons for being there. When they had family or other visitors coming by the hotel they always introduced me and explained to them who I was and why I was there. During the whole stay I also asked the employees both general and personal questions about subject related to my research and also about their work and work environment.

DIFFERENT COUNTRIES -DIFFERENT STRATEGIES

I spent three weeks observing and I did part time observations in Norway. In contrast I was in Palestine for nine weeks and did full time observations. It can be questioned if I got enough data in Norway and if this data was comparable to the data I got in Palestine. Since I am from Norway the country and culture is familiar to me. I have also been working in different companies in Norway and was therefore familiar with different work environments. After the first month in Palestine I felt that I had gathered most of the data I needed from the hotel and I focused more on gathering general data about the society, laws and labour unions. Therefore the amount of time I spent gathering data in the two hotels was approximately the same.

After Preiur (2005) had been in Mexico she questioned her earlier research and if she had been too naive to discover if her informants were telling her the truth. At the same time her earlier research was based on interviews and not observation. It is possible that I have not seen everything that was going on in the hotel in Norway and also that some of my informants not were completely open towards me. However, all the employees I talked to in Norway spoke Norwegian or English. It was therefore easier to communicate with them and it took less time to understand what was going on and the relations between the employees. In Palestine I was much more dependent on reading signs and symbols and therefore it also took me more time to get to know the employees and understand the relations between them. I believe and will show in this paper that the data I have gathered is sufficient to do a comparative analyse of the two hotels. It can however be questioned if I came too close to some of my informants in Palestine, see section 2.5.

INTERVIEWS

I wanted to do interviews of the top management in the two hotels because I believed it was important to get their perspectives. I was also prepared that it might be necessary for me to do several interviews in Palestine, because of language problems, cultural difference and also because it was an unfamiliar country to me. I did two interviews in Norway, one with the director of the hotel and one with the former head chef. In Palestine I interviewed the hotel manager, two of the receptionists and three people from two different labour unions. The reason why I chose to do interviews with people from the labour unions was because I found that most of the employees in the hotel in Palestine were members of a labour union.

I used the same method for all the interviews: I had prepared open questions and took short notes during the interview. After the interview was finished I transcribed the notes to full text. The interviews lasted from 45 minutes till 2 hours. I let the one I interviewed speak freely but I guided the conversation with my question and subject of interest. I had not planned for and did not use a recorder. I can see the advantages of using one, because it is difficult to write down everything that is said during one and a half hour. At the same time, in Palestine I soon realized that there were some things that I had to be more careful asking about, especially the conflict with Israel and the political situation in Palestine. I believe that if I had used a recorder I may not have gotten any interviews at all or very little information. In Norway I also had to ask some difficult questions about power relations and conflicts, also there I felt that I got some information that I would not have obtained if I had used a recorder. In section 2.5 I will show some ethical considerations I made when it came to observe in a work place and also discuss if I came “too close” to some of my informants in Palestine.

2.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Since I was going to look at work environment I knew that I could meet people who were members of a labor union. According to the Norwegian Personal Data Act information about membership in associations is considered sensitive information. I therefore reported my project to Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD) before I started my research. They approved of it 29.12.2010. Johanessen, Tufte and Christoffersen (2010) write that scientist must submit to ethical principles and that there are several rules and guidelines. All scientific activities which may have consequences for others must be judged by ethical standards.

Johanessen, Tufte and Christoffersen (2010) write:

“The guidelines can be summarized in three types of considerations that a researcher has to think through (Nedrum 1998): informants' right to self-determination and autonomy, the researcher's obligation to respect the privacy of the participant and the researcher's responsibility to avoid harm. (...) Research information about identifiable individuals and this often implies legal matters that must be clarified” (Johanessen, Tufte and Christoffersen 2010:91-93) (MT).

Before I started observing in Norway I e-mailed an information sheet⁵ and a consent form to the housekeeping manager, Maria. Since I knew some of the employees did not speak Norwegian, I also made the forms in English. Since the employees in the hotel worked

⁵ In the information sheet I explained who I was, where I came from and what I was doing there. I also had written that participation was voluntary. That people who had participated could change their minds and withdraw their consent at any time. I explained that it was anonymous and that I exercised professional secrecy. I also posted a picture of me and my contact information.

different shifts and not all of them were present every day, it was not possible to gather them all and tell them orally about my project. I therefore posted the information sheet on information boards in all the departments.

I asked all the employees in the hotel directly if they wanted to participate, even the employees who had signed the consent form before I came. My thought was that if their leader asked them, they might have felt obliged to participate. In the housekeeping I found out that the housekeeping employee Maria had not delivered out the information sheet, I therefore gave the employees directly when I asked them if they wanted to participate. In the reception the leader had already given out the information and consent forms, and most of the employees had already signed before I began my observations. In the kitchen I did likewise as in the housekeeping department. I gave them the information the first day I was observing and asked if they wanted to participate. Some of the employees in the hotel did not want to participate and I fully understood and respected this.

In Palestine I e-mailed the hotel manager, Saed, the information sheet and consent forms in English and wrote that I would appreciate if he informed the employees about me before I was coming. When I arrived the first employees I met in the hotel were the ones working in the reception. They told me that they knew why I was coming and my purpose of being there. I found out that it was expensive to translate the information sheet to Arabic. Since I had a limited budget I did not afford to get it done. I therefore asked those who spoke English in the hotel to explain properly to the other employees why I was there, what my research was about and that it was voluntary. I also got them to explain the meaning of the consent form. It could be questioned if I should have taken the cost of getting the information sheets translated. However, the employees worked together for long hours every day and most of them also lived together during their work periods. They always knew what the others were up to and what was going on in the hotel. If there had been any doubts in my mind that some of the employees did not understand why I was there, I would have asked someone to translate and clarify it for me.

I ended up making a different consent form than the one I had used in Norway. Instead of asking for their full names I asked for their initials. The reason why I chose to do that was because I knew that I could be searched on the airport in Israel on my way back to Norway and I did not want to expose my informants. All the employees were explained and signed the consent form.

FAILING TO JUDGE BY ETHICAL STANDARDS - GETTING TOO CLOSE IN PALESTINE

In the beginning of my stay I was very curious and wanted to learn everything about Palestinian life. One of the young employees, Ahmed wanted to show me around in the city. I therefore gave him my Palestinian phone number and one day we agreed to meet in the city centre. Ahmed showed me around for couple of hours and we had some coffee. Later in my stay I came closer to one of the employees Aasim, it would be wrong not to admit that I now consider him a friend. He spoke fluent English and he is at my age. We met a couple of times outside the hotel and he also once took me to see another city in Palestine. Aasim told me that he almost got fired once for showing a guest around in Palestine. I therefore had some doubts about taking these tours with him. At the same time he convinced me it was safe and I convinced myself that it was ok since I was not a normal guest.

Around the same time, an unknown person started to call and send me text messages on my Palestinian phone number. I asked Aasim to find out who it was. Aasim found out that it to be a friend of Ahmed, the young employee who had showed me the city centre. I then heard that the hotel manager also had found out about this. I started to worry if Ahmed would get into trouble for showing me the city and giving away my number, because of what Aasim had told me about almost getting fired. I asked Aasim how the manager had found out about it and he told me that the manager had overheard him. During my stay I had been told that some of the employees put other employees in a bad light by telling things to the hotel manager because they want to get in a better position themselves. Some days after I had found out that the hotel manager had heard about Ahmed. Aasim texts me and asks me if I had told anyone about the tour I had taken with him. I began to feel that rumours had started to spread among the employees and that I had started a conflict. I began to worry what kind of consequences this would have for Ahmed and Aasim.

I got the message from Aasim after the hotel manager, Saed's working hours. I therefore sent a text message to him and said that I was sorry if I had created any kind of trouble and that the employees were not to blame for it. I did not hear anything back from Saed. But this was a real wakeup call for me. What if they had been fired because of this, because of me? I realized that I had come too close to my informants and put them in a difficult position. I decided that I had to take some distance from them. I did not want to be a part of any "games" between the employees and the hotel manager. Nor did I want to take side in any conflict. When I felt that things had calmed down and nothing happened I started

to be more around the employees again. I was however much more aware of my reasons for being in the hotel, my role as a scientist, and what I was saying and doing. At the end of my stay I had an interview with the hotel manager, Saed, who told me that the reason why Aasim almost got fired was not because he had been on a tour with a guest, but because he had not showed up for work. This was a relief for me to hear. I realized that it would probably not have been a problem taking those tours. But that it had been better if I had consulted with the manager first to avoid misunderstandings.

Wolcott's (2008) general advice when it comes to participant observations is to become only as involved as is necessary to obtain the information desired. Each researcher must weigh what might be gained, and at what risk or cost, by acting more natural, becoming more involved and by approaching the research setting more informally or causally. I think it is unavoidable to get closer to some people when one stays in the same place for a long time. From the tour with Aasim I got to experience how life was for young Palestinians. I wanted to learn about their culture and to see how they were living, but I should have been more cautious. I would never forgive myself if Ahmed or Aasim lost their jobs because of me. It fortunately turned out well. However, if I am going to conduct a study like this again, I will be much more cautious. I should have clarified with the management first.

Even though I feel ashamed of this episode I think it was important to be honest about it, maybe others can learn from my mistakes. One of the things which inspired me to do this research was my curiosity with how and in what ways peoples actions can result to consequences for others. Somewhere along the way I forgot that this also could be applied for my own actions.

In the end of my stay in Palestine I began to feel sad about leaving the employees and Palestine. Maybe it was a new sign that I was beginning to get to close. Several of the employees told me that I had become part of the "family". I had experienced and seen how their life was in Palestine and how it is to live under occupation. I felt that it was unfair that I was free to leave, while they were stuck there under those extremely difficult living conditions.

2.7 STORING DATA AND ANONYMITY

I kept all the data I had gathered out of reach for others. None of my notes contain full information about any of my informants and I always kept the consent forms in another place

than my notes. In consideration for the employees and their leaders I have chosen to anonymize the two hotels and the cities they are in. For the same reason all the names I use are fictitious. The number of rooms and floors are also fictional but I provide for virtually the same magnitude. Some places I also saw it necessary to talk about the employees and leaders in general. Those whom it might concern have read recognizable and vulnerable information and agreed that I could use it in this paper.

2.8 MY ROLE AS A SCIENTIST

In the introduction I wrote that one can see the world and the people in it as socially and historically constructed. As all others, scientist can also have taken-for-granted views of the world. Prieur (2006) writes with reference to Bourdieu that scientists should submit to objectify themselves. Objectifying oneself sociologically in Bourdieu's view is not the same as objectifying oneself psychologically. The scientist must see his or her own place, position and relations they have in the world in the same way as those one is studying. I will in the next section show my position in the field relative to the field I have studied.

MY POSITION IN THE SOCIAL FIELD

I am a master student in sociology of law with seven years of studies behind me, mainly sociology and sociology of law but also some law and psychology. I was prepared that my research could be somewhat intimidating for the employees. I was therefore very open about my role as a master student and why I was in the two hotels.

I have grown up in a home where both education and (hard) physical work have been highly valued. I believe that this is some of the reason why I have worked much alongside studies and never been especially picky on the type of work I have had. I have 10 years of experience with different manual work. I have also been working on a cruise ship once as both a housekeeping employee and also in the restaurant. I therefore had some previous knowledge about the field in which I was going to meet and assess. I was very aware that I could have brought with me some taken-for-granted views on how things should be. Since I have had similar jobs to the ones I was going to study I was conscious about having an open mind. I also tried to meet the field as if it was completely new to me. I did not tell the employees about my previous experiences. Because I did not want to appear as one who was better than them and knew all about what they were doing. And also because I did not want to bring my experiences into their words, I wanted the employees to tell me their story and not mine.

I must admit I have always considered these jobs as temporary and not something that I would have done on a more permanent base. Sollund (2004) writes that it was hard for her to understand why people could be pleased to work as cleaners. In the beginning of my project I also had this opinion but it has to some degree changed. A discussion of this would go beyond this paper but in short; I still believe that it is difficult to understand why some people willingly have a cleaning job on a permanent base their whole life. But cannot this also be asked about those who work with dispose of garbage, factory workers with repetitive work, cashiers in supermarkets and other manual work. If people have these jobs of their own free will and they have other opportunities available I believe it also can be easier to understand and find out why they have chosen to work as cleaners or in the latter occupations as mentioned.⁶

I am a woman and I am 31 years old, I believe that these two factors also had significance for the contact I got with the employees. I also believe that it had different meanings in the two countries. In Norway employees' age was approximately between 20 and 60 where the average was my age or a bit higher. In the reception, I felt that many of the employees could relate to me because many of them were students and also at my age. In the housekeeping I believe it was more a mix of both my age and gender. Some of the women in the housekeeping came from other countries with some different views on women and men. I believe that it would have been more difficult to get them to talk to me if I had been a male. It might also have been more frightening for them to be with an unfamiliar man than a woman. Because of the circumstances in the kitchen it is difficult to say if my age and gender had any significance.

There were only men working in the hotel in Palestine. Their age was approximately between 20 and 55 where the average was approximately my age, as in Norway. I felt the employees were protecting of me because I was a woman. I believe this had the consequence that I came closer to the employees than I would have done if I had been a male. I also believe that being from another country made it easier for me. I think it would have been more difficult if I had been a Palestinian woman. From how I understood the employees and others I talked to in Palestine; women were seen as inferior to their men or if they were not married they were

⁶ Sollund (2004) also write that it could be western phenomena. In Palestine I got the impression that cleaning jobs was not as highly valued as a job in the restaurant or the reception, and it is therefore plausible that this is not only a western phenomena. The difference was that the hotel manager in Palestine was in contrast to the top management in Norway open for that the employees in the housekeeping could advance, see chapter 6.

inferior to their fathers. There were also some cultural norms of what women should and should not do. I believe that because I was woman from another country I was at better liberty to ask “stupid” questions.

Since it is normal to be married at my age in Palestine and I am not married I decided to lie about it and say that I was. Because I was told that I would risk that the men would not treat me with respect if I was not married. However, I am not sure that I would have done the same again because I had a hard time with it. It was especially difficult to lie when the employees started to question me about my husband. Because I had to make up a story, and lie even more, and also remember to tell the same story if others asked me. At one point I considered to tell them that I was not married. But I concluded that it would probably make it even worse. Maybe they would not see me as trustworthy and start to question everything about me. In retrospect it is impossible to know how things would have been if I had been honest about not being married. Maybe the employees would have been less open towards me and less respectful. After being in the hotel for two months believe that very few of the employees would have questioned it or acted differently towards me if I had been honest about not being married. In chapter 3 I will give an overview over the two countries history (mainly labour history) and also say something about Norwegian and Palestinian identity and religion.

3. BACKGROUND AND UNDERLYING STRUCTURES

As I wrote in chapter 2 some things may be taken for granted and be experienced as natural and given. I believe that people’s history and their culture can be part of explaining “taken-for-granted” views of the world, how people interact with each other and also how they experience the world. Prieur (2005) writes that Bourdieu has raised some criticism towards ethnologists when it comes to the danger of ignoring the background of what is observed:

“Knowledge is therefore needed about the underlying structures and history of the actors. That makes the actors have an immediate and unreflective experience of the world, or doxic experience of the world. This is Bourdieu’s formulation of the ethnological or phenomenological point that there is an amount of knowledge that people act upon without being aware of it (taken as given)” (Prieur 2005:113) (MT).

I will in this chapter give an overview over the labour history and the identity and religion in the two countries, first Norway then Palestine. In the end I will discuss the differences and similarities between the two countries.

3.1 THE NORWEGIAN HISTORY OF LABOUR LAW AND LABOUR UNIONS

I will base this first section on Aubert (1989). From the nineteenth century a long historical struggle for workers' rights in Norway began. Before 1900 the work relation was regulated through contracts between the employer and the employees –the farmer and the cotter. The agreements about the amount of obligatory work varied between the districts. The legislation governing the master and the servant relation did provide the servants with some rights. But the servants could at any time be dismissed for more or less diffuse reasons. The servants were regarded as members of the household and had a subordinate position. They were to be at the disposal of the master at any time and were not allowed to leave the house without permission. Until the middle of the nineteenth century it was also prohibited to be unemployed. The constitution of 1814 was influenced by the American and the French declaration of human rights, that all men are born equal. To this context one could add Orwell's supplement "*but some are more equal than others*" (Aubert 1989:189). Aubert (1989) writes;

"For, it is apparent that the laws concerning servants do not deal with them as a category of people who have chosen a particular kind of occupation, but rather as people born into a lower estate, carrying with them social characteristics of almost ethnic nature" (Aubert 1989:189).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the industrialized sector had expanded but the legislators were reluctant to interfere in the contract between the employers and workers (Aubert 1989). At the same time since women and children did not have the same rights as men and were seen as inferior to the men, fathers, husbands or the employers. The state saw it as more legitimate to interfere on behalf of them (Bjørnson 1997). The first piece of legislation regarding factory work was the act of 1892 which regulated child labour. But the law served more as a symbol and was not effectively enforced. During the same time as the first labour protection laws appeared, trade unions and the labour movements emerged as a force. The labour inspectorate was established in 1892 (Aubert 1989). The trade unions became the most important force for establishing the workers' rights in Norway. In 1899 the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions⁷ were founded. The Norwegian Employers Union⁸ was founded the year after. The two organisations were dominant through the twentieth century. Between 1900 and 1940 they established several tariff agreements nationwide and in 1935 they made the so called "Main agreement". Which meant that LO and N.A.F had become formal counterparts. Through this, several conditions in the companies

⁷ LO –Landsorganisasjonen i Norge.

⁸ N.A.F. Norsk Arbeidsgiverforening.

were regulated (Fennefoss and Høgsnes 2006). With the new work environment act of 1977 a new era for workers protection began (Bjørnson 1997).

The act was the precursor for the work environment act as it is today⁹. Bjørnson (1997) writes that from the act of 1977 the term “work environment” was expanded and given new content. It gave clear signals that the workers health was prioritised higher than the companies’ economy. The act underlined the significance of evaluating the interplay between many different environmental factors. It also stated that the work environment should be “fully justifiable” both the individual factors but also in total (Bjørnson 1997). However as Engelstad (2006) writes, it is the owners/ employers who have the autonomy and right to control the company. This can mainly be derived from two factors, the contract between the employer and the employees and the companies’ property right. In the work contract the employees agrees to work in exchange for a charge, which is normally money. The employer owns the raw materials and the tools used. Whatever comes out of the work is therefore also the employers’ property. At the same time, this autonomy is limited by law, contracts, agreements, legal practice and customs (Engelstad 2006). The most significant and important limitation of a company’s autonomy in Norway is the work environment act of 2005. The Work Environment Act is mandatory and cannot be deviated from unless specifically provided for cf. §1-9.

NORWEGIAN IDENTITY AND RELIGION

Until the 1960’s Norway had been a relatively cultural homogenous cultural society. In the mid 1980’s there was a discussion between Norwegian and foreign social anthropologists about what it meant to “be a Norwegian” and they began to search for “Norwegian way of life”¹⁰ (Bjørkås 2005). Bjørkås refers to Per Magnsets’ (1982) summary of the discussion: Norway has for a long time been a culturally homogenous society without other minorities than a remote Sami population. Values of equality have been highly regarded. Traditionally there has also been a large will to share public benefits. Tolerance for differences has been low. Puritanism has been valued grater in Norway than in many other countries however in a very little dominant an aggressive form. Local roots and local traditional values have been strong. The family has been most central to the Norwegian people and the way of life. It is only in the last few years that urbanisation, nightlife, coffee shops and public places has been considered as a value of relatively larger groups (Magnset 1982 in Bjørkås 2005). Bjørkås

⁹ The working Environment Act of 17 June 2005 No. 62

¹⁰ Bjørkås (2005) refers to Klausen 1984.

(2005) writes that there is an emerging reason to assert, that this common culture is increasingly being replaced with cultural pluralism. Through growing globalisation, immigration, travelling, increasing circulation of cultural impulses and individualisation (Bjørkås 2005). At the same time Repstad (2006) writes that Christian traditions have pervaded the Norwegian history for the last century.

The Norwegian population is relatively liberal in many moral questions regarding the individual. But one would find a very high morale when it comes to how the society is governed. Political solutions' on behalf of the community is highly respected. Norway has gone through a strong institutional secularisation. During the last two hundred years the Christian positions in the countries laws and government have been weakened (Repstad 2006).

Hylland Eriksen and Neumann (2011) write that in the context of culture and national identity one must separate between culture (common meaning) and social identity (making groups and drawing social lines). The reason for this is that culture can change rapidly without influencing the peoples' identity (Hylland Eriksen and Neumann 2011). Hylland Eriksen and Neumann (2011) claim that the Norwegian identity in 2010 is shaped by both change and continuity, they write;

“The populations’ belief in Norwegian superiority, Protestantism and identification with ‘the underdogs’ are still strong. And equality, frugality and egalitarian individualism are still bearing elements of the national self-image (...) When it comes to the discussion about integration there is rarely any noticeable interest for the minorities influence on the Norwegian culture – the ‘Norwegianness’, however there are several suggestions on how the minority can become more like the majority”
(Hylland Eriksen and Neumann 2011:14-15) (MT).

Brochmann (2002) writes that the Norwegian equality ideology puts its own agenda before immigrants: Firstly because the ideology is a signal that people from other countries will never manage to become like “us”, and also that they never can be “equal” enough to fit in. Secondly the ideology can be confusing for the immigrants’, because when immigrants arrive they can experience that the equality ideology does not fit with how they perceive the Norwegian society because the Norwegian society is not as homogenous as it can give the expression of being. There are many different cultures inside the Norwegian community and there are also regional and local differences (Brochmann 2002).

3.2 THE PALESTINIAN HISTORY OF LABOUR LAW AND LABOUR UNIONS

Palestinian history is important in order to understand the Palestinian workers' situation today. I have therefore chosen to a larger degree also to write about Palestinian history in general in this section. I will base this section mainly on Farsoun and Aruri (2006).

Palestine was an agricultural society until the 19th and into the beginning of the 20th century. After World War I the British established a mandate over Palestine. The European intervention in Palestine encouraged European settlement in the country. It started to transform the economy and created new social classes and rearranged power relations between existing groups. The Ottoman authorities had earlier introduced administrative, legal and governmental reforms in response to the European threat. They also had renewed their interest in the Arab province. The consequences of the Ottoman reforms on landownership in Palestine led among other things to a great number of peasants losing the legal right to their land and becoming wage workers.

In December 1917 Palestine came under British control in the course of the war against the Ottoman Turkey. During this period the Zionist project was implemented in Palestine and started to split the country. The Jewish immigrants were superior in education, technology and capital. In contrast to the Jewish people from Palestine the immigrants did not let themselves assimilate with the population living there. The British mandate over Palestine contributed to further a discriminatory labour politics benefiting the Jewish immigrants and denying the Palestinians opportunities for creating better wage levels and working conditions (Farsoun and Aruri 2006).

However, in 1925 the Palestinian Arab Working Society (PAWS) was established and it grew rapidly during World War II. The union was especially active in the coastal industrial cities as Haifa, Jaffa and Jerusalem. In 1942 another major union emerged, The Federation of Arab Trade Unions (FATU) in a political split with PAWS. PAWS orientation was social democratic while FATU was influenced by communism. The unions contributed to impressive gains and witnessed growth in activism and independence (Farsoun and Aruri 2006). With brutal policies and tactics the Zionists took over the control and achieved their independent Jewish state Israel in 1948, the operation Palestinians call Al-Nakbah (the catastrophe). After Al-Nakbah in 1948 the British gave away their mandate over Palestine to the United Nations and left the country. During this period Palestinians had fled their homes and land because of mortal fear created by systematic terror campaigns conducted by the Israeli state force. Those

who fled were quickly replaced by hundreds of thousands of European and Asian (Arab) Jews. Of the total land of Palestine the Israeli captured 76% even though the UN partition had allotted Israel 55%. It is estimated that 750.000 to 800.000 of 900.000 Palestinians lost their land and became refugees.

Palestinian laws are drawn from four independent legal traditions; 1) Ottoman laws, especially regards land appropriation and taxation; 2) British mandate, defence emergency regulations (passed in 1945), which primarily justified curfews, censorship and house demolitions; 3) Jordanian and Egyptian civil laws which regulated criminal and landlord tenant disputes; 4) Israel civil law, which is under the jurisdiction of the military courts, and often derived from security considerations (Farsoun and Aruri 2006). Farsoun and Aruri (2006:213) write that all these laws creates a complex web of legal traditions, where only some are effectively enforced or even clear to the Palestinian people. Because of this Palestinians tend to settle disputes with customary law (urf) outside the official civil or religious courts (Farsoun and Arouri 2006).

After the Israeli occupation in June 1967 the Israeli added to the existing laws the Law of Administrative Ordinance. The law enabled Israel to extend their jurisdiction and public administration over the entire era. All the Palestinians were issued an identity card registered in the Israel military. From 1967 till 1970 Israel started to build a belt around Jerusalem with Jewish settlements. This has repeatedly been condemned by the UN General Assembly and the Security Council.¹¹ Israel left the status of the West Bank to Jordan and the Gaza strip to Egypt. At the same time as this happened there were calls for annexation of Palestinian territories by a new movement within the Knesset, the greater land of Israel. Where, Minister Menachem Begin with the support from General Moshe Dayan argued for the creation of strategic Jewish settlements, to create facts on the ground.¹² During the 1970s Jewish settlements were installed in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Farsoun & Aruri 2006).

Efforts to organize workers in Palestine have since 1967 been labelled terrorist activities by the Israel military. Before 1967 thirteen of twenty-four Palestinian unions were located in Jerusalem. As Israel continued to break up the unions they became informal and hidden. By establishing new unions and other national organizations they compelled the activist to

¹¹ "On September 25, 1971 UN Security Council passed Resolution 298 deploring Israel's' actions on Jerusalem, labelling them totally invalid, and calling on Israel to rescind all its actions and measures to change the status of the city. Israel blatantly ignored international pressure" (Farsoun & Aruri 2006:211).

¹² "Israel's policy of creating "facts on the ground" in the Occupied Territories since 1967 has often been based on the assumption that should the state be forced into some kind of negotiated "compromise", the more land that has already been colonized then the more crumbs there are to be toss of from the table" (White Ben 2007), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2007/nov/07/factsontheground>

circumvent the authorities to reach the masses. They accomplished this and the unions again grew stronger. At the same time it was limited what the unions could do. They provided their members primarily with social rather than economic protection and service. The unions were particularly successful in administering health care service and medicine at a minimum cost to members and their families. The unions also tried to provide for legal aid, counselling and education (Farsoun & Aruri 2006).

Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip started to confront the Israeli occupation with demonstrations, tax revolts and labour strikes. The rise of Palestinian Liberation Organisation in 1967 also helped unifying the Palestinians and gave them an institutional framework. The Palestinian uprising eventually led to what is called the first intifada in 1987. In the beginning of the intifada the strength of the Palestinian masses overwhelmed Israeli military. As a result the Israeli army turned to brutal actions as beatings, use of teargas, house demolitions and shootings with both rubber and live ammunition (Farsoun & Aruri 2006). Farsoun and Aruri (2006) write;

“Unlike previous endeavours¹³, the intifada was strongly unified. It joined together the young and old, men and women, urban dwellers and villagers, both Palestinian Muslims and Palestinian Christians, the poor and the rich, and all political currents, to form a genuine grassroots movement representing the latest strong expression of the collective Palestinian will¹⁴” (Farsoun & Aruri 2006).

After almost two years of fruitless public negotiations between Israel and Palestine a top-secret PLO-Israel negotiation was held in 1993. It was cultivated by the Norwegian government and the negotiation led to the Oslo accords. The agreement transferred specific and limited spheres to the Palestinian authority as education, culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation and tourism. It also permitted the establishment of a Palestinian police force and elected council. At the same time the agreement allowed the Israel army to move freely in most of Palestine and to maintain their military installations (Farsoun & Aruri 2006). The agreement led to the division of the West Bank into three zones, called A, B and C areas. The Palestinian authorities were given full control over the first area A. It was made up of six Palestinian cities and consists of three percent of the total area of the West Bank. In the agreement Israeli troops in these areas were to be redeployed to the suburbs, or a ring around the cities, roughly one to two kilometres outside the cities. In the second area, B, the Palestinian Authorities should be in charge of civil affairs and public order inside the villages. At the same time, the Israeli military retained the overall security authority. It covers 27% of

¹³ Between 1936 and 1939 the Palestinians revolted against the British mandate. In 1947-1948 there was armed resistance to the partitioning of Palestine. Between 1964 and 1968 was the founding of the revolutionary PLO (Farsoun & Aruri 2006).

¹⁴ Farsoun and Landis, “Structures of Resistance”, p. 60 (Farsoun & Aruri 2006).

the West Bank and about 450 villages, where two thirds of the West Bank Palestinians live. The third area, C, was to remain under Israeli control. It consists of existing and future Israeli military installations, settlements, and unpopulated Palestinian state land areas which make up 70 % of the West Bank (Farsoun & Aruri 2006:246).

Most of the employees in the hotel in Palestine I observed in came from villages (B-areas) one to two hours away from the city where the hotel was located (A-area). The hotel therefore provided the employees with apartments in the city. When I was in Palestine I took some time off from my field work and went on several trips with different international groups and a Palestinian guide around in Palestine (West Bank). Several times we had to cross military installations in the C areas called check-points. At every check-point there was a high tower, with a one way glass mirror. Israeli soldiers were supervising from the towers. Sometimes the soldiers' were also standing on the ground with large machine guns. I was told regarding the check-points but also in general that you never know when things happen and what the Israeli military will do. And that the Israeli military could behave completely at random. I was told that Palestinians that travelled inside the West Bank were controlled daily. It was therefore very difficult for Palestinians to move around and they were dependent on having a job in the village they came from or be provided with a place to stay from their work place. In addition to the difficulty of travel it was also very expensive. Almost none of the employees in the hotel I observed in could afford a car. On average the employees in the hotel earned 650\$¹⁵ in one month and a bus ticket one way to a village cost 35\$, at night time they were depended on taxis¹⁶ or that they had a car.

Israel's violation of the human rights of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza continued after the Oslo Accords. In Palestine there have been administrative arrests', ill treatment, torture and killings done by Israeli military. In the Gaza Strip, especially, there have been house demolitions, severe restrictions of movement and varied forms of collective punishments.¹⁷ In the years after the Oslo accord there was a short period of recovery. But it came to a sudden end as the second intifada erupted (called Al-Aqsa intifada). As a result Israel imposed more devastating closures on Palestine. They reoccupied the Palestinian cities in the spring of 2002 and started the construction of the separation wall. Each Israeli closure

¹⁵ I have in this paper used and calculated dollars for both Norwegian kroner and Israeli shekels (The currency in Palestine).

¹⁶ When I was in Palestine I did not find out if taxis drove between cities or villages at night time, I believe that very few of them did, maybe none, because of the check-points and also because many of the roads were in poor conditions and lacked street lights.

¹⁷ B'Tselem (Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories), September and November 1994 reports. Can be found online at: www.btselem.org. See also Human Rights Watch/Middle East, *Torture and Ill-Treatment: Israeli's Interrogation of Palestinians from Occupied Territories* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1994) (Farsoun & Aruri 2006:272)

reduced the number of Palestinian workers allowed to work in Israel. Before the intifada 180.000 Palestinians were employed in Israel. After the Gulf war in 1991 the number had declined to 100.000. The signing of the Oslo Accords, the repeated closures of the borders reduced the number even further to 45.000 in 1995. Palestinians workers were being replaced by foreign guest workers. By October 1994 Israel had imported 59.000 workers. After the Oslo Accords unemployment in Gaza had reached 50% and 35% in the West Bank. In 1996 the number was even higher because of total border control, 60% in Gaza and 40% in the West Bank and the figures are continuing to rise (Farsoun & Aruri 2006). Farsoun and Aruri (2006) write;

“The repeated and increasingly longer closure of the Israeli borders to Palestinian goods and labor, the lack or delay in investment by international donors, and the reluctance of private diasporas Palestinian and Arab capital to enter the unstable environment of the autonomous areas – all have led to a dramatic economic downturn since the Oslo Accords were signed. (...)The most telling consequence of closure is the rise in the level of poverty defined as an income of about 2\$ per day and \$650 annually per person per year. According to a World Bank report, poverty is extremely high by regional standards” (Farsoun & Aruri 2006:259-277).

Majd, one of the employees in the hotel in Palestine told me that his father had owned a construction company and that the company had been doing a job inside an Israeli settlement. After the Israeli closures the company had not been allowed into the settlement to finish the job and the company was never paid. Majd’s father therefore had to pay with his own money those who had been working for him and also those he had bought building materials from. Majd also told me that most of his family had fled to Jordan and that the Israeli had occupied 80% of the land that belonged to his village. Several of the employees in the hotel told me that they had been working in Jerusalem before they started to work in the hotel I observed in. They had all lost their jobs, access to Israel and their work permissions after the second intifada.

After the Oslo Accords, Palestinian Authorities have established ministries. Among others a ministry of labour and they also established a labour inspection authority. In March 2000 Palestine also had a labour law given by the Palestine National Authority. The main union in Palestine today is The Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU).

When I was in Palestine I met some people that were sceptical towards PGFTU. I was told that PGFTU had too close bonds to the political party Fatah. I was also told that PGFTU was less democratic then it appeared to be. The leader Shaher Saed has been sitting since 1983. Others have therefore started up their own independent unions with the help of The

Democracy and Workers' Rights Centre in Palestine (DWRC). DWRC was established in 1993 by a group of lawyers, academics, trade unionist. In the interview with people in PGFTU I was told that the reason why they had not elected a new leader was because of the conditions and the conflict with Israel. They said it was impossible to gather all the members and have elections. I was also told that PGFTU had for many years been collaborated with The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) in Norway. I contacted LO in Norway when I came back to Norway to ask them about this. I found out that After the Oslo Accord LO has been supporting PGFTU with funding, education and training. It goes beyond this paper to go into the criticism towards PGFTU and also what kind of influence LO might have had on the PGFTU. I see that it would have been interesting for my paper to find out in what ways the collaboration with LO could have influenced PGFTU's work and their members.

PALESTINIAN IDENTITY AND RELIGION

The Nakbah in 1948 is the central element in modern Palestinian history and also the core around which Palestinians' national identity crystallizes. It created among the Palestinians a psychological bond and a strong feeling of identity and unity (Farsoun and Aruri 2006). One of the major consequences especially of the Nakbah but also of the reoccupation in 1967 was the displacement of the Palestinian population. In 1948 many of the Palestinians fled because of stories they had heard about what had happened to the Palestinians in other villages (Farsoun & Aruri 2006). Farsoun and Aruri (2006) refer to a witness description in R. Sayigh¹⁸:

“My village Sa'sa, didn't leave because of battle. There was fighting around there were air-raids and bombardments. But the reason we left was the news of the massacre of Safsaf, where fifty young men were killed. There were other massacres – Jish, Deir Yasseen – and there were stories on attacks on women's honour. Our village was especially concerned to protect their women, and because of this fear, many of the northern villages evacuated before the war reached them” (Farsoun and Aruri 2006:113).

The exodus of 1967 from the West Bank was far less extensive than in 1948. In the folklore it is said that the Palestinians had learned an important lesson. In 1948 the protection of the family honour was ranked before the protection of the land, in 1967 this was reversed. Most of the Palestinians stayed put on their land in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The land had come to rank before the family honour. For the Palestinians in the diaspora it has never been a question if they would return to their homes, but when and how. In many Palestinian homes one can find the words “Innana raji'oun' – “We shall return” carved in wood or needlework

¹⁸ R. Sayigh, *Palestinians: From Palestine to revolutionaries* (London: Zed Press 1979)

pictures (Farsoun & Aruri 2006). Since the year of 635¹⁹ the majority of the population in Palestine have been Moslems. There have also been a Christian and Jewish minority living there. As of today there is still a Christian minority in Palestine (Kimmerling & Migdal 2003). In the respect of the two religious minorities the Ottomans abided by the old covenant up to the end of the eighteenth century:

“(...) ‘Umar the second successor after the Prophet Muhammed, and formalized it into the millet (sectarian) system. The social (including family) and religious affairs and courts of the “People of the book”, the Christian and Jews, were completely autonomous (...)” (Farsoun and Aruri 2006:26).

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, European and American missionary groups started to target the Palestinian population. But instead of reinforcing difference the Christians in Palestine tended to affirm their sense of belonging to an Arab and Palestinian community. With festivals of Nabi Saleh (the prophet Saleh) and Musa (the prophet Moses) which drew thousands of people from all the villages. The Christians and Moslems reasserted shared values and norms and encouraged a common Palestinian identity (Farsoun & Aruri 2006). The situation today is still the same with Christian and Palestinians living together in Palestine. Because of the war, occupations, uprisings and conflicts with Israel the political situation in Palestine is very tense. Since Islamism was introduced to Palestine in the 1920's by the Arab Brotherhood there have been and still are clashes between those who want a secular state and those who want an Islamic state. The two best known political fractions are Fatah (for a secular state) and Hamas (for an Islamic state). As of today the West Bank is controlled by Fatah and the Gaza Strip by Hamas. However their power is very limited because of the Israelis control and blockade of the West Bank and the control and total blockade of the Gaza Strip.

3.3 STRUGGLE FOR WORKERS RIGHTS, OLD LAWS AND NEW LAWS AND CULTURE

Norway has had their own laws for almost two hundred years and the new labour laws for more than 40 years while the Palestinian Authority recently has started to create Palestinian laws. Norway is a multicultural society while Palestine is a homogenous society. Both Norway and the West Bank can be seen as secular states. In both Norway and Palestine there has been a long struggle for the workers' rights. I will try to show in this paper in what ways these different but also similar historical events have influenced the employees in the two hotels. Society, laws, social norms and their history are all part of structuring how people act

¹⁹ “635-637 - The Arab tribes capture Jerusalem from Byzantine and make the province of Palestine Prima into a military district (jund) of Filastin; Arabization and Islamization of the region” (Kimmerling & Migdal 2003:419)

and interact with each other. At the same time a workplace organizational form and structures can also affect how employees interact with each other. I will therefore in chapter 4 show and discuss the different structures, settings and positions in the two hotels.

4. POSITIONS AND STRUCTURES IN THE TWO HOTELS

I will in section 4.1 and 4.2 give an overview over the different settings and positions in the two hotels and the three departments. In section 4.3 I will argue that the two hotels can be compared in spite of some differences. In section 4.4 I will with the use of organizational theory show that the hotel in Norway was more mechanistic organised while the hotel in Palestine was more a mix of mechanistic and organic forms. In the end I will discuss what significance the organizational form can have for the work environment (how people communicate, knowledge about rules, power relations and conflicts) and if there are other things that also could be important.

4.1 THE HOTEL IN NORWAY AND THE THREE DEPARTMENTS

The hotel was located in the city centre in one of the larger cities in Norway. It was a separate part of a large company that also rented out apartments. The hotel had a reception, a bar, a restaurant, six conference room and 270 rooms for the guests, single, double, twin and family rooms. The hotel had ten floors with rooms for the guests. There were five elevators in the hotel, four for the guests and one for the employees.

4.1.1 TOP MANAGEMENT

The hotel had one director, one deputy-managing director, one market director, one accounting director, one operating director and a booking department. They were located in an office two blocks away from the hotel. The operating director (the hotel manager) had the main responsibility for operating the hotel. Since the hotel was a part of a larger company, the top managementsresponsibilities and workload were significantly over and above the operation and responsibility of the hotel. Every day they had lunch at the hotel's restaurant between 11.30 and 12.30. They never ate with the employees in the hotel.

4.1.2 THE HOUSEKEEPING

There was one manager and two assistant managers and 32 employees. They were 25 females and eight males aged between 18 and 60 years. They originated from many different nations, Afghanistan, Philippines, Kurdistan, Italy among others, mostly non - western countries, a

few of the employees were from Norway and Sweden. The housekeeping manager and one of the assistant managers worked full time 37,5 hours a week, from Monday till Friday 07.00-15.30. The other assistant manager worked part time, 16 hours a week, Saturday and Sunday 08.00-16.00. There were 6 regular workers that worked 37,5 hours a week, 6 part time workers who worked 8- 20 hours a week and 24 employees contracted as call substitutes that could work all from 0 to 37,5 hours a week. All the employees, regular, part-time and call substitutes were expected to be able to work Monday till Friday 08.00-16.00 and also Saturday and Sunday 09.00-17.00. Two of the employees in the housekeeping department were union representatives for all the employees in the hotel.

All the employees in the hotel had their own entrance, it went straight into a corridor where the housekeeping manager and the reception manager had their offices and also the housekeeping employees had their break room and meeting place before they began to work. In the corridor there was also one wardrobe for men and one for women. In the corridor there was a time clock where the employees had to register in after they had changed for work and register out when they were finished working. There were storage rooms in the third, sixth and ninth floor where they had towels sheets, soap, garbage bags and vacuum cleaners. The housekeeping employees also had their trolleys there which they used to bring with them all the equipment that they needed to clean the rooms. The housekeeping employees' workplace was the guests' rooms, the corridors and the storage rooms.

Every day the housekeeping manager, Maria went through a list she had picked up from the reception. The list contained a view of all the rooms in the hotel, and information about the rooms, that showed if they were check out rooms or stay in rooms. Maria had to make 12-16 lists to hand out to the cleaners every day. This list contained a view of which rooms the employees had to clean and also which of the rooms were check out rooms and stay in rooms. Maria told me she tried to make the lists as fair as possible by giving the employees similar amount of check out and stay in rooms. She also tried to give the employees rooms that were on the same floor, because the housekeeping employees had to bring the trolley. It would take more time when they had to go up and down to different floors. It was estimated that they used 15 minutes on a stay in and 30 minutes on a check out room. In the check out room they had to take out the garbage, change the sheets, vacuum and clean the bathroom and also all the surfaces in the room. While in stay in rooms they had to take out garbage, change the towels, make the bed with the old sheets and vacuum if necessary. When Maria was finished

with the lists she mostly did administrative work in her office. Maria also told me that she from time to time helped cleaning the rooms if they were lacking staff.

The housekeeping department needed about 12 to 14 people to clean the rooms on a normal day. The housekeeping manager told me that she almost every day had to call in one or two call substitutes. When the employees came to work, they met in the assistant managers' office. They were each given the list with rooms and a master key they used to open the rooms. After they had picked up their list and the master key they went to get their trolleys and then went to the corridor they had been given. A couple of the employees were responsible for cleaning the public areas in the hotel, the elevators, restaurant and the entrance to the reception. When they were finished with their task they had to help out the employees in the housekeeping to clean the guests' rooms. The assistant managers' tasks were different from the cleaners. Every day they had to go to a storage room located outside the hotel to get five large trolleys and place them in the five different floors. These trolleys were for garbage and dirty sheets from cleaning all the rooms. The assistant managers also checked in on how the cleaners were doing and helped them if there was too much work. In addition they also got different assignments from the housekeeping manager, Maria. In the weekends Maria was off and the assistant manager had to make the lists.

The employees in the housekeeping were scheduled to have common lunch from 10.30 to 11.00. They could eat as much as they wanted in the hotel's restaurant for 4\$ each day. It was also possible for them to bring their own food and eat in the break room. It was mainly the housekeeping manager, her assistant and three or four employees who ate in the restaurant, the rest of the employees ate in the break room. Some of my informants told me it was better to bring one's own food because then they could eat when they wanted. In addition to half an hour lunch they could take cigarette breaks outside of the hotel.

4.1.3 THE RECEPTION

In the reception there was one reception manager and one assistant manager and five regular workers and five part time workers. They were ten females and two males aged between 18 and 36 years, from Norway and Sweden. The manager and the assistant manager and the regular workers worked full time, 37,5 hours a week. The five part time employees worked 8 to 20 hours a week. The receptionists could work three different shifts, day, evening and night shift. In the day and the evening shift they were normally two people and in the night shift

only one. The first shift started at 07.00, the next at 07.30. The afternoon shift started at 15.00, the next at 15.30. The night shift started at 23.00.

The reception was right at the entrance of the hotel. The receptionists stood behind a large counter, where the guests could approach them. On the receptionists side they had two computers and two cash boxes. They also had key cards for the rooms, pens and papers. They sold soft drinks, sandwiches and a few hygiene items, like shampoo and toothbrushes. Behind the reception there was an office for the receptionists. Here they had two big desks placed against each other with one computer on each desk.

The reception manager, Eva worked day time and was never scheduled to work in the reception. She was mainly in her office doing administrative work. If people were away due to illness or for other reasons Eva had to work in the reception, if she could not find a substitute. The assistant manager, Josette, worked as a regular receptionist but she knew all the managers tasks and had to do them if the manager was away. The main work activity of the receptionists was to check in and out guests, make bookings and booking lists' and to help the guests. In every shift they also had to print an overview over all the guests staying in the hotel and put them in a safe for safety reasons. On the night shift they helped the guests with questions and ensured the safety of the hotel. The door to the hotel closed at 23.00. After this time the receptionist had to open it manually for guests who had been out or arrived late.

The receptionists who worked the day shift could eat in the restaurant from 11.00 to 11.30. Since they could not leave the reception empty they had to eat one by one and therefore alone. The employees who worked the two other shifts had to eat in the back office and bring their own food. Most of the employees, including the day shift brought their own food. They were also allowed to have short cigarette breaks.

4.1.4 THE KITCHEN

There was one kitchen chef, Erlat, one breakfast host and one regular employee, working full time, 37,5 hours a week. They were all males between 40 and 50 years old. All of them came from a non - western country. Erlat's position was only temporary he was normally the assistant chef. The former kitchen chef, Lars had quit abruptly and the hotel had not found a replacement for him. The kitchen borrowed one to three employees (normally the called substitutes) from the housekeeping department to help out preparing food and to do the dishes on a regular basis. They could work all from 0 to 37,5 hours a week in the kitchen. It

depended on how many guest there were in the hotel or if some of the regular kitchen staff was away due to illness or on vacation.

The first day I met with the kitchen chef, Erlat he was busy doing the breakfast host work tasks because the breakfast host was off that day. Erlat told me that it was normally the breakfast host that started at 06.00 in the morning and that he started at 07.00. Since I was going to be in the kitchen area Erlat gave me a chefs' jacket and an apron to wear. I went to change and when I came back Erlat showed me the kitchen area. There was one corridor leading to many rooms and another corridor. In one of the rooms they prepared hot food and in the other one cold food. There was one large refrigerator and one large freezer. The chefs' office was located in the same corridor. The other corridor led to the restaurant but also to another corridor where they had a storage room and at the end of it was a dishwashing room with a large automatic dishwasher.

Erlat's normal work tasks were to prepare breakfast and lunch for the conference guest and the employees. Erlat normally had one extra person in the kitchen who helped him prepare food. They always tried to prepare as much as possible the day before. Making trays with food for the breakfast, cutting up and cooking sausages, vegetables and other things they needed for the breakfast and the lunch the next day. In addition to making breakfast and lunch they also made fruit trays for the conference guests and sandwiches to sell in the reception and in the hotel bar. The breakfast host, Ava brought out breakfast and lunch to the restaurant. Ava was also in charge of delivering fruit and cake trays, coffee and tea to the conference rooms and also getting glasses, cups and plates guests had used. The extra employees from the housekeeping helped the breakfast host to clean the tables and the conference rooms after the guests. In addition they did all the dishes from the guests and the equipment that had been used in the kitchen.

I did not see them have lunch together. The extra employee who helped with preparing food ate while standing in the room where they prepared the cold food. The chef ate standing where they prepared the hot food. The extra help doing dishes ate in the dishwashing room. It was no time for them to actually sit down together and eat because of the rush. First they served breakfast to the hotel guests, then lunch for the employees and the top management and then lunch for the conference guests.

The company in Norway rented out apartments and all the employees in the hotel could for shorter periods rent an apartment. It was located nearby the hotel. The price was the same for the employees as it was for regular renters about 1050\$. The full time employees did not have to pay a deposit. The average salary of the full time employees was 3000\$ after tax and about 20\$ after tax per hour for the part time and the call substitutes. There were two employees from different departments who rented apartments from the company when I observed. The employees did not know about each other.

4.2 THE HOTEL IN PALESTINE AND THE THREE DEPARTMENTS

The hotel in Palestine was located in one of the larger urban cities near the city centre. It had one reception, a coffee-shop, a restaurant, four conference rooms and 50 rooms for the guests. It had 8 floors and two elevators.

4.2.1 TOP MANAGEMENT

A Palestinian family, two brothers and their two cousins, owned the hotel. Three of them lived in USA and one of them (one of the brothers) in Palestine. None of them had anything to do with the daily operation of the hotel. The hotel had one manager, who had full responsibility for the hotel. In comparison to the hotel in Norway it could be said that the manager in Palestine was also the market director, accounting director, responsible for the booking and the operating director. The hotel manager also managed the hotel's reception. The owners had two hotels in Palestine and both of them were the managers' responsibility. I observed in the biggest one where the hotel manager, Saed also had his office. Saed was present at the hotel everyday at daytime from 07.30 to 15.00. The owner was from time to time also present at the hotel. Saed and the owner mostly had their lunch outside the hotel. It was only a couple of times during my stay that I saw them eating in the hotel's restaurant. They never ate with the other employees.

4.2.2 THE HOUSEKEEPING

In the housekeeping there was one leader and four employees. They were all males aged between 20 and 32 years. They all worked approximately 48 hours per week. The hotel had five floors with rooms for guests. The housekeeping had a storage room on the first floor and one on the fifth. The employees shared one trolley. They did not have a break room but they had a break "space" in the fifth floor next to the storage room. They had one table there and some chairs. They also had a mattress there. Each morning the leader or one of the employees went to the reception and received a list of all the rooms showing if it was a check out room, a

stay in or an empty room. The leader and three employees started together on the same floor. They mostly cleaned the rooms alone but when I was there I also saw them helping each other. When they were finished with one floor they all moved on to the next. They used about ten minutes to clean a stay in room and 20 minutes to clean a check out room. The procedure and how they cleaned the stay in and check in rooms was similar to how it was done in Norway. The housekeeping employees did not have any time pressure on them, however sometimes the hotel was fully booked and they had much to do. They always had time for breakfast, lunch and cigarette breaks. It was allowed to smoke everywhere in the hotel except from the kitchen area where they prepared food.

One of the employees in the housekeeping was responsible for cleaning the public areas in the hotel; as the reception, restaurant, elevators and the conference rooms. When the other employees had finished with the rooms they helped cleaning the public areas or they got other assignments from the manager. This could be anything from washing the manager's car, the outside areas of the hotel or run errands. When there was no work for them, they were sitting down, listening to music on their mobile phones or surfing on the net or hanging out in the kitchen waiting to go home. They worked from 08.00 in the morning till 16 every day. When there were many guests in the hotel one of the housekeeping employees had to stay there till 22:00 in the evening and help the reception with guests. If there were any problems with the rooms or if the guests needed extra towels or sheets.

The housekeeping employees had breakfast together at 11.00. They ate together in the break "space" at the fifth floor. They had food from the kitchen, mostly it was from the guests' breakfast but sometimes the chefs had made something extra for them. Later I found that some of the employees also went down and ate in the kitchen together with rest of the hotel staff. They also ate lunch in the hotel and always in the restaurant together with the rest of the staff usually around 15.00, after the conference guests had finished eating. The lunch was leftovers from the conference guests. It was both hot and cold meals, fruits and sweets and they could eat as much as they wanted for free.

4.2.3 THE RECEPTION

The hotel had three receptionists, they were all men aged between 28 and 45 years. Two of them worked 48 hours or more per week and one of them part time 36 hours per week. There were three entrances to the hotel. One was at the same level as the reception; the second was from the garage three floors below the reception. The third entrance was from a lower street

level where also the conference rooms were located. From there one could take the elevator or the stairs up to the reception. On the receptionists side they had one computer and a monitor that showed the entrance to the hotel from the garage and the lower street level.

They had three shifts and there was only one person working in each shift. The shift was called A, B and C. A shift started at 07.00, B shift at 16.00, and C shift at 21.30. The employee who worked part time always worked B shift while the other two split working A and C shifts. The A shift work task was mostly check outs and some check in, while B shift had check in and C shift had some check ins. B shift also took care of the booking list for the next day, while the C shift was responsible for printing the guest list for safety reasons. This list was picked up by the Palestinian police every day. One of the receptionists told me that it mainly was for safety reasons but also if the police was looking for specific people. All the guests who checked in had to show the receptionist their passport and the receptionist always took a copy of it. The receptionist also gave information to the guests and helped them if they had any problems. If the guests wanted food the receptionist called down to the restaurant and ordered food for them and if they needed help in the rooms they called for the housekeeping. The entrances to the hotel closed at 23.00 after this time the receptionist had to open the doors manually for guests who arrived late.

At breakfast and lunchtime the receptionist always ate in the kitchen together with the other staff while the hotel manager watched the reception. The receptionists who worked B and C shift had to eat in the reception area because then there would be one to cover for them. They got dinner from the kitchen specially made or dinner made for guests if there were planned dinner settings. In the night shift the employees could go down into the kitchen and make themselves a snack. For toilet breaks they could get one of the cleaners or waiters to watch the reception for them. I rarely saw any of the other employees in the reception. During my interview with the receptionists, Majd, he had to go to the toilet and the housekeeping leader, Rami covered for him. A guest approached the counter and asked Rami something in English. Rami did not understand what the guest was saying and he looked at me for help, even though he knew that I could not explain it to him in Arabic. Since I had spent so much time with Rami and the other employees I managed to explain to Rami with signs what the guest wanted. Language was therefore probably some of the reason why I rarely saw any of the other employees in the reception.

4.2.4 THE KITCHEN

They had three chefs, two of them working 48 hours or more per week, one of them part time 36 hours per week. One of the chefs had the main responsibility for the kitchen and was in charge of making the time sheets. They had two employees in the kitchen to do the dishes and both of them worked approximately 48 hours per week. In the restaurant they had four waiters who worked 48 hours per week or more. One of them was the headwaiter who had the main responsibility for the other waiters and was in charge of the time sheets for them. The headwaiter was also the employees' union representative. They were all males aged between 20 and 55 years.

The kitchen was one floor down from the reception. The employees had their own entrance to the kitchen by stairs from the reception. They could also use the elevator and go through the restaurant. The kitchen was an open room where they prepared both cold and hot meals at different counters. There was one refrigerator room and one freezer room connected to each side of the room. A small hallway was next to it where there was an entrance to the restaurant. At the end of the hallway they had two large sinks, a large counter and one small washing machine. There was a small room to the left of the washing machine where they had a larger sink to wash the equipment from the kitchen. In the hallway they had a table and some chairs and they used the hall as a break room for a coffee and a cigarette breaks. They also ate breakfast there.

One of the waiters always started at 06.00. The waiter placed the breakfast and helped the guests if they had any questions and cleaned the tables after them. The next waiter and the two chefs came at 07.00. One of the chefs started preparing salads for the lunch while the other chef prepared hot meals for the lunch. The lunch was for conference guest. The lunch was served between 13.00 and 15.00. One of the employees who did the dishes started to work at 06 and the other one at 10. One of them, Ahmed was a trainee to be a chef in addition to do the dishes he sometimes helped the chefs in the kitchen.

The waiters helped the chefs taking out the lunch and served the guest drinks and prepared the tables for each table setting, breakfast, lunch and dinner. They did not always have a dinner setting but they always served dinner if a guest asked for it. Therefore there was always one chef, one employee doing dishes and one waiter working to 20.00. They always had one waiter working night shifts since the hotel had a coffee shop that was open around the clock. The coffee shop was very small and was located opposite to the reception. The kitchen and

restaurant staff always sat down together and ate with all the other leaders and employees in the hotel.

Most of the leaders and employees came from villages located one to two hours from the city. The hotel therefore provided the employees with two apartments in the city that they could use when they were working, for free.

4.3 ARE THE TWO HOTELS COMPARABLE?

Both hotels were divided into different departments, where each department had its own work tasks. Each department also had a leader. The work tasks and routines in the different departments were also similar in the two countries. One of the differences was that the hotel in Norway was almost twice as large as the hotel in Palestine. However, as I will later show and discuss, during a work day both hotels had approximately the same number of employees present at the hotel, with 17 employees in Palestine and 25 in Norway. In both hotels the employees' average age was approximately the same.

The main difference was the age difference in the housekeeping department in Norway and the housekeeping department in Palestine. The employees in Norway were aged between 20 and 60 and in Palestine they were between 20 and 32. This could mean working as a housekeeping employee in Palestine was more a temporary job and something one did when one was young in contrast to in Norway. I will also show in chapter 6 that the housekeeping employees in Palestine had greater opportunities to advancement than the housekeeping employees in Norway. Another difference was that there were both males and females working and that they were very multicultural in the hotel in Norway and only males and a homogenous group in Palestine.

I do not believe these differences have made it difficult to compare the two hotels. I rather believe and will show that it has been enriching for this study and that it brings out with better clarity how the employees communicated with each other, their power relations and how they solved conflicts. It goes beyond this paper to discuss the gender differences. However I will in section 4.4 look at the two hotels organizational form and its significance for how the employees communicated. I will also discuss what significance it had that the employees in Norway were multicultural and that the employees in Palestine were a homogenous group.

4.4 MECHANISTIC OR ORGANIC SYSTEMS²⁰?

In Sollund's (2004) doctoral thesis she did a research on housekeeping employees in two hotels in Norway. Her focus was on how immigrant woman experienced their work environment. She used Burns and Stalker's (1961) theory to discuss how the two hotels were structured. Burns and Stalker (1961) found in their research, of twenty companies, that firms operating in environments with relatively stable and predictable markets tended to have what they called a mechanistic form. While companies in environments with rapid change, uncertain markets and complex technologies had an organic form.²¹ Sollund (2004) argues that one of the hotels in her study, "Style" was more mechanistic while the other hotel "Charm" was more organic organized (Sollund 2004).

My study was in several ways different to Sollund's (2004). I looked at the interactions between all the employees in several departments. I did a comparison of two hotels in two different countries and cultures. And my main focus was the communication between the employees and what significance legal law, rules and norms and power relations had for their work environment and how they solved conflicts. However I have also chosen to use Burns and Stalker's (1961) terms mechanistic and organic systems and their different characteristics. I find that they are good descriptive and explanatory tools to give a structural description and comparison of the two hotels. At the same time I acknowledge there are several other theories about organizations and also about how they are structured and formed.²² I also find it important to say that organizations can come in many different forms and that they also can operate in many different sectors, with reference to Scott 2004. Burns and Stalker also recognized the latter and ascertained that they were talking about ideal types and that the relationship between mechanistic and organic systems was not rigid (Thomson & McHugh 2009).

Burns and Stalkers' (1961) mechanistic systems are characterized by specialized differentiation of functional tasks where problems and tasks are broken down. Each individual task is pursued with techniques and purposes more or less distinct from the whole. It has a hierarchic structure of control, empowerment and communication and there is a tendency for

²⁰ Mechanic and organic solidarity originates from Émile Durkheim 1893 (Rasborg in Korsnes 2008).

²¹ Burns and Stalker's theory is a rational oriented theory and can be seen as an open system approach that has been grouped under the heading of contingency theory. Contingency theory has faded from the managerial literature scene because of its weaknesses. It has been criticized for its environmental determinism and for seeing organization as passive receivers and users of the environment (Thomson and McHugh 2009).

²² A similar rational theory to Burns and Stalker's theory is Williamson (1975) transaction cost theory. However, in Williamson's theory peer groups ("organic form") and simple hierarchies ("mechanistic form") are seen from the organizations' (and not the environment) risk and cost perspective. Mintzberg (1991) criticized contingency theory for its; "it all depends" to not go far enough and proposes that there are six basic parts of organizations that always has to be present. Mintzberg (1991) also proposed that organizations can be structured in several different ways. Wadel (2003) also writes about formal and informal work division.

interaction to be vertical. While organic systems are characterized by adjustment and continual re-definition of individual tasks through interaction with others. It has a network structure of control, empowerment and communication, and lateral rather than a vertical direction of communication (Burns and Stalker 1961:119-121). Burns and Stalker (1961) write;

“both the types represent a ‘rational’ form of organization, in that they may both, in our experience, be explicitly and deliberately created and maintained to exploit the human resources of a concern in the most efficient manner feasible in the circumstances of the concern” (Burns and Stalker 1959:119).

Sollund (2006) refers to Shamir’s²³ (1978) discussion of Burns and Stalker where Shamir argues that one should expect that hotels were organic in nature. And, also that hotels have a tendency to exhibit a formal mechanistic structure at the same time as they have an internal organic structure. This is characterized by an informal and lateral way of communicating across the different departments. I have not read Shamir’s (1978) original work. I am therefore not sure if Shamir (1978) by this means that the informal and lateral way of communications only regards work activities or also socializing at work. I have interpreted Burns and Stalker’s (1961) organic and mechanistic systems as both rational. I will therefore in my use of the concept assume that both systems shall be viewed as rationally created.

I will use the same categories from Burns and Stalker as Sollund (2004) used, division of labor, hierarchy, empowerment and communication. I will argue that both hotels’ were more mechanistic organized when it comes to division of labour, hierarchy and empowerment. I will also argue that both hotels were more mechanistic when it comes to communication. However in Palestine the employees had much more time and opportunity to socialize and communicate. I believe and will argue for that time and opportunity for lateral informal communication resulted in that the employees in Palestine united rationally. Through this the organizational form in the hotel in Palestine can be seen as a mix between the two forms. At the same time I will show there was a very visible difference between the two forms. In contrast to Sollund (2004) I will place a greater emphasis on the communication in the two hotels and also distinguish between different forms of communication. I will discuss the different ways to communicate in the two hotels and its importance for the development of informal groups in the light of the employees’ different backgrounds and cultures. In the end I will discuss the significance of mechanistic and organic systems.

²³ Boas Shamir (1975) did a study of working environment and attitudes to work of employees in British hotels (Sollund 2004).

DIVISION OF LABOR, HIERARCHY AND EMPOWERMENT

In both hotels the division of labor was similar. They were divided into different departments and all departments had a leader. There was little or no work exchange between the departments and the employees work tasks were fixed and characterized by routine.

The hotel in Norway had a clearer hierarchical control structure. This can be due to the size of company. At the top they had a staff of leaders doing administrative work for the whole company. The hotel manager was part of this group. In the housekeeping and the reception they had leaders who did administrative work. The reception manager, Eva told me that she sometimes helped out in the reception and the housekeeping manager, Maria told me that she helped the housekeeping employees. At the same time it was still evident that they had a higher position. During my observations I never saw the reception manager work in the reception and I only saw the housekeeping manager help out once. In Palestine the hierarchical control was more subtle. This can be due to the hotel being smaller and also because the leaders worked together with the other employees and that all the administrative work was done by the hotel manager.

In both Norway and in Palestine the leaders were the only ones giving orders to the other employees and who also communicated orders from the hotel manager and the top leaders. The hierarchical structures, division of labour and the leaders control and authority in the two hotels were all signs that the two hotels were mechanistic organized.

COMMUNICATION – TIME TO COMMUNICATE

In Norway they had 270 rooms to clean and they had beds for approximately 400 guests. In Palestine they had 50 rooms and beds for approximately 100 guests. At the same time, as already mentioned, the total amount of employees present at the two hotels during working hours was almost the same, 25 employees in Norway and 17 in Palestine. In Norway the employees in the housekeeping department and especially in the kitchen department worked under great pressure of time. In the reception the pressure was more varied, depending on the flow of guests. In all the departments in Norway they had limited time to take breaks, in the reception they had to eat alone, in the kitchen they ate when they had time and in the housekeeping department some of them joined to eat in the restaurant while others ate in the break room and some ate at later times than the others. In Palestine all the leaders and employees always sat down together to eat breakfast and lunch and if they had more breaks they were always together.

In Lysgaards' (1999:203) study of work communities (Arbeiderkollektivet) he differs between system-ordered and spontaneous-chosen interaction processes. Where system ordered interaction is required and needed communication about work task where employees work together on the same task. Spontaneously chosen interaction processes are when the employees are not ordered or required but seek together to have a conversation. I will use Lysgaards' (1999) terms to show in what ways and what kind of communication there was between the employees in the two hotels. In my opinion Lysgaard's (1999) terms are not covering the whole phenomenon of interaction in a work place. The example Lysgaards' (1999) gives for system ordered interaction is of two people working together. I also believe it can be applied to employees who not directly work together on the same task but need to communicate to get a work task done. When it comes to his term spontaneously chosen interaction processes, Lysgaard (1999) gives examples that this interaction form can take place during breaks, in the hallways and while waiting. I am of the opinion that chosen interaction also can take place without being spontaneous. And that spontaneously chosen interaction is better suited for employees that maybe not know each other that well. It can also be questioned if communication inside a workplace always is embedded on system ordered communication. Because even though the employees' choose to speak or spontaneously speak to each other they may feel obliged to do so because of different power relations or positions in a workplace. I will in the next section show what opportunities the leaders and employees in the two hotels had to communicate and also what type of communication there were.

OPPORTUNITIES TO COMMUNICATE AND TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

Lysgaard (1999) writes that the environment is also significant for the employees' opportunities to communicate. Walls, doors, the size of the company, where people are placed and how free the employees are to move around in a company can prevent and also block the communication.

The hotel in Norway was relatively large with ten floors; the housekeeping department, the kitchen and the reception were all located in different areas of the hotel. Because of the division of labor, the time pressure and limited breaks in Norway there was no communication between the employees across the different departments. There was some system ordered communication between the leaders in the different departments. Internally in the different departments in Norway there was some communication. In the housekeeping there was some chosen and spontaneous interaction between the employees and their leaders.

Some of the employees found time to go and search for a colleague in another corridor or they met at lunch time or in the storage room. But most of them kept to themselves and the only communication they had was system ordered with the assistant manager - to ask for help and if the assistant manager came by to check on them. In the kitchen there was basically only system ordered communication or no communication at all because they all worked in separate rooms. In addition, both in the housekeeping department and in the kitchen some of the employees only spoke their own language and it was not possible for them to communicate with the others. In the reception it was system ordered, spontaneous and chosen interaction. In the day shift and in the evening shift they had time to communicate in between the guests and also while they were doing other work tasks. While in the night shift the employees were working alone and the only communication they had was when they took over the shift or when the others came to take over in the morning shift.

The hotel in Palestine was smaller but as in Norway the employees were located in different areas of the hotel. In Palestine all the employees communicated with each other, however it was a much clearer distinction between when it was system ordered and when it was spontaneous or chosen. It can be pictured with Goffman's (1992) terms front-stage and back-stage. When the employees were working they got into their work character and did their roles and performed their work tasks and the communication between the departments was mostly system ordered. But when they had cigarette breaks, breakfast or lunch breaks it was like they became a family. There was no difference between them, except their uniforms. They could joke and make fun of each other or they could play fight no matter what positions they were in - they were all equal. The difference became visible again as soon as they rose from their breaks and started to do their work tasks again, the chefs went back to the kitchen, waiters to the restaurant and the housekeeping employees back to their work.

The communication in Norway clearly mirrored and confirmed that the hotel was mechanistic organized. While in Palestine there was a striking visible difference between the work communication and their informal communication. The employees work communication in Palestine also mirrored and confirmed that the hotel was mechanistic organized. However, their informal communication was something else but not immediately organic in Burns and Stalker's (1961) sense. Because Burns and Stalker's (1961) terms regard how work activities are systemized, 'rational' and planned, and not the informal activities in a workplace.

Even though the employees in Palestine had planned breakfast and lunches or other breaks, there was no one telling them that they had to eat or be together. In those two months I was there all the leaders and the employees besides from the manager sat down together when they had breaks. In addition there was always one chef, one waiter and one of the men who were doing dishes who stayed in the hotel until 20.00 every day. This was in case guests in the hotel wanted dinner in their rooms. Very few guests ordered dinner in those two months I was there. The employees were therefore just sitting in the restaurant talking. I asked them once why they did not have a television in the restaurant, because it seemed a bit boring to sit there and wait for the guests to order something. They told me that the hotel manager did not allow them to have a television. I therefore do not believe that the manager had planned or intended that they were to sit there and socialize. It was more like an unintended consequence of how the manager had scheduled them to work and the low cost of having them there. During my stay in Palestine I also found out that almost all the employees in the hotel were members of a labour union. I believe it is therefore likely to think that the employees' time and opportunity to communicate informally created this 'rational' cooperation between them.

INFORMAL GROUPS

There may be several different conditions which make an informal group develop in a workplace (Wadel 2003). Wadel (2003) refers to Shein (1985) "*who speaks about physical closeness, frequency of interaction, common tasks, problems, background, history and status (...) as conditions that must be present for a group to develop a common culture*" (Wadel 2003:157)(MT). In Norway it was evident that both time and location prevented communication between the employees. I also found several other factors that must be brought into the light. In Palestine all the employees were men with the same background, history and religion. Most of the employees also lived together and therefore also spent much time together when they were not working. In addition they were all living under and experiencing the same difficult living conditions because of the conflict with Israel. In Norway the employees came from many different nations both western and non-western countries and they were both males and females. They had different backgrounds, histories, religions and non religions. Some of the employees in Norway could not speak other languages than their own which made it impossible for them to communicate with the others. In contrast to Palestine the only thing the employees in Norway had in common was their work tasks and work place. It was evident that this was not sufficient to form a group and develop a common culture among the employees.

MECHANISTICS OR ORGANIC SYSTEMS- DOES IT REALLY MATTER?

Sollund (2006) found that “Charm” was more organic organized. There was little specialization of work tasks in “Charm” and the women felt safe and were satisfied with their jobs. The women in “Charm” also had a much better relations with their superiors than the women in Style. Sollund (2006) writes that “Charm” seemed to be more flexible due to its size. Because it was small it was necessary to have employees who could be transferred to other departments. In addition “Charm” was also located in a rural area and experienced more change in the environment. At the same time, “Charm” was under some pressure from the management. Sollund’s (2006) refers to one of her informants in “Charm”;

“(…) every new director must prove that he can squeeze something more out of the hotel. We have always been very conscious of costs and have had people who worked really hard, still they are never satisfied. They always say: “You must make a little more next year” and I feel this affects the health of all of us” (Sollund 2006:299)

This shows a tendency in organic organizations which in my view is highly important to emphasize. When I was in Palestine the hotel had called in some extra people to help out from another hotel. I talked to one of them, Reyad. From what he told me I understood that the hotel he was working in was more organic organised. Reyad told me that it was very stressful to work there, because they were very few employees and that he had to do everything from cooking, serving to cleaning rooms. In addition to that he had a lower salary then most of the employees in the hotel I was observing in. Sollund (2006) recognises a similar problem with organic organizations, with reference to Sennet (1998) she writes;

“If no strict division of work exist between the various positions in the organization, the distribution of work may be unjustly distributed because some have more responsibility than others”.

I will add to this that it is also plausible to think that if leaders see that some of the employees are capable of working harder and do more they might expect all the other employees to do the same. One of Sollund’s (2006) conclusions was that in order to achieve work commitment and stability among immigrants one should aim for an organic form. I agree with Sollund (2006) that an organic form can open up for better communication between the employees and the leaders. At the same time, I will argue that when it comes to communication between leaders and employees it is not necessarily sufficient to change the organizational form. As I have shown time and opportunity were some of the major obstacles for socializing and for communication to happen in Norway. If employers chose an organic form because they want to “squeeze the most out of the hotel” with the consequence of employees “running around” the employees will not have time to communicate and socialize.

The hotel in Palestine was in many ways more mechanistic than organic organized, the difference being that they had lots of time and opportunity to communicate. An important point in this is that all the employees had a very low salary so the cost of having them present at the hotel for long hours was very low. The question is if it is possible to create the same time and opportunity to communicate in a mechanistic organization in Norway? I am not so sure of this but at the same time my concern is that organization might adapt to an organic form for its profits and not for the benefits of a better work environment. I will in chapter 6 argue that opportunity and time to communicate is important for power relations and also for conflicts and how the leaders and employees solved conflicts. Firstly I will in chapter 5, show what significance the institutional environment and the employees' time and opportunity to communicate had for the leaders and employees' knowledge about their rights, company rules and the labour unions.

5. THE COMPANIES AUTONOMY AND THE EMPLOYEES RIGHTS

In chapter 3 I showed that the company's autonomy and power is derived from the property right and that workers give up some of their power when they agree to work for others. I showed that what the employer and the employees can agree upon is limited by the Norwegian Work Environment Act and the Palestinian Labour Law. I also showed that it was possible for the employees in Norway and Palestine to join a labour union. My theoretical base for this chapter will be organizational theory and theories of sociology of law.

I will in section 5.1 give an overview over the different theories I will use in this chapter. In section 5.2 I will show that it is to a large degree up to the employers to ensure that the Norwegian Work Environment Act and the Palestinian Labour Law are followed. In section 5.3 I will show and discuss different reasons for why the two hotels were isomorphic with their environment. In section 5.4 I will show that there was confusion about company rules in Norway and argue that this may be because they had limited time and opportunity to communicate. In section 5.5 I will show that I also found "Living law" in the two hotels, and argue that in Norway it was again because of opportunity and time to communicate while in Palestine it was because other rules or rights were higher prioritized. In section 5.6 I will show that time and opportunity had significance for what the employees knew about the labour unions. In section 5.7 I will discuss the significance of these findings and also discuss a

new law that recently has been added to The Work Environment act in Norway, about the Psychosocial Work Environment.

There were some similarities between how the two hotels adapted to their institutional environment and also how they created their own semi autonomous fields. I have therefore chosen to arrange this chapter somewhat different from previous chapters.

5.1 “*INSTITUTIONS IN ACTION*^{24?}”

In this section I will shortly introduce New Institutionalism²⁵ and DiMaggio and Powell’s (1983) theory about isomorphism. I will argue that institutional theory falls short when it comes to “law-in-action” (and institutions in action). I will argue and discuss the use of the term semi autonomous fields as a concept that covers “institutionalism in action”. I will also argue for the use of Luhmann’s (1976-1997) concept about double contingency.²⁶ I have not read Luhmann’s original work and will therefore base my arguments on Crubellate (2007), Vanderstraeten (2002) and Aakvaag (2008).

Organizational theory has focused primarily on the rational and material life of organization and downplayed the significance of cultural factors up till the 1970’s. The theories of rational and material life have in recent years been challenged by institutional theories (Suchman and Edelman 1997). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argue with reference to Weber’s work on The Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism that;

“(...) the cause of bureaucratization and rationalization have changed (...). Organizations are still becoming more homogenous, and bureaucracy remains the common organizational form. Today, however, structural change in organizations seems less and less driven by competition or by need for efficiency. (...) bureaucratization and other forms of organizational change occur as the result of processes that makes organisations more similar without necessarily making them more efficient”.
(DiMaggio and Powell 1983:147)

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) claim that these processes’ happens through isomorphism. With reference to Hawley (1968) DiMaggio and Powell (1983) who write that; “*isomorphism is a constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions* (DiMaggio and Powell 1983:149). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) have identified three mechanisms where institutional isomorphic change occurs; coercive, mimetic and normative isomorphism. Coercive isomorphism is when

²⁴ Taken from Suchman and Edelman (1997).

²⁵ The term institutionalism was first introduced by Philip Selznick and followers (1940’s and 1950’s). DiMaggio and Powell refer to this work as the old institutionalism and notes that it reflected a distinct normative image of social structures and actions (Suchman and Edelman 1997).

²⁶ Talcott Parsons introduced the concept of double contingency in 1951 (Vanderstraeten 2002).

organisations are pressured formally or informally by other organizations which they are dependent upon. Mimetic isomorphism is when organizations resemble or model themselves after other organization. Normative isomorphism happens through professionalization.

Suchman and Edelman (1997) write that this notion challenges the conventional assumption that laws affect organizations only by altering the immediate economic costs of specific sanctioned activities. It recasts law as a broad cultural framework that influence organizations both mimetically and normatively, not merely through coercive material incentives. Suchman and Edelman (1997) acknowledge that institutional theory have much to offer to the Law and Society tradition. At the same time they say that institutionalists also have much to learn from it: *“The baseline assumption (among institutionalists) seems to be that law are explicit, authoritative and coercive – at least until proven otherwise”* (Suchman and Edelman 1997:929).

The Law and Society tradition focus and research has been on law-in-action and has from its earliest days highlighted the way in which extralegal social processes continuously construct and reconstitute the meaning and impact of social legal norms (Suchman and Edelman 1997). Suchman and Edelman (1997) write;

“(...) law is much like other elements of organizations’ institutional environment: not an explicit, authoritative and coercive system of material constrains, but an ambiguous, contested and constitutive system of cultural understandings” (Suchman and Edelman 1997:938).

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) show how different institutional environments as the government, other organizations and professionals can in various degrees influence and affect organizations. However as Suchman and Edelman (1997) point to that institutionalists fail to show that organizations are active receivers and users of the institutional environment, *“(...) legal rules not only reconstitute organizations, but are often reconstituted by organizations as well”* (Suchman and Edelman 1997:938).

The most known and used terms in the Law and Society tradition are “law-in-books” and “law-in-action” defined by Roscoe Pound (1959) and Eugene Ehrlich’s term (1936) “Living law” (Nelken 1984). Nelken (1984) argues that Pound (1959) and Ehrlich (1936) had different backgrounds and interest and therefore “law-in-action” and “living law” do not describe the same phenomenon, as some have argued. Nelken (1984) writes that Pound’s scientific background and sympathy with pragmatism led him to view law in terms of its purposes and that he saw law as an instrument to solve social problems. For Pound (1959) “law in action”

always had its base in legal law and he was occupied with the need to harmonise “law in books” and “law in action”. Ehrlich (1936) defined “living law” as *“the law that dominate life itself, even though it has not been printed in legal propositions”* (Nelken 1984:161). Nelken (1984) writes that the problem with Ehrlich term is how one shall distinguish between norms in general and norms perceived as law. For Ehrlich this was not a problem because he was not interested in their usefulness but their meaning and how it expressed common patterns of behaviour and feeling and unified groups (Nelken 1984).

I find the term “living law” more appropriate to use than “law-in-action”, because I believe people can conceive norms as law and as binding even though it is not “law in books”. At the same time I question Ehrlich positive view on “living law” because he means that “living law” is not primarily there because of dispute and litigation, but because of peace and cooperation (Deflem 2008). Pound acknowledges that law is a form of social control and that it is the most conspicuous and effective form (Deflem 2008). My opinion is that if “living law” is perceived as law and it is created of people with more power. As for example when company owners creates company rules and the rules are experienced as law, then “living law” is not necessarily there for peace and cooperation, but it can be an effective form of social control. I do not by this mean that companies are not interested in peace and cooperation but to demonstrate the companies’ ability to create law and by that they can have even greater power.

In Moore’s article (1973) she proposes that small fields “semi autonomous fields” can generate rules, customs and symbols internally. She also acknowledges that fields are vulnerable to rules, decisions and other forces emanating from the larger world. Moore (1973) points to that legislation or other attempts to change a field, often fail to achieve their intended purpose. And that even when they succeed wholly or partially, they carry with them unplanned or unexpected consequences. Moore (1973) also writes that social and binding obligations often already exist in a field and these are often effectively stronger then new laws. Moore (1973) writes;

“It is well established that between the body politic and the individual, there are interposed smaller organized social fields to which the individual “belongs”. These social fields have their own customs and rules and the means of coercing or inducing compliance” (Moore 1973:720)

I believe what Moore (1973) writes here is contradicting. Because firstly Moore (1973) writes that fields are vulnerable to the forces emanating from the larger world and then she writes that attempts to change a field often fail to achieve their intended purpose and that the reason

for this is because binding obligations often already exist in a field. I believe that Moore's (1973) concept of semi autonomous fields in a good way captures that organizations are active creators and users of the institutional environment. At the same time the concept falls to short of explaining where the binding obligations that already exist in the field comes from.

Edelman and Suchman (1997) writes with reference to Macaulay 1987, Sarat 1990, Erwick and Sibley 1992 and Fuller et al 1997, that; "*for most people, the legal system is both remote and arcane, and popular understandings of law and legality comes largely from day to day experiences (...)*" (Edelman and Suchman 1997:500) and that continuous flows of information, participation by professional groups, personal exchanges and exposures to a common set of rational myths lead both official and private organizations to adapt a common outlook and mutual practices (Edelman and Suchman 1997). Edelman and Suchman (1997) write;

"Together - through dialogue, litigation and mimesis – these entities collaborate to enact simultaneously the meaning of the law, the nature of the enforcement threat, and the options for compliance" (Edelman and Suchman 1997:502).

Edelman and Suchman (1997:502) claim that their image of unimpeded communication between legal and organizational fields contrasts sharply with European autopoietic²⁷ theories of law, where law is seen as a self-referential system. I believe and will argue, with Luhmann's (1976-1997) concept of double contingency, that Luhmann's theory does not contrast their image of unimpeded communication. In addition I will also argue that Luhmann's (1976-1997) concept much better grasps the relation between institutions and organizations. My argumentation for this will be based on Crubellate (2007) and Vanderstraeten (2002) interpretation of Luhmann's work and I am therefore open to that others can have interpreted Luhmann in other ways.

That autopoietic systems are operationally closed and self referential does not mean that they cannot be affected by the environment (Crubellate 2007). In Luhmann's theory each social systems creates its own (binary) codes for communication. For example, the economy operates with pay/not pay, the law as lawful/unlawful, the education system with learn/not learn and religion with transcendence/immanence (Aakvaag 2008). This means that each system will relate and respond to its environment in accordance with its own mode of

²⁷ Social systems are according to Luhmann autopoietic. (The term autopoietic Luhmann takes from Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Verla). Luhmann claims that social systems survive only through continuously reproducing its limits between itself and the world. The systems consist of communication and to survive it must continue to produce communication. If a system stops producing communication it will cease to exist (Aakvaag 2008)

operation (Crubellate 2007 with reference to Bednarz Jr. 1989). Crubellate (2007) refers to Luhmann (1976) writings about contingency theory;²⁸

“It has become customary to explain organizations by some kind of contingency theory” (...) the contingency theory develops two different notions, (1) dependence and (2) uncertainty, side by side. On the one hand contingency means that structures and practices (...) of a system depend on the way in which the environment becomes relevant to the system, while the reverse situation – the system working on the environment – is not generally taken in to consideration (...). (Luhmann 1976:96-97 referred in Crubellate 2007:72)

From my point of view Edelman and Suchman (1997) and Luhmann (1976) say the same thing. However, Edelman and Suchman (1997) in their article are vague in their explanation of how isomorphism happens; they say it happens through dialogue, myths, and unimpeded communication while Luhmann is more right to the point, it happens through a double contingency and expectations of expectations. As I understand Edelman and Suchman (1997) they interpret Luhmann’s binary codes too strict. And through this they cannot see how Luhmann’s different systems can communicate.

From how I interpret Luhmann’s theory he does not say that fields cannot overlap each other. At the same time when it comes to for example solving a legal question it will have to be done by the legal system if one is interested in the legal solution of it. And it is also expected that legal systems deal with legal problems and doctors with medical problems and so on. In Nelken’s article (1984) he refers to Ehrlich who states that when it comes to disputes and conflicts over “living law” one must seek to “norms for decisions (law in books)” for solutions (Nelken 1984). In my opinion this can have two different outcomes, “living law” can be accepted as “law in books” and by that it can be determined if it is lawful or unlawful. It can also turn out that “living law” is a norm without law enforcement behind it, which means that the legal system cannot determine if it is lawful or unlawful in legal terms, because it only operates under its own conditions. It is in this way I believe Luhmann means that autopoietic systems are closed, they cannot operate in fields that they do not have anything to do with. Aakvaag (2008) writes that Luhmann’s theory captures an important feature of the modern society. Aakvaag (2008) also questions if Luhmann emphasizes the horizontal differentiation too much at the expense of other differentiation functions, especially vertical differentiations.²⁹

²⁸ In contingency theory different structures in organizations are explained by different structures in the environment (Crubellate 2007).

²⁹ See chapter 6 for a discussion about Luhmann’s theory of power.

The reason why I brought these theories into light in this section is because all of them capture parts of what is going inside organisations and between institutions and organizations. My contention is that most organizations operate as semi autonomous fields at the same time as they are influenced through communication and by their expectations of the environment and also the environments expectations of the organisation. I will show and argue that the two hotels were isomorphic with the environment but also that they operated with their own rules and interpretations of the law and can therefore also be seen as semi autonomous fields. In the next section I will show that it is up to the employers in Norway and also in Palestine to ensure that the Work Environment Act and the Labour Law are followed.

5.2 “*THE EMPLOYER SHALL ENSURE THAT THE PROVISION OF THIS ACT ARE COMPLIED*”

The Norwegian Work Environment Act has long historical roots. Because of this it is today very detailed and extensive. The Palestinian Labour law is relatively new. It covers many of the same aspects as the Norwegian Work Environment Act but at the same time it is much less extensive and detailed and it leaves much room for interpretations.³⁰ When it comes to civil rights as the work environment act, Edelman, Erlander and Lande (1993) write;

“(...) civil rights laws is ambiguous, procedurally oriented, and has weak enforcement mechanisms, it does not guarantee that the symbolic structures organizations create in response to law will cause organizations to realize legal ideals (...)” (Edelman, Erlander and Lande 1993:4).

Edelman, Erlander and Lande (1993) are referring to civil right laws in the United States, but it can be assumed that what they say can be applied to Norwegian civil rights as well. In the work environment act chapter 2, §2-1 it says that: *the employer shall ensure that the provision of this act are complied*. It is therefore much up to each employer to ensure that the company follows the law and that the company’s rules and regulations are consistent with the law.

It is however important to mention to this that the Norwegian Labour inspection authority and other authorities can have routine controls to make sure that the companies follow The Work Environment Act and other rules. The former kitchen chef, Lars in the hotel in Norway told me that during the last twelve years the Food Safety Authority had been in the hotel only once. I did not hear anything about the Labour Inspection Authority but also they can have routine controls. On the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority (NLIA) webpage³¹ it is written that they can have announced controls and unannounced controls. When they are

³⁰ It goes beyond this paper to go into detail about the two laws. I will in this paper go into some of the different laws the employees in the two hotels knew about or used consciously or unconsciously.

³¹ <http://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/om/index.html?tid=207111>

announced it means that the company can prepare themselves and also correct things that are wrong before they come. Regarding the unannounced controls it is written that it happens mainly when someone has notified the authorities that there is something wrong. It is also written on NLIA's webpage that when they come announced they inspect for one day and spend two to four hours inspecting. I believe that it can be assumed that it is limited what the authorities would find. It depends of course on what they are looking for and how salient the violations are (if there are any). Different authorities with different agendas are also looking for different things. It can therefore be assumed that by that, they exclude other things. In addition most companies know what the different inspection authorities are looking for and they can therefore create rules and routines accordingly. But this does not necessarily mean that they always act on them as Meyer and Rowan (1977) write;

“To maintain ceremonial conformity organisations that reflect institutional rules tend to buffer their formal structures from the uncertainties of technical activities by becoming loosely coupled, building gaps between their formal structures and actually work activities” (Meyer and Rowan 1977:341)

This has also been captured by Luhmann and Weick³², Crubellate (2007) writes;

“(...) a loose coupling is always expected in relation to any institutionalization parameter since the action is a product of its interpretation by the system. For the same reason a point to point correlation is what is least expected in relation to any type of institutional pattern (according to Luhmann 1989; Meyer & Rowan 1977 and Weick 1969) (...)” (Crubellate 2007:77)

In the Palestinian Labour Law Article (2) says: *“Every citizen capable of working is entitled to work. The National Authority shall seek to provide work on the basis of equal opportunities, without any kind of discrimination”*. This can be interpreted as the Palestinian National Authority is to be responsible for ensuring that the companies follow the act. Those I talked to in the labour union in Palestine told me that the act was there but that it was not implemented on the ground. Also when I was visiting the Ministry of Labour in Palestine to get a copy of the Palestinian Labour Law, they told me that they had scarce resources and it was limited how much they and the Palestinian labour inspection authority could do. From what I understood much of the responsibility for implementing the law therefore lay within the companies and that there was no control over what the companies actually did.

The hotel manager, Saed in Palestine told me he yearly had to send a report to the Ministry of Tourism about the number of employees he had, for tax and incurrence reasons. To find out

³² And also Edelman (1990,1992) who *“suggest that organizations may outwardly compliant structures as visible demonstrations of attentiveness to legal mandates, norms and schemas – while at the same time preserving managerial prerogatives by decoupling structural symbols from substantive practises”* (Edelman and Suchman 1997:496).

more about general rules for the hotels I went and talked to a person working in the Palestinian Authority Media Centre “PAMC”, who told me that there was a committee appointed by the Ministry of Tourism, The Municipality and the Ministry of Civil Defence. “PAMC” told me hotels (restaurants and other service industries) had to apply to this comity for a license to operate. “PAMC” also told me that this committee every second year sent a control group to inspect the health and safety in the industries. The hotel manager, Saed in Palestine told me that the control group recently had inspected the elevators, fire exit and general fire safety in the hotel. Saed also told me that the control group had the power to close the hotel if it was not safe.

In both Norway and Palestine different authorities may have routine controls in the hotels to make sure that the hotels follow rules and regulations. However, in Norway I heard that the Food Inspection Authority had been there only once in twelve years. It is plausible to think that since there are so many companies in Norway it is impossible for the authorities to inspect all of them on a regular basis. Therefore they might be dependent on that people notifies them about violations. In Palestine the Ministry of Labour and the Labour Inspection Authority had scarce resources and it was difficult for them to implement the Labour laws because of this.

In the light of these findings it can be assumed that it was much up to the employers in both Norway and in Palestine to ensure that the Work Environment Act and The Labour Law were followed.

Edelman and Suchman (1997), writes that one of the things scientific studies of organizations should to look at is *“under what conditions do organizations behave rationally in response to law, and under what conditions do ideas about rationality, itself, change in response to legal and social norms?”* (Edelman and Suchman 1997:508). In Luhmann’s power theory, see also chapter 6, Luhmann shows how the subordinates draw conclusions about the power holders sanction potential through signs and symbols (Gulbrandsen 1999). Gulbrandsen (1999) writes that it seems that Luhmann bases this on the communication theory’s fundamental insights; that human abilities are limited when it comes to receive and process information. People face daily a wealth of information and also a number of actions to choose from. To reduce the information abundance and the insecurity people look for signs and symbols that can tell them something about the person or the situation they are facing. These signs and symbols become a replacement for substantiating information about persons or situations and are shortcuts for

making a decision (Gulbrandsen 1999). Crubellate (2007) writes with reference to Luhmann (1983);

“When an institution is understood not as a final state but rather as a provisional stabilization of expectations of consensus, it becomes easier to understand why they do not determine action. If the actions of the systems are based on expectations (micro-social plane) of expectations presumed by third parties (macro-social plane), then as these expectations are institutionalized at a high degree, the greater the possibility there will be for expectations being developed are coherent with them” (Crubellate 2007:77).

Luhmann’s (in Crubellate 2007) “answer” to why some laws (or other parts of the institutional environment as rules, social norms and religion) are followed accordingly, is because they are institutionalized at a high degree. This is also in line also with Olsen and March (1989) who argues that “rules that are more familiar are more likely to be evoked, and so recently revised rules come to attention” (Olsen and March 1989:25) and also that “higher order rules may be used to make the choice” (Olsen and March 1989:25). I will in section 5.2 show that both the Norwegian Work Environment Act and The Palestinian Labour Law was followed accordingly and discuss if this can be because these rules are institutionalized at a high degree. In the next section I will show that both in Norway and Palestine some rules were “institutionalised at a high degree”.

5.3 ISOMORPHISM? “TAKEN-FOR-GRANTED” – THE EMPLOYEES DUTIES AND RIGHTS

In Norway the leaders and employees all had written contracts. They came to work when they were scheduled to and wore their uniforms. They followed their different work routines and did their work tasks accordingly. They also had breaks that they were entitled to and they were allowed to smoke in designated areas outside the hotel. If the employees were sick they were entitled to sick leave.³³ The reception manager, Eva told me that all the leaders and the employees in the hotel had the same wage agreement according to an agreement between The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO)³⁴ and The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO).³⁵ Eva also told me that every other year the employees got a wage increase by seniority. The hotels staff manual stated that the company had an agreement with two labour unions, The Confederation of Norwegian Tourism (RBL)³⁶ and The Confederation of Norwegian Restaurant workers (HRAF)³⁷ which regulates the work relations, wage and work agreements.

³³ LOV-1997-02-28-19, Folketrygdeloven (Insurance Act), chapter 8, section II, workers, §§ 8-15-8-33

³⁴ Næringslivets Hovedorganisasjon (NHO)

³⁵ Landsorganisasjonene i Norge (LO)

³⁶ Reiselivsbedriftenes landsforening (RBL)

³⁷ Hotel – og Restaurantarbeiderforbundet (HRAF)

In Palestine all the employees in the hotel had an oral contract with the manager.³⁸ Those who had uniforms wore them and all the employees came when they were scheduled to work. The employees also got breaks that they were entitled to. I asked Khaled how many days off the employees were entitled to. He told me that they had one day each week and that after working there for five years they were entitled to one month vacation. He told me that the weekly day off should be Fridays because it was a holiday for Moslems. This was regulated in the Palestinian Labor Law, Article (73): *“Friday shall be the weekly day off, unless the nature of work requires the systematic setting of another day”*.³⁹ The housekeeping employees always had less work on Fridays and they did not have to clean the stay in rooms, it was also normal for the employees who had their time off to leave on Thursdays or Fridays.

Majd, one of the receptionists told me that the employees were entitled to termination benefits when they had quit a job. Majd was not sure about how it was so he asked one of the waiters who was standing in the coffee shop to come across to explain. The waiter was not especially well versed in English so he explained to Majd who translated it to me. The waiter said that when an employee had been working in the same place for more than a year he was entitled termination benefits. And for each year these benefits increase. I did not quite understand what he meant. I therefore later asked one of the other receptionists, Kamal, about it. Kamal told me that some private companies give people “salary” yearly after they had quit in a company, and that it was called “Nehyat Khidma”. How much one gets depends on how many years one had been in the company. This rule can also be found in the Palestinian labour law in Article (45):

“The worker who has spent one whole year at work shall be entitled to termination benefits amounting to one-months-wages for every year he has spent at work. The termination benefits shall be computed on the basis of his last wage, exclusive of overtime (...)”

Some of the waiters told me that they were paid termination benefits from hotels in Jerusalem were they had been working before. One of the employees later told me that these rules (among some of the others) originally came from the British and Jordanian Laws and has been implemented in the Palestinian Labour law.

³⁸ In the Palestinian Work Environment Act, Article (24) it says that; *“The individual work contract is a written or oral agreement (...)”*.

³⁹ It is interesting to see that even though both Norway and The West Bank are considered as secular states, religious rules are implemented in the laws given by the governments; in the Norwegian Work Environment Act there is also rules regulating work on Sundays and public holidays c.f. §10-10.

ISOMORPHISM IN NORWAY AND IN PALESTINE

As I wrote in chapter 3, the company's autonomy, power and the right to control is derived from the property right. 10. December 1948 the property right was implemented into the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In article 17 it says that: (1) *“Everyone has the right to own a property alone as well as in association with others”* (2) *“No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property”* (Buflod, Sannes and Aasebø (eds.) 2004:119). This rule in addition to the rules about contracts can be seen as highly institutionalised. In both hotels the employees followed company rules accordingly. They came to work when they were scheduled to work, wore their uniforms and did their work tasks accordingly and I got the impression that these things were taken-for-granted. In addition to that the employees also seemed to take some of their rights for granted. In Norway the employees received the salary that they were entitled to and they also were aware of and used their right to be on sick leave. In section 3.1 I showed that the struggles for workers rights in Norway had made the worker rights improve greatly from the 1970's. I also showed that in the Norwegian society there is a large will to share public goods. The right to be on sick leave can be seen as a public benefits and also as an important part of the Norwegian welfare system. In Palestine they were entitled to have Friday's off because it was a holiday. If they did get time off some of the employees had lesser workload or they got another day off. In chapter 3 I showed that Palestine has long religious historical roots and it can be assumed that this right was seen as something that was natural and given.

That laws and rules were followed accordingly in both Norway and Palestine can be seen in the light of Luhmann's theory of double contingency, and that these rules and rights were highly institutionalised. As long as the employers and the employees act on their expectations and their expectations are coherent with the institutions these laws and rules will be maintained.

5.4 SEMI AUTONOMOUS FIELDS –CONFUSION ABOUT COMPANY RULES – ONLY IN NORWAY

In this section I will show that there was some confusion about the company rules in Norway. I will first give one example from the housekeeping department and then three examples from the reception. I will also discuss why I did not find similar tendencies in Palestine.

None of the employees I talked to in the housekeeping department in Norway talked explicitly about company rules. But, Namra, one of the employees in the housekeeping, told me she had

heard that some of the housekeeping employees had been yelled at for sitting on the bed in a guest room and watching television. By that she had found that this was probably not allowed. Later the same week was with the assistant manager, Imad. We came down one of the hotels corridors and saw one of the employees sitting on the bed in one of the guest rooms watching television. I remembered what Namra had told me and therefore asked Imad if the employees were allowed to do that. Imad told me that they were not, and said; “*some of the employees do whatever they want*”. Imad told me that the leaders had tried to do something about it but it had not worked.

It can be assumed that it could be difficult for the employees in the housekeeping to interpret what is and what is not allowed to do when the employees are not informed about the company rules. Especially when people are treated differently and some of the employees can “*do whatever they want*”. In Luhmann’s (in Gulbrandsen 1999) theory, people look for signs and symbols to interpret the situation they are in. What is appropriate⁴⁰ to do will always depend on the context and position one is in. As I have showed many of the employees in the housekeeping department in Norway came from a non-western country and few of them spoke Norwegian fluent. They were therefore even more dependent on reading signs and symbols and interpret the other employees’ actions. Since all the employees in the housekeeping department are in the same position it can be assumed that the employees interpret what the others do is also ok for them to do. Maybe especially if the employees doing the actions have been working in the hotel for many years.

One of the first days I was observing in the reception, Kari, one of the receptionists, went into the back office to take a snuff⁴¹ (snus) while her colleague was on a break. Kari told me she had to hide that she was using snuff, because it was not allowed according to the company’s rules. Kari told me that if someone saw her she could get a written warning for it. I had not heard about written warnings or company rules when I had been observing in the housekeeping department. I therefore later asked the reception manager, Eva about the company rules and if they were written down anywhere. Eva told me that they were written in the staff manual and she printed out a copy for me. I told Eva that I had not heard anything about these rules when I was in the housekeeping department and asked her if these rules also applied to them. She told me that the rules applied to all the employees in all the departments and that all the employees were supposed to get a copy of the manual when they started

⁴⁰ Olsen and March (1989) presents a theory about logic of appropriateness, and write: “*What is appropriate for a particular person in a particular situation is defined by political and social institutions and transmitted through socialization*” (Olsen and March 1989:23).

⁴¹ Snuff is a moist powder or portion tobacco product, which normally is placed under the lip.

working in the hotel. Eva thought the reason why I had not heard anything about the rules in the housekeeping department was because the receptionists had much more responsibilities.

The staff manual contained an organization chart, facts about the hotel and general rules for all the employees. In the staff manual it was written; *“it is strictly forbidden to use drugs or be intoxicated during work hours. However smoking is allowed in designated areas as long as the employees do it during the breaks they are entitled to”* (MT). The manual said nothing about snuff but since it can be equalled with cigarettes it was probably not “strictly forbidden” as drugs were. However, it was also written in the staff manual that there were specified manuals for each departments and positions. Maybe the rules for the reception were more specified in that manual. I did not get hold of the specified manuals.

Many of the employees in the reception in Norway used the computer in the back office when there was nothing to do in the reception. Both Trine and Lise told me that it was allowed to be on the internet in the back office if all the work tasks had been done and there were no guests in the reception. One of the other employees, Nina, told me that it was not allowed but she used it anyway. In the staff manual it was written; *“the company’s e-mail system can be used to send messages internally or externally but it is forbidden to be on the net for personal agendas”* (MT).

The reception manager told me that the hotel bar was recently refurbished. And that after the refurbishment the bar had been running well. In a jocular manner she said it was because she and some of the employees from the reception had started to go there. In the staff manual it was written;

“Normally the employees are not to stay in the work place after working hours. The company could give permission if there is a special occasion. If employees are present after working hours, they should act and dress the same way as the guests. It is forbidden to be together with employees that are working” (MT).

In the housekeeping the employees were dependent on reading signs and symbols and also hearing stories about what other people had experienced when it came to knowing what was allowed to do. In the reception there was some confusion about the rules and what was allowed to do. The difference between the reception and the housekeeping department was that all the employees in the reception spoke Norwegian or Swedish and they all had been given the staff manual. At the same time it seemed that some rules were more important that the employees in the reception followed while other rules were not. It can therefore be

assumed that the important rules became highly institutionalised in Luhmann's view, while the other rules "lived their own life" and by that the receptionists and the housekeeping employees created their own semi autonomous field with reference to Moore (1973).

ARE COMPANY RULES MEANINGLESS?

In Palestine there were some general company rules for all the employees, which were the ones that they "took-for-granted". As already mentioned: showing up for work, wearing their uniforms and doing their work tasks. No one questioned that the employees in Palestine used a computer, played music on their mobile phones or hung around in the corridors or in the restaurant waiting to go home if there was no work to do.

In Norway as I have showed there were some general company rules but also some specific company rules for each department. At the same time the employees did not know much about them. In addition to I also showed they had limited time and opportunity to communicate with each other. They were therefore, with reference to Luhmann (in Gulbrandsen 1999) dependent on reading the signs and symbols that were around them. Hearing about people who were yelled at, seeing people "*do whatever they want*", seeing other employees using the computers for personal agendas and seeing the reception manager hang around in the hotel and using the bar, can all be strong signifiers that tell the employees what is and what is not allowed. At the same time even though the employees in Norway violated these company rules they did their work tasks accordingly, as in Palestine. It can be questioned if all these company rules really are necessary. In chapter 4 I showed that the employees in Norway were a heterogeneous group. They came from different countries and cultures. They therefore bring with them their own social norms and backgrounds into the company. Their experiences of what is right and what is wrong can be much more divergent than in a homogenous society. In this light company rules probably are important to insure structures and order in a company. However as long as the company rules are not communicated and implemented on the ground they become meaningless.

5.5 "LIVING LAW" – VIOLATIONS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT ACT AND THE LABOUR LAW

I will in this chapter show that the two hotels had some company rules and practises which violated The Work Environment act in Norway and The Labour Law in Palestine. I will also argue that the violation was a burden for the employees in Norway while it could be seen more as a benefit for the employees in Palestine.

MAKING MISTAKES AND HAVING TO PAY FOR THEM- NORWAY

I wanted to find out more about what the employees in the reception knew about the company's rules. Trine and Lise told me that one could get a written warning for many things in the reception. I asked them to give me some examples. They told me that they could get a written warning, if they used the "fire key"⁴² and if they had given out a room to a guest without booking them into the hotel. They could also get a written warning if they did not turn off the pay television and telephone in the guest rooms after a guest had checked out, if there was error in their cash register and if a guest had left without paying. In addition to getting a written warning to these last things they also had to personally cover all the costs. Lise knew that some of the other employees had read and signed a paper where these rules were written down but she did not remember if she had done it herself. I asked the other employees I talked to if they had signed this form and if I could see one. Those I talked to did not remember and did not know where to find the form. In the reception many of the employees I talked to owed the hotel money because of different errors they had done. This was also a conflicting subject and the employees thought these rules were unfair, see chapter 6. In the work environment act §14-15 2) it says that deduction from the pay cannot be done unless;

*e) "in respect of compensation for damage or loss suffered by the undertaking and caused wilfully or by gross negligence on the part of the employees in connection with the work, when the employee has acknowledged his liability in written or it has been established by court decision, or when the employee unlawfully terminates his employment"*⁴³

Even though this paragraph regards deductions from the salary it must be assumed that the term also can be applied to all economic claims that an employer can have against an employee. The terms "wilfully or through gross negligence" are strict conditions and it must be assumed that it takes a lot more than mistakes, like the errors the receptionist did, for the conditions to be fulfilled.

The reception manager, Eva had started to work in the hotel as a regular receptionist 10 years ago. Eva told me that the compensations rules had been there for a long time and before they had these rules there had been more economic losses in the reception. Eva said that the rules made the employees more careful and conscious of handling money. From how I understood Eva the rules were there to protect the company's funds. Since the company has property right they also has right to protect their property. At the same time this right is limited by the Work Environment Act but as I showed in section 5.1 it is much up to each employer to ensure that

⁴² This key was only to use under emergencies, but some of the employees had borrowed it to get into the employees entrance.

⁴³ The Norwegian Work Environment Act: <http://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/binfil/download2.php?tid=92156>

the company follows the work environment act. It therefore opens up for employers to generate their own rules and customs. As I wrote in section 5.1 with reference to Ehrlich in Nelken (1984) and Pound in Deflem (2008): “living law” perceived as law can be an effective form of social control.

OVERTIME – IN NORWAY

The receptionist, Eva told me that she and her assistant, Josette had to take many extra shifts in the reception. Eva told me that they did not get paid for overtime, but that they could take time off for those hours or days they had been working extra. However, they had to take time off in the same month as they had worked overtime. Eva said she always made sure that Josette got her time off. But that it was not always possible for Eva to do the same. Eva told me that her leaders therefore had allowed her to compensate the overtime with shorter work days instead. In the Work Environment Act it says, §10:

11) “*Overtime work shall be paid as an addition to the regular salary, the addition should be at least 40 percent*”, 12) “*The employer and the employee may agree that overtime hours wholly or partly can be transferred to time off on agreed days, in a written agreement*”. (MT)

The agreement between Eva and her leaders can therefore be seen as legitimate. The former kitchen chef, Lars, told me that when he had been working in the hotel his contract had said that his working hours were from 07.00 to 15.00. But the top management had expected of him to always work overtime because he was the kitchen chef. At the same time, Lars was not paid for it and it was not possible for him to take time off either because he always had to work. When Lars quit he asked to get paid for all the overtime he had been working since he had started. Lars had preserved all the pay prints as prove for his claims. Lars told me that he had found out that the punch clock did not store overtime and that all the data was erased monthly. He told me that it was therefore impossible to find out how much one had been working, unless one had printed a copy. Lars also told me that it was only the leaders who had access to print out copies. He said that the hotels routines with respect to the overtime were illegal and that he had reported the hotel to The Labour Inspection authority and The Data Inspectorate. I asked Lars if he was a member of a union at the time he quit. He told me that he was not but that he had contacted a private lawyer. From what Lars told me it could be seen as a gross violation of the law. At the same time, it could be questioned if Lars was the only one who had experienced not to get paid or get time off. When I observed I did not get the impression that the other employees in the hotel worked much overtime. It can be

assumed that the company's rules about overtime were well known among the regular employees in the hotel, especially in the kitchen.

When I observed in the kitchen, the kitchen chef Erlat told me that he was going to have time off and that he deserved it since he had been working so much lately. I got the impression that the employees in the kitchen were very conscious about their rights to take time off and also to go home when they were scheduled to⁴⁴. The former kitchen chef, Lars had only been working in the hotel for a couple of years while some of the employees in the kitchen had been there for 20 years. It could be assumed that the overtime practices was highly institutionalised among the employees who had been working in the hotel for 20 years and that this was the reason why they were very aware of their right to go home and take time off.

"NORMAL" WORKING HOURS - DOUBLE AND TRIPPLE SHIFTS -PALESTINE

The employees in the reception and in the kitchen in Palestine worked 48 hours or more every week. In the Labour Law article (68) it says; "*Effective working hours shall be forty-five hours per week*". The term leaves little room for interpretation, however in article (6) it is written;

"The provision of this Law shall be deemed as the minimum non-assignable rights of the workers. Wherever there is special regulation governing work relation, the provision of this Law or of said special regulation shall apply to workers, whichever is best for the worker"(My underline).

From this it could be interpreted that it was allowed to agree on more working hours. The salary in Palestine was very low and all the employees wanted to work as much as possible and for that reason working more than forty five hours was in their best interest. At the same time, since the act also regulated overtime, I assume the law makers' intention was that forty-five hours was to be the maximum hours the employees were allowed to work. But it could be difficult to argue that it was illegal as long as the employees themselves said that it was in their best interest to work more.

In the interview with the hotel manager, Saed, he told me that it was normal and also legal for those who worked part time to work 48 hours a week, while it was 64 hours a week for those who worked full time. The employees in the reception and in the kitchen could work several shifts the same day, and therefore be working up to almost 12 hours the same day. Sometimes both the chefs and waiters' started at 08.00 and worked to 20.00. The receptionist could start

⁴⁴ See chapter 6.

working at 22.00 and then work to 15.00 the next day, occasionally also from 15.00 to 15.00 the next day. However, during the night they had about four hours sleep on the coaches in the lobby area in the reception.

All the employees who were working overtime were paid accordingly. I asked Majd if it was legal to work that many hours in one day, he told me that it was. In the Labour Law Article (71) it says;

- 1) *Both social partners may agree upon overtime hours that will not exceed twelve hours per week.*
- 2) *The worker shall receive against every overtime hour, a remuneration equal to that of one and a half hour work.*

Since the employees were paid overtime, there had to be something that distinguished their normal working hours from the overtime. I therefore asked Majd how many hours the employees had to work before they were paid overtime. He told me that after eight hours in the same day they were paid overtime. This would probably mean that their normal working hours was approximately 48 hours and that they worked about 16 hours overtime every week. In that way, both the rules about normal working hours and overtime were violated.

VIOLATION AS A BURDEN IN NORWAY AND A BENEFIT IN PALESTINE

In Norway and Palestine I found “living law”. I did not get the impression that the employees nor their leaders knew that the compensation duty in Norway nor the overtime in Palestine were violations of the law. I believe that the violations can be seen as a burden for the employees in Norway. While in Palestine it can be seen as in the best interest of the employees and therefore a benefit. In Norway the employees in the reception did not know that the rules about compensation duty were illegal, they only thought it was unfair. From the company’s view it could be assumed that the company had “taken it for granted” that it was legal for them to protect and secure their property right, without any concern of the consequences of their rules actually violating the law. Since the rules had been there for so long the employees probably assumed that they were legitimate. It is also plausible that some employees trusted and interpreted the company’s autonomy and power synonymous with knowledge, “*that they know what they do*”, and therefore did not question the legality of all the rules given. Albiston (2005) write;

“Over time, however, institutions become self-sustaining because these cognitive structures and taken-for-granted expectations tend to constrain what constitute legitimate action and to channel behaviour in ways that reproduce institutionalized practises” (Albiston 2005:16)

When it comes to overtime in Norway I got the impression that most the employees were aware of the hotel's policy about overtime because the employees, especially in the kitchen were very conscious about being entitled to take time off. In Palestine the employees wanted to work as many hours as possible, therefore in some ways one can say that they approved of the violation of the law. At the same time, in the interview with the hotel manager, Saed I had the impression that he did not actually know what the law said about working hours. Nor did I get the impression that the employees knew if it was right or wrong. As I have showed when it comes to following rules and confusion about rules, some rules are prioritised over others and can be seen as highly institutionalised. In Palestine the employees' agenda and focus when I observed in Palestine was to get a higher salary, see chapter 6. As long as the employees had a low salary they were dependent on working as much as possible, working overtime was not seen as a problem and therefore not contested.

5.6 LABOUR UNIONS

In this section I will show that almost none of the employees in Norway were members of the labour union while almost all the employees in Palestine were. I will argue for that the employees' time and opportunity to communicate and their membership in the union made it much easier for them to find out about their rights then it was for the employees in Norway.

"I AM NOT A MEMBER OF THE LABOUR UNION" – NORWAY

I was told that the hotels union representatives worked in the housekeeping department. I asked all the employees I talked to in the housekeeping department if they were members and what they knew about the union. Namra, who had been working there for a year, did not know anything about the union or who the representatives were. Nadja had heard something about the representatives but she did not know much about them or the union. Later on she remembered an episode where she had wanted to take out her vacation money and some of the employees had told her to go and ask the union representative about it. The representative had told Nadja that she needed to fill in a form and give it to the hotel manager at the same time Nadja told me that it was the housekeeping manager who helped her to fill it in. Thabita had been working in the hotel as call substitute and part time worker for seven years. About a year ago she had got a regular job in the hotel. She knew about the union representatives and was also a member of the union, but she did not know much about it. I got the impression that the six full time employees in the housekeeping department were members of the union while the rest of the employees were not.

In the kitchen there were only a couple of the regular employees who were members of the union but they did not know much about it. None of the employees in the reception I talked to were members of the union or knew who the representatives were. The reception manager, Eva told me that she was not a member of the union and that she did not know much about it either. I asked Eva if it would have been easier if one of the representatives was working in the reception, Eva agreed to this, but thought that one needed to be a member of the union to vote for representatives in the company. And since none of the employees in the reception were members it would be difficult. In the Work Environment act §6-1 it says that the company has a duty to elect a safety representative. In the regulation of 1977-04-29-7 nr 07⁴⁵, §2, it says:

1) *“The safety representatives should be elected by workers, from all the different departments “safety areas”, who have been working in the company for more than two years. And in §5, 2) “the main representative should be elected of members of a union, if the members are in majority at a workplace”, if not 3) “the safety representatives shall elect a main representative”.*

It was also written in the staff manual that the company had a main representative and two safety representatives. And that;

“These are chosen by the employees to look after the employees interest regarding the work environment. The representatives shall insure that the company and how they organize the work, should take sufficient considerations regarding health, environment and security”.

I did not hear anything about the safety representative when I was in the hotel. From how I interpret this article the safety representative shall elect a representative if the members of the union are not in a majority in the hotel. I did not get the impression that the members of the union in the hotel were in a majority and therefore, their representatives should have been elected by the safety representative. If they did not have a safety representative, it was a violation of this article.

“ALMOST ALL THE EMPLOYEES ARE MEMBERS OF THE LABOUR UNION” - PALESTINE

I asked some of the employees what they knew about the union and they told me that almost all the employees in the hotel were organized in PGFTU. I asked what the union did for them, one of them said, *“nothing”*, and that he had become a member because the union had offered

⁴⁵ FOR 1977-04-29-7:Forskrift om verneombud og arbeidsmiljøutvalg (Regulation about representatives and work environment committee), <http://www.lovdata.no/cgi-wift/ldles?doc=/sf/sf/sf-19770429-007.html>

a free mobile subscription. Khaled was one of very few employees who was not a member of the union. He told me that it was pointless, because they cannot do anything. He said;

“maybe they can talk to you, but that is all, because they have no power over the companies. You pay them, but you get nothing back. In a trial they will maybe be there for you, but they cannot do anything for you. It will always be the companies’ that has the last word”.

The Palestinian Authorities had not established a minimum wage agreement. In the Palestinian work environment act, in Article (89) it said; *“The worker’s wage may not be less than the duly recognized minimum wage”*. I talked to several people who worked in the PGFTU they told me that they were trying to negotiate with the authorities about establishing a minimum wage agreement.⁴⁶

In the interview I had with the hotel manager Saed, he told me that there was a minimum wage in the hotel and that none of the employees would get any less than 420\$ a month. During my stay I also found that the union held many meetings in the conference rooms in the hotel. Because of this all the employees knew many of the people from the union. And from what I saw there was also a good contact between them. This can be some of the reason why the hotel manager already had established a minimum wage and also why the employees had become members of the union.

5.7 RULES, LABOUR UNIONS AND OR COMMUNICATION?

The knowledge about law, labour union and company rules varied greatly between the different departments, but also between different positions in Norway. In Palestine all the employees knew about the company rules and they also had some common knowledge about the Labour Law. The difference between the two hotels was that in Norway each department had their own specific rules and there was also almost no communication between the employees in the different departments. In Palestine all the employees had time and opportunity to talk to each other and through this their knowledge about rules was more consistent. In addition if the employees in Palestine were unsecure about rules they could always ask one of the other employees, the manager or the union for help. In the next section I will discuss a new law that recently has been added to The Work Environment act in Norway about the Psychosocial Work Environment.

⁴⁶ PGFTU told me that the conditions for many women were terrible; PGFTU was therefore working to establish a minimum wage for them.

PSYCHOSOCIAL WORK ENVIRONMENT -IS LAW ALWAYS THE BEST SOLUTION?

In chapter 4 I showed that the all the departments in the hotel in Norway were isolated from each other. And that most of the employees worked under great time pressure. There were therefore limited opportunities for the employees, especially in the housekeeping and the kitchen to communicate. In 2005 the Norwegian Work Environment act got an addition to The Work Environment act about the psychosocial work environment §4-3;

(1) “The work shall be arranged to make sure of the employees integrity and dignity”(2) “The work shall be arranged in a way that it enables contact and communication with other employees in the workplace” (3) “The worker shall not be subjected to harassment or other improper behavior” (MT).

I will in chapter 6 show and argue that attitudes towards the housekeeping employees cannot be seen as taking care of the employees’ (1) “integrity and dignity” and therefore it can be questioned if there was to some degree a violation of this article. It can also be questioned if article (2) was violated. There was very little time and opportunity for the employees to communicate. Pedersen in arbeidsrett.no (2011) writes with reference to Ot.prp. nr. 49 (2004-2005) chapter 7.3.5: *“to avoid social isolation the work must be arranged in a way that it makes it possible for the employees to communicate (...)”*. All the employees in the hotel in Norway had some opportunities to communicate with their colleagues and their leaders, but this opportunity was very limited by time. Pedersen in arbeidsrett.no (2011) writes with reference to Ot.prp. nr. 49 (2004-2005) chapter 7.3.5: *“The department agrees that this shall not be interpreted as a duty for the employers to have more employees than what reasonably can be required”*. Since it is up to each employer to interpret and ensure that they follow the work environment act, see section 5.4 it can be questioned if this preparatory works leave it too much up to the employer’s to also interpret how much communication and what kind of communication the employees actually are entitled to.

There was not any law that regulated the psychosocial work environment in Palestine. At the same time all the employees had both time and opportunity to talk to each other and they had a good work environment. It can be questioned what the point is with legislating rules if they will not be implemented on the ground. Even though I have showed that some rules work according to the law I have also showed that others are not and also that the two hotels create their own “living law”. As I wrote when it came to company rules in Norway; as long as the company rules are not communicated and implemented on the ground they become meaningless. I believe the same can said for legal law and maybe one should look for

other solutions when it comes to creating opportunities to communicate and a better work environment.

One of the reasons why companies are required to have workers representatives is to protect the workers' rights. But what if the employees do not know who the representatives are and there is no one else to ask what actually is right or wrong and the company stand by its own rules? In both Norway and Palestine the hotels can be regarded as semi autonomous fields. The difference was that in Norway the different departments can be seen as small semi autonomous fields operating in a large field while in Palestine there was only one field. These fields can also be looked at as different systems operating with their own specific codes with reference to Luhmann's system theory. By isolating these fields in Norway it is made even more difficult for the employees to find out about their rights and also to have a common understanding and the same rights as the employees in the rest of the hotel. I also believe that it makes it even more difficult for the employees to become a common group with common interest which they initially have since they work together in the same company.

6. POWER RELATIONS, CONFLICTS RESISTANCE AND SOLVING CONFLICTS

In section 6.1 I will present the theories I am going to use in this chapter. In section 6.2 I will show that in Norway and in Palestine some of the employees were seen to be in less valued positions and had fewer opportunities than the other employees in the hotel. I will also show that these employees had different ways of resisting against the companies power. In section 6.3 I will show and discuss that in both Norway and Palestine some of the leaders and employees had more opportunities than the others. In section 6.4 I will show and discuss how the top management and the leaders in Norway solved conflicts. I will also show that the employees in Palestine felt that there was nothing they could do about their situation but at the same time I will show and argue that they actually tried to do something. I will also show how they solved conflicts in Palestine. In section 6.5 I will discuss the similarities and differences between the two countries.

The reason why I have chosen to include power relations, resistance, conflicts and conflict solving in one chapter is because there was an evident interplay between these factors in the two hotels that made it difficult for me to separate one of the factors from the others.

6.1 POWER, CONFLICT AND RESISTANT THEORIES

There exist many theories about power and it is a contested concept. It can be questioned who has actual power over whom, where it is and how far it reaches (Lukes 2005, Thomson & McHugh 2009). I have chosen for this section to use three different theories of power; Luhmann's (in Gulbrandsen 1999) theory about power as a generalised communication medium,⁴⁷ Steven Lukes (2005) third dimensional view of power and Michel Foucault's (in Sandmo 1999) "theory"⁴⁸ about power. I have not read Luhmann's and Foucault's original work. I will for Luhmann base my arguments on Trygve Gulbrandsen (1999) interpretation of Luhmann (1975). For Foucault I will use Erling Sandmo (1999), Gunnar C. Aakvaag (2008) and Knights and Vurdubakis (1994). For conflicts and for different kinds of conflict management and resistance I will mainly use Aubert (1989) and Black (1998).

In chapter 3 and 5 I showed that when employees agree to work for a company they give up some of their power over themselves and their time in exchange for money. This can with reference to Lukes (2009) be seen as a one dimensional view of power. The owner's (leaders) (A) have power over the employees (B) to the extent that the owner's (leaders) can get the employees (B) to do something the employees (B) would not otherwise have done.⁴⁹ Since the employees have out of their own free will given up some of their power in exchange for some benefits, the employers' power can be seen as legitimate. It can therefore be said that companies have 'power over' the employees, but that it is local and limited by the company frames. At the same time I believe that how much power companies actually have over their employees can vary greatly. Wadel (2003) writes that wage labour is the most important source of subsistence. In addition it can give people a feeling of belonging and meaning far beyond its source of subsistence. But wage labour also leads to some costs. The workers have to give away some of their time and they have to be away from their friends and families. Work can also be physical demanding and pose a risk to the workers health (Wadel 2003).

In Luhmann's (in Gulbrandsen 1999) theory the base of power lies in B's desire to avoid negative sanctions. Luhmann (in Gulbrandsen 1999) also separates between power and influence. Influence is when A affect B's choices, but where B's choices are not motivated from a desire to avoid negative sanctions. Luhmann (in Gulbrandsen 1999) differs between

⁴⁷ Gulbrandsen (1999) writes that; Talcott Parson (1963) claimed that power lies in the political system and as a generalized communication medium that contributes to control the exchange of resources between the political systems and other sub systems in the society. At the same time Parson never managed to concretize what a generalised communication medium actually was and his concept were to abstract to grasp. Luhmann on the other hand has managed to give the concept more substance (Gulbrandsen 1999)

⁴⁸ Foucault is not directly a power theorist, his analyses also contains power, but never of 'power in itself' and his analyses never only about power (Sandmo 1999).

⁴⁹ This view originates from Max Weber, later renewed by Robert Dahl (Lukes 2005).

three forms of influence (1) authority, (2) rumours and (3) leadership. This is in contrast to Lukes (2005) third dimensional view on power, where Lukes (2005) proposes that; “*A may exercise power over B by getting him to do what he does not want to do, but he also exercise power over him by influencing, shaping and determining his very wants*” (Lukes 2005:27).

Luhmann (in Gulbrandsen 1999) sees exercise of power as a form of communication. However he acknowledges that in a modern and complex society the exercise of power do rarely happens through direct communication. Luhmann (in Gulbrandsen 1999) assumes that exercise of power to a great degree happens through that those who are exposed to power already have an expectation of what the power holders want. Luhmann (in Gulbrandsen 1999) point to that it in a society there exist a number of generalised signs and symbols. And that the generalised symbol for power is coded in a specific way. Luhmann (in Gulbrandsen 1999) gives several examples of how generalised and coded symbols of power can look like. As hierarchies, status and function positions, specific terms in the language, system history and episodes of power exercised by specific people that are remembered and generalised (Luhmann in Gulbrandsen 1999).

There is one question I believe must be asked when it comes to Luhmann’s view on influence and symbols of power. How can authority and leadership be seen as ‘only’ influence, when hierarchy and division of labour can be symbols of power? In my opinion it is in its place to also view authority and leadership as symbols of power. And I question if it is even possible to separate between authority and leadership as ‘only’ influencing and authority and leadership as a symbols of power. Based on these arguments I disagree with Luhmann (in Gulbrandsen 1999). I agree with Lukes (2005) and will later in this section argue for the use of Lukes (2005) third dimensional view of power.

However, as Gulbrandsen (1999) I find Luhmann’s power theory thought-provoking. At the same time there are some more things that can be criticized. Gulbrandsen (1999) writes that he finds several problems with Luhmann’s power theory. I agree with Gulbrandsen (1999) in much of his criticism. I only see it relevant here to point at one of them. But firstly I will show that I disagree at one point of Gulbrandsen (1999) and I will base my arguments on Guzzini’s (2007) and Crubellate’s (2007) article about Luhmann’s theory of double contingency.

Gulbrandsen (1999) sees Luhmann's term about generalised communication as confusing. Gulbrandsen (1999) writes that it is especially unfortunate that the generalised symbols and signs are termed as power. In Gulbrandsen's (1999) view the signs and symbols must be understood as phenomena that contribute to create actions, where the actions outcome is power. Gulbrandsen (1999) writes; *"They are therefore not in themselves power, but instruments for exercise of power"* (Gulbrandsen 1999:146) (MT). From how I understand Luhmann (in Guzzini 2007 and Crubellate 2007), Luhmann does not mean that the symbols and signs in themselves are power. In my opinion Luhmann says what Gulbrandsen (1999) claims Luhmann is not saying: that signs and symbols are instruments of power and that they have no power in themselves. Because in Luhmann's view it is the receiver's expectations of the symbols and signs that "give" the symbol and signs power. I see it as Gulbrandsen (1999) has interpreted Luhmann's term about power as "power in action" and not as "power in communication" with reference to how Guzzini (2007) distinguish the two forms;

"(...)Luhmann's concept of power cannot be accounted within Oppenheim's⁵⁰ conceptual frame. It is a form of power which has an agent referent, but the causality of power does not in fact derive from the agent as such but it is attributed to it by the communication process" (Guzzini 2007:30)

This is also in line with Luhmann's (in Crubellate 2007) theory about double contingency. Luhmann believes that systems are contingent in both directions and this implies a relationship between the expectations, and this is based on the expectations of expectations (Crubellate 2007). I therefore follow Luhmann in the way he sees symbols and signs as constructing for power relations.

I agree with Gulbrandsen (1999) when it comes to that Luhmann's theory leaves little room for conflicts and power relations. What if B's expectations of A's expectations of B is not something B would have agreed on if B had all the right information or had other information important or relevant to the subject? This is where Lukes (2005) theory comes in: Lukes argue that; *"power can be at work inducing compliance by influencing, desires and beliefs without being 'intelligent and intentional'"* (Lukes 2005:135). Even though I agree with Lukes (2005) in the latter I have found some things that must be discussed.

If power is unintelligent and unintentional will not this also result in that the consequences are unintended? This even though the consequences can be seen as intended from those it affects? Not that this is necessarily any better, especially not if it is a very negative consequence. However it is plausible to think that it is easier to "forgive" and

⁵⁰ Felix Oppenheim's definition of power is close to Robert Dahl's (1968 and 1976) definition and refers to the causal relation between one action and another (Guzzini in Berenskoetter and Williams 2007:28).

understand errors and faults because of unintelligent and unintentional use of power than intended. In addition it can also be assumed that intended power can have unintended consequences and what is then the difference between unintelligent and unintentional use of power and intentional use of power that results to unintended consequences? Lukes (2005) solution to this is that for power to count as power it must be foreseeable. But at the same time, Lukes (2005) write; *“What actors intentionally do always generates chains of unintended consequences and it is implausible to deny that some of these manifest power”* (Lukes 2005:76). Lukes (2005) does not seem to give a good solution and answer to this problem. But in Lukes (2005) theory he places power in an agent and therefore the power relation is already present and through this Lukes (2005) means that power can be unintelligent and unintentional.

The problem then is how to decide how much power do the agents actually have and also over whom? This was also my initial question, how much power do the employers have over the employees and how far does it reach and is it equally “effective” and experienced? Lukes (2005) has been criticized for his idea about people’s “real interest”. Thomson and McHugh (2009) write; *“(…) how do we research things that are hidden and how do we know that power suppresses and hurts peoples’ interests when the outcome is compliance or consent?”* (Thomson and McHugh 2009:129). To this Lukes (2005) argues that one should look to see if actors *“(…) have equal dignity and equal entitlement to shape their own lives, making their own choices and developing their gifts in reciprocal relations with others”* (Lukes 2005:117). I believe and will show in this chapter that it is possible to find unintelligent use of power by looking to see if people are treated equally or not. I also believe that one can discover unintelligent use of power by looking at power relations and see how symbols and signs can induce compliance and influence desires and beliefs, with reference to Lukes 2005:135.

Foucault (in Sandmo 1999) asserts that power is everywhere where there is knowledge and truth, where truth is an effect of power. With this Foucault (in Sandmo 1999) presents an important capacity with power that is: power can be productive. Foucault (in Sandmo 1999) says power is not delegated from above but it is generated upwards. From this one can interpret that those in the lowest positions have accepted their positions because they accept the socially constructed world that has put them in these positions.

This can also be seen in Luhmann's (in Crubellate 2007 and Vanderstraeten 2002) theory, where Luhmann shows that people act of expectations of expectations. As I showed in chapter 5 both the countries legal rules and company rules were followed accordingly. This can be assumed was because the rules were highly institutionalised, with reference to Luhmann (in Crubellate 2007) I believe that this also can be applied to power relations and as long as people accept the symbols and signs, they will be maintained. At the same time I believe that power (and also law) can create positive outcomes, as democracy, human rights, with reference to Aakvaag's (2008) critic of Foucault's dark and pessimistic view on power as only disciplining and controlling.⁵¹ I believe some of Aakvaag (2008) critic can be questioned. From how I interpret Knights and Vurdubakis's (1994) interpretation of Foucault, when it comes to 'doxa' and 'heterodoxa'. It is not necessarily that one of the views is better than the other. Knights and Vurdubakis (1994) refer to Foucault 1984b:343: "*my point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous which is not exactly the same as bad*" (Knights and Vurdubakis 1994:187). In my opinion I believe this can be interpreted as Foucault means that no matter who has power, someone will always have less power, and one will never know for sure what is right (or the best way). Knights and Vurdubakis (1994) cite Foucault:

"A delinquent puts his life into balance against absurd punishment; a madman can no longer accept confinement and the forfeiture of his right, a people refuses the regime which oppresses it. This does not make the rebel in first case innocent, nor does it cure the second, and it does not assure the third rebel of the promised tomorrow (...)" (Foucault 1978:8 in Knights and Vurdubakis 1994:189-190).

I believe that Foucault with this, point to an important fact that also good things can be dangerous for some, and that there are always someone who will become worse off. Therefore good thing also needs to be investigated and should not be taken-for-granted. At the same time I believe Aakvaag (2008) is right when it comes to that some things are at least better than other things as democracy and human rights in contrast to tyranny and slavery. The problem, as I see it, with Luhmann's (in Gulbrandsen 1999) and Foucault's (in Sandmo 1999) view on power is that neither of them questions what makes people accept the powerful and why. Lukes (2005) theory shows that powerful people can create compliance by influencing, shaping and determining people's very wants. As I showed in chapter 5 both the management in Norway and management/employees in Palestine created their own "law" and as said this can be an effective form of social control. Highly institutionalised signs and symbols of power can therefore also be assumed are effective forms of social control.

⁵¹ Foucault has been criticized for a one dimensional dark and pessimistic view on the modernity, and that modern rules of law, human rights, democracy among others are absent from his theories (Aakvaag 2008).

I follow Foucault when he says “power is everywhere” and I acknowledge that there exist multiple forms of power relations. Clegg (1994) writes;

“Organizations are constituted around power relations between people; people have different subjectivities and identities. Different identities and the subjectivities that make relevant can be postulated as offering differential resources for accommodating to or resisting organizational power relations” (Clegg 1994:287).

Through communication people can also gain knowledge. Foucault proposes knowledge embodied in the formal (science) and self-knowledge (common sense) (Knights and Vurdubakis 1994). Collinson (1994) writes that;

“Knowledge in organizations is multiple, contested and shifting. Employees may not possess detailed understanding of certain bureaucratic/political processes, but they often do monopolize other technical, production-related knowledge that facilitates their oppositional practises” (Collinson 1994:28)

Knights and Vurdubakis (1994) write with reference to Foucault that power relations involve agents that are constituted in a specific form in a specific location. At the same time people can also pretend that they accept symbols and signs of power and do something else when the powerful are not looking. As Scott in Lukes (2005) cite with the Ethiopian proverb; *“When the great lord passes, the wise peasant bows deeply and silently farts”* (Scott in Lukes 2005). Additionally, if people had passively accepted the “powerful” there would not have been disagreements and conflicts.

Different types of problems and disagreements can be found in a workplace. It does not necessarily end in a conflict. People can agree to disagree. It is first when problems and disagreements over time cannot be solved or agreed on that conflicts occurs. Aubert (1989) writes;

“In order for a conflict to be present, at least one of the parties must have carried out or planned actions that are bound to harm the other party. The conflict either consist in an objective relationship (the furthering of the interest of one party at the expense of the interest of the other) or it is subjectively expressed through hostility” (Aubert 1989:96)

Conflicts can be latent, which means that there are disagreements in a relation between people or a group that under certain conditions will remain inactivated. Conflicts can also be activated if situations change. Conflicts can be hidden; a person or a group can have problems or disagreements with others. The others might understand that there is something wrong but not exactly what (Sørensen and Grimsmo 2001). Aubert (1989) separates between conflict of interest (things), as when two people never can get the same object and conflict of values (rules, norms, religion) as when people have different opinions of what is right or disagree

over the truth. Conflict, disagreements and different power relations can also lead to that people resist (Collinsen 1994). Black (1998) shows seven elementary forms of conflict management and proposes that different ways on handling conflicts depends on the field the conflict occurs. Black (1998) differs between self-help, vengeance, discipline and rebellion, avoidance, negotiations, settlement, toleration. Black (1998) shows with these different types of mechanisms, that people react to and handle conflicts in different ways, depending on what opportunities they have and what positions they are in.

6.2 LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES

In this section I will show what opportunities the employees in the housekeeping and the kitchen department in Norway had to advance in the hotel but also their expectations when it came to getting other jobs. I will also show if this was consistent with the top management and leaders view of the employees' opportunities. I will give three examples of different conflicts in the two departments and argue for that the employees in the housekeeping and the kitchen department resisted against the company because of their lack of opportunities. I will also show what opportunities the employees in Palestine had, especially the housekeeping employees and also if this was consistent with the hotel manager's view. I will argue that some of the employees in Palestine slandered to get in a better position with the manager, especially the employees in the lowest position and I will also argue that this can be seen as resistance. In the end I will discuss the similarities and differences I found in the two hotels.

6.2.1 NOT A PLACE TO STAY AND UNDERSTAFFING

“THIS IS NOT A PLACE TO STAY - IT IS A PLACE TO BEGIN”

The housekeeping manager, Maria in Norway said to me; “*the housekeeping department is not a place to stay it is a place to begin*”. Many of the housekeeping employees I talked to had been working in the hotel from five to more than twelve years. I asked the housekeeping manager, Maria, why the employees had been working there for so long if this was only a place to begin. Maria said it was because they know their rights, especially the right to be on sick leave.

The employees I talked to told me it was difficult for them to find another job mostly because they did not speak Norwegian very well. Thabita who had been working there for eight years told me that she wanted to go to evening classes to learn how to work in a shop. She told me that it could sometimes be lonely to work in the housekeeping department. She

had also considered getting a job in a reception. I asked Thabita if she knew if it was possible to get a job in the reception in the hotel, she did not know. I followed the question up and asked her if she knew if anyone else had gone from the housekeeping or other departments to the reception. She told me not that she knew of. At the same time Thabita told me that some had got a job in the kitchen department, but she did not want that, she said it would be the same as working in the housekeeping. Aisha, who had been working in the housekeeping for more than twelve years, told me that there were very small chances for the housekeeping employees to get other jobs or positions in the hotel.

When I was observing in the reception, the reception manager, Eva, told me that the hotel was looking for a person to hire. One they could use in the reception and as a conference host. I asked Eva why they did not ask or use the employees from the housekeeping. She told me that the employees in the housekeeping did not speak Norwegian and because of that it was not possible to give them a job in the reception.

Of the eight employees I spoke to in the housekeeping five of them spoke Norwegian and three of them English. Those I talked to had no problems understanding me and I had no problem understanding them, even though not all of them spoke fluent Norwegian or English. In addition I also overheard that there were more employees in the housekeeping who spoke Norwegian and English. There were therefore very few who did not speak either of the two languages.

THE CHEF'S POSITION - MAYBE NOT THAT ATTRACTIVE?

As I have showed I did not get to spend much time in the kitchen in Norway. Therefore the only one I talked to about opportunities was the kitchen chef, Erlat. He had been working in the hotel's kitchen for over 20 years. He told me that he did not see the point of applying for the open chef position. He had tried to take the culinary certificate twice but he had failed. While I was observing he took care of everything, from making food, ordering food and paying bills. In chapter 5 I argued that the kitchen employees were very aware of their right to go home and take time off. From what the former kitchen chef had told me about overtime in the kitchen I believe that it can be assumed that Erlat over the years has noticed that the chefs had to work much overtime. Erlat had probably also done it himself. It is therefore possible to think that because of this the chef position was not that attractive to him.

THE EMPLOYEES OPPORTUNITIES FROM THE TOP MANAGEMENT VIEW

In the interview I had with the company director, Knut I asked Knut what opportunities the employees had to make a career in the hotel and if all the employees had the same chance of being considered. Knut said it was difficult to notice all the employees. At the same time he told me that two people in the top management had started their career in the reception in the hotel. I asked Knut if it was possible for the housekeeping employees to get a job in the reception or in the top management. Knut told me that it was difficult because of the culture and attitudes in the top management. Knut said *“It’s not culturally accepted here that employees from the housekeeping get a job in the reception or in the management”*. As I understood Knut it had to do with the different values of the different kinds of work. Knut told me that he did not agree with this but that he had no power to do anything about it because he was in minority among the top management with his opinions about this.

I asked Knut if it had to do with language problems. Knut told me it was not, and also that there had been working people in the reception who only spoke English. I did not get to ask Knut if the top management had the same attitudes towards the kitchen employees as they had towards the housekeeping employees. Knut however told me that several of the regular employees from the kitchen department had been given courses to get the culinary certificate, but that the employees had failed the courses. I asked Knut if the kitchen employees had been given new chances to try. Knut told me they had but that the employees did not want to try again.

The reception manager, Eva told me that the housekeeping employees could not work in the reception because they did not speak Norwegian. I believe that if there had been more time and opportunity to socialize between the departments maybe Eva would have noticed that many of the employees in the housekeeping actually spoke Norwegian. At the same time, after the interview with the director I found that language was not the biggest obstacle for making a career in the hotel, but the top managements’ attitude towards the housekeeping employees and the value of their job. One of the things, as already said, Lukes (2005) bases his theory on, is that human shall *“(...) have equal dignity and equal entitlement to shape their own lives (...)”* (Lukes 2005:117). I believe the top managements’ attitude towards the housekeeping employees can be seen as unintelligent power in the light of Lukes (2005) theory. And that this made it impossible for the housekeeping employees to make a career in the hotel.

In section 5.7 I discussed the addition to the Norwegian Work Environment Act about the psychosocial work environment, in §4-3, (1) it is said: *“The work shall be arranged to make sure of the employees integrity and dignity”* (MT). I believe that it can be questioned if the housekeeping employees’ ‘integrity and dignity’ was ensured in the hotel. Pedersen (2011) writes that the two terms integrity and dignity express central human rights. The provision is broad and touches core issues of rights to equal treatment when it comes to race, skin color, gender, language, religion, and political opinions, national and social origin (Pedersen 2011).

Most of the employees in the housekeeping (and the kitchen) came from a non-western country. In chapter 3 I wrote that values of equality have been highly regarded and traditionally it has also been a large will to share public benefits in Norway. And tolerance for differences has been low in Norway (Bjørkås 2005). At the same time it can be questioned equality for whom? Brochmann (2002) writes that the Norwegian equality ideology puts its own agenda before immigrants. The ideology is a signal that people from other countries will never manage to become like “us”, and also that they never can be “equal” enough to fit in. In Luhmann’s power theory he acknowledges that power can be found in the signs and symbols and also that these signs and symbols are generalised through communication. Eventually some of them are also taken-for-granted. Since none of the housekeeping employees (and kitchen employees) had gone from housekeeping (and kitchen) to another department “of value” it is possible to assume that this reinforced the housekeeping (and kitchen) employees experience that they and also their work had low value.

In an article in Dagbladet.no⁵² 12.04.12 they show to a research of 867 hotel workers, conducted by the Work Research Institute (AFI), University of Oslo and FAFO. Some of the main findings according to the article were that; hotel workers experience harassment, they are afraid of losing their jobs and their work environment is undignified, especially for the housekeepers. The article also shows that 78 percent of the housekeeping employees in Oslo and Akershus are born in countries outside of Scandinavia and Europe. My finding is consistent with the findings in this research. I believe these finding but also the top managements attitudes in the hotel I observed in confirms what Brochmann (2002) is stating, when it comes to the Norwegian equality ideology, that some can never be equal enough to fit in. In my opinion I believe that people can fit in but then one have to start treating people as equal and also give them the same opportunities.

⁵² <http://www.dagbladet.no/2012/04/12/nyheter/arbeidsliv/innenriks/forskning/hotell/21083899>

6.2.2 CONFLICTS

I will in this section give three examples of latent conflicts in Norway. Firstly over the rules/the truth in the housekeeping department, secondly over how the call substitutes were managed in the housekeeping department and thirdly one example from the kitchen showing that there was a latent conflict also there over how they were managed. In the end I will discuss these conflicts.

“SICK ON LEAVE?”

The housekeeping manager, Maria, in Norway told me that many of the housekeeping employees took advantage of the self-certification system for sick leave,⁵³ and this made her angry. Maria wished that the Norwegian system had been like the one they have in Sweden. She told me in Sweden you have the right to be away for three days but it is unpaid. As I understood Maria the employees in the housekeeping department were often away due to illness and it was a big problem and a conflicting topic. The first day I observed in the housekeeping, Maria had to call for two extra people to come to work. As I understood her this happened all the time.

During my observations in the housekeeping I had the impression that after the new rooms were built there had been much more absence due to illness. It was much harder (physically heavier) to vacuum the carpets in the new rooms. There were also new duvets in these rooms which were much heavier than the duvets in the old rooms. The problem with the carpets in the new rooms had been addressed and the leaders had bought in five new vacuum cleaners. One of the housekeeping employees, Namra, told me, that the new vacuum cleaners were hopeless and it was not possible to vacuum properly with them. She also said the new vacuum cleaners were difficult to handle and they did not reach under the beds. The employees therefore had to lift up or move the beds to vacuum under them. Namra said that the leaders had been informed about this problem, and she had been told that the leaders tried to find a solution to it.

One day I was sitting in the break room Thabita told me she was tired in her arms and because of that her working was going slowly that day. I had already spent some time with her and offered to help her. I helped her taking off sheets and putting on new on three beds. It took me about ten minutes, as I understood her, it helped her a lot and she was grateful. Fada had been working as a call temp in the housekeeping for three years and did not have any

⁵³ Folketrygdeloven (Insurance Act), chapter 8, section II, workers, §§ 8-15-8-33, self-certification §§ 8-23-8-27.

regular shifts. However, he had his regular corridor, because none of the other regular employees wanted it.⁵⁴ He told me that there were many double beds in this corridor which meant more workload because of extra bed change. When I observed in the housekeeping department in the weekend one of the employees, Nava, complained about back pain. The assistant manager asked me if I could help Nava. As I understood the assistant manager they were understaffed that day. I decided to help. At lunchtime I told Nava that I had to go and be with someone else. Nava understood me but was still in pain and asked the assistant manager if he could go home and he was permitted to do that.

Many of the employees in the housekeeping department I talked to complained about pain in their neck, back and shoulders and some of them told me that they had tendonitis in their arms. Aisha told me that people who were sick were not believed and trusted. The housekeeping manager, Maria gave me an example that one of the older employees in the housekeeping had never complained or been sick. Maria told me that she did not believe that employees were sick.

The reason why I call this a latent conflict was because these problems were never addressed openly between the housekeeping leader and the employees. It was a conflict over rules but also a conflict over the truth. The employees said they were sick because of strain injuries while the housekeeping manager's opinion was that the employees took advantage of the sick leave system and skipped work. In Maria's opinion the problem with sick leave would have been solved if the rules were changed. In this situation it could be said that the employees had power in their right to be on sick leave and there was nothing Maria could do about it.

I do not believe that the employees in this case used sick leave as resistance, even though I acknowledge that the right to be on sick leave could be used as a mean for resistance. But claiming that would be to accuse the employees for pretending to be sick. In addition after watching, helping and talking to several of the employees in the housekeeping it appeared to me that it was likely their work tasks could lead to repetitive strain injuries. I asked the employees if they were offered any kind of physical therapy or massage that could reduce work injuries. Those I talked to told me that they were not. However one of the employees told me that they had a small discount in one of the fitness centres in the city. But they had to sign up for a whole year and even though they had a discount it was still expensive. It could be question why the leaders had not done anything to prevent work injuries. And also why

⁵⁴ The regular and part time employees in the housekeeping had their regular corridor and trolley.

they had not done anything with the vacuum cleaners or the heavy duvets, since this seemed to be a part of the problem. It can be assumed it had its cost, but at the same time it is plausible to think that it was also expensive to have employees absent due to illness all the time. From the employees view this could also be interpreted as they were not trusted when they told their leaders about the vacuum cleaners and the heavy duvets. And also since the leaders did not do anything about the problem it can be assumed that this reinforced the employees believes that they were not trusted.

THE CALL TEMPS ALWAYS HAVE TO BE AVAILABLE

I asked Namra what type of contract she had. She told me that it was time based. She also told me that since she was a call substitute it was very seasonally based how much she got to work. Sometimes there was much work, and she could work every day other times it could go up to three weeks before they needed her again. I had seen Namra the whole week I had been observing. I therefore asked her if she had any time for school. She told me it was difficult to plan because she did not know when she was going to work the next time. She also told me she had asked the housekeeping leader, the day before, if it was possible to know more for sure when she was going to work. Namra told me she thought it was difficult to say no, because she was dependent on the income. She said the danger of saying no is that they might not call you again the next time. Nadja told me that there was always work, but that how often they called depended on how high the call substitutes ranked on the list. That the call substitutes always had to say yes was because they “competed” with 23 other call substitutes that were on the call list. Nadja told me that the longer the call substitutes had been working in the hotel the higher on the list they got – as long as they always said yes.

That the call substitutes always had to be available was a conflict over how they were managed. They had in the contract agreed to be call substitutes and it was the housekeeping manager, Maria’s right to call them when she needed them. As I wrote in section 6.1 when employees agree on a contract they give the employers right to control them and their time for the hours they agree upon. Through that the company gets power over the employees. I also wrote that this power is local and limited. It can however be questioned how local and limited it was experienced by the call substitutes since they never knew when they had to work or when they had time off.

Luhmann (in Gulbrandsen 1999) writes when B has no options it is force and not power.

When it comes to the call substitutes I believe that it could be said that they in some ways felt

forced, especially to say yes to come to work. In addition to that many of the housekeeping employees I talked to, as I have showed, told me that it was difficult for them to find other jobs. But as any of the other employees in the hotel they could quit their job, and then they would be “free” and therefore it is difficult to see them as directly forced. However I got the impression that at least some of the employees almost felt forced.

During my observation in the housekeeping I never saw any of the employees help each other, some of them could get help from the assistant manager but normally no one helped them. When I was observing I chose to help one of the employees and I was also asked to help another, which I did. The latter went home when I told I could not help anymore. It could be questioned if the employees had been helping each other more maybe it had reduced their overall workload, work injuries and fewer had been on sick leave. However, they often had many rooms to clean and it was not possible for them to help each other.

The housekeeping manager, Maria, told me that she had to call in extra employees to work every day. It was mostly, as already said, because the employees were away on sick leave but also because they “staffed as needed”. By this I mean, how many extra employees they had to call in depended on how much work there were. I believe that it could be questioned why the hotel did not have more employees on a permanent basis, since the housekeeping manager Maria always had to call someone and since they always were understaffed in the kitchen. It can be assumed that this probably had to do with costs. If the hotel went in to a bad season they would maybe end up being overstaffed.

Sollund (2006) writes that Shamir (1978) in a discussion about Burns and Stalker’s (1961) theory about mechanistic and organic management systems states that; *“because of the hotel industry’ demands for flexibility, one should expect that hotels would be organic in nature, as mechanistic organizations are appropriate to stable conditions”* (Sollund 2006:288).

As I showed in chapter 4, the hotel in Norway was mechanistic organized. There was some work exchange between the kitchen and the housekeeping. However, several of the employees in the housekeeping department told me they did not want to work in the kitchen because they had heard that there was even higher time pressure there then in the housekeeping department. Most of the employees I talked to in the housekeeping told me that they wanted other jobs. Some of them also told me that they would like to work in the reception, but it was not possible for them in this hotel.

They were also often short of staff in the reception. If there had been more work exchange between the different departments, the cost and risk of employing more people had been lower. In addition there had been more work to give to the 24 call substitutes from the housekeeping department, which could have reduced their pressure to always say yes. At the same time as I emphasized in chapter 4 changing to a more organic form could also lead to more work pressure on the employees than there already was. If people were flexible and could work all over the hotel, it might be expected that when there was little to do in one department they had to “run” and help out in another department.

UNDERSTAFFING AND LACK OF COMMITMENT

Two employees were absent the first day I was observing in the kitchen in Norway. One of them, the breakfast host, had the day off and the other one was on sick leave. Erlat told me that in addition to do his own work tasks that day he had to cover for the breakfast host. Erlat told me he appreciated the extra help they got from the housekeeping department. At the same time he said that the kitchen got different people almost every day and it took much time to teach the extra employees.

The second day I was in the kitchen I knew there was going to be lots of work for them to do. The day before Erlat had told me that the hotel had many conference guests who were going to eat lunch. The top management had hired in an extra chef to help them out. I began to feel that they saw me as an extra help. They gave me lots of work tasks and I was mostly standing by myself, in the room where the cold food was prepared. The hotel manager, Toril, came by and saw me standing alone preparing food. She said to me that it was nice to have some extra help. I experienced this almost as a confirmation that they had counted me in as a part of their staff that week. I later also saw my name on the employees timesheets.

Erlat told me that he was going to be off the next day, which was going to be my third day in the kitchen. I expressed some concerns about that, especially since I had the feeling that they depended on me to be there and work, but without actually saying so. Erlat appeared unaffected of this. He was going to have time off and he deserved it since he had been working so much lately. He told me that the hired in chef was to take all his tasks and also since I was there it was going to be fine. I understood Erlat was joking when he mentioned me but at the same time, with what I had seen so far it did not feel like a joke. I therefore asked the hired in chef Jose, if he knew what his work tasks were going to be for the next day. Jose told me that he was going to go through it all with Erlat at the end of the day.

The same day one of the kitchen employees, Ava ‘orders’ me to go with him and I did. Ava made me help to get used glasses and cups from the conference rooms. In the elevator on the way down Ava said to me that he was happy that he only had one hour left to work. I was thinking about everything that was left to do in the kitchen, it was still two more servings for conference guest. It was also much food to prepare for the next day and dishwashing after the equipment they had used in the kitchen and after the guests. I was tired of being seen as an extra help and decided to go home. In the wardrobe I met Vivian, one of the employees from the housekeeping. I told her I had been in the kitchen observing and also that it had been really much to do. Vivian said; *“It’s always like that down there”*. I wondered how it would be in the kitchen the next day without Erlat present.

The next day, I once again found myself standing alone. The hired in chef, Jose and the other employees gave me different work tasks. As I saw it I did not get anything out of being there and I decided to go home. Jose was about to give me some more tasks when I told him that I wanted go home. Jose looked a bit disappointed, I explained to him the situation and he understood me.

My impression from observing in the kitchen was that the employees lacked a sense of commitment towards their work. They did what they had to do, but nothing more. I asked the former kitchen chef, Lars how he had experienced working in the hotel. Lars told me he had felt that there had been a lack of commitment in the kitchen. Lars said, *“If I asked the employees to help me and work overtime, they always said no”*. Because of this Lars had seen it as necessary to show little consideration for the employees wishes and wants when he made the timesheets. Lars’ solution to the “staff problem” had been to arrange the timesheets so the employees where working more spread out during the day and weekends. Lars said to me; *“Since they didn’t bother to do anything for me, I didn’t bother to do anything for them”*. In this situation Lars had used his power as a leader to try to change and solve the problems in the kitchen department. It also shows that the leaders’ power in some ways can be used as vengeance; the employees did not bother to do anything for Lars, than he did not bother to do anything for them. In Black (1998) view, vengeance only happens between equals and not between someone with more power. In my opinion Lars action shows that vengeance also can happen through use of power. I also believe Lars actions can be viewed as outflanking with reference to Clegg (1994);

“An example of the role that division can play in the outflanking of potential resistance occurs in the example that Collinsen (1993) cites of multinational corporation, where divisionalization reinforces ‘insecurities and barriers to resistance’” (Clegg 1994:291)

By changing the timesheets Lars outflanked the employees’ opportunities to resist the company’s/leaders power. Since the employees never worked overtime or helped Lars, he saw it as necessary to spread their hours more to cover all the shifts.

When I was observing in the kitchen all the regular employees had early shifts, and they never worked overtime. Since I did not observe for the whole week I cannot say if this arrangement worked well, nor if this was normal for them. From what I saw things were a bit chaotic from day to day. I also had the impression of that they were constantly understaffed, which might also have been the reason why they did not do more than what was absolutely necessary.

Erlat told me that after the former chef had quit the hotel manager was in charge of the timesheet. He often felt that they were understaffed but believed that some of the problems could have been solved if the same people came to help from the housekeeping department. One of the days I was observing in the kitchen the hotel manager came by. I heard Erlat tell the hotel manager that everything was going fine. If Erlat always says that when he talks to the hotel manager it is plausible to think that it is very difficult for the hotel manager to know otherwise.

In the interview with the former kitchen chef, Lars, he told me that he had informed the top management about the staff situation in the kitchen several times. Lars said that the top management had never showed any understanding at all. He said; *“they sit in their office Monday till Thursday 9-16 and then on Fridays they go home 14.30 and then you don’t hear from them before Monday again”*. From this it could be interpreted that the top management was very aware of the problems in the kitchen. It can be assumed that the top management lack of interest for the kitchen department had resulted to the employees’ lack of commitment and motivation towards their work. In Luhmann’s (in Crubellate 2007) view one might say that the kitchen employees’ attitude towards their work was consistent with the expectations and the attitudes in the top management.

I have showed that in both the housekeeping department and in the kitchen they had limited opportunities. Black (1998) writes;

“The greater the inequality, the more severe the discipline and rebellion” and “Avoidance ranges from permanent flight to a temporary reduction in contact (...). It may be total or partial, and may entail in physical separation or only decreased communication” (Black 1998:76-79)

As I wrote with reference to Scott in Lukes (2005), even though people seemingly accept the power relations that are present, they can find ways to hide and silently disagree with the power holders. I will in the next section show that the housekeeping employees and the kitchen employees resisted and their different strategies.

REBELLION AND AVOIDANCE

There was a policy in the housekeeping department that those who were finished before the others had to help the others out. Namra, one of the housekeeping employees, told me that most of the employees did not help others and that she was one of them. She told me no one ever helped her. She also felt it was unfair some of the employees had to help while others did not. Namra told me that all the employees have the same numbers of rooms to clean. And therefore those who had to help had been working faster. Namra knew that she could work faster, but when the “punishment” was to clean more rooms than the others, her strategy was to work slower. She believed the other employees were doing the same. Namra also told me that if there was little work to do the employees were free to go home earlier. But if they do they will not get paid for the whole day. Nadja told me that some of the employees cheated with the punch clock. She told me that if they were finished earlier they got one of the other employees to log them out at the end of the day. I asked Nadja what would happen if the leaders noticed they were gone without logging themselves out. Nadja told me the leaders might call them, but then the employees could lie and say they had forgotten to log out.

The employees in the housekeeping were mostly working alone and keeping to themselves and as Namra said most of them did not help each other out. I therefore did not get the impression that there were many employees collaborating the way Nadja told me.

Some of the housekeepers rebelled against the company. It was especially the call substitutes who experienced that they were “forced” to come to work at short notice. Black (1998) writes, –extreme- rebellion has the characteristics of inequality, vertical segmentation, social distance, functional unity and immobility. The call substitutes had the least opportunities in the housekeeping department and were also the most socially distanced. As the other employees in the housekeeping they had no opportunities to get other positions in the hotel, besides from being placed in the kitchen to work.

Since I did not get to spend much time in the kitchen I did not see or hear about any 'rebellion' similar to the one I heard about in the housekeeping. However, I believe the regular kitchen employees' awareness of their right to take time off, to not work overtime and their lack of commitment towards their work could be interpreted as avoidance. This I also found in the housekeeping department. The employees almost never helped each other. In addition the employees both in the kitchen department and in the housekeeping department who were finished before the other employees went home instead of helping others.

Black (1998) writes that the characteristic of avoidance is absence of hierarchy, social fluidity, social fragmentation, functional independence and individuation. There was not an absence of hierarchy in the housekeeping department, but as I showed, they all worked alone in their own corridor and they were not directly supervised or controlled. In the kitchen on the other hand there was an absence of hierarchy and their work was also characterized by fluidity, because they were always understaffed and pressured on time. Occasionally the hotel manager, Toril, came by the kitchen, but she did not order them to do anything she was just checking on them as the assistant manager could do in the housekeeping department. The employees in the housekeeping department and in the kitchen were socially fragmented and functionally independent of each other, the latter especially held true in the housekeeping department. In the kitchen they were to some degree very dependent on each other and that they performed their different work tasks. At the same time they only did their own work tasks and rarely helped each other. As in the housekeeping the kitchen employees worked in separate rooms. And the kitchen employees and the housekeeping employees could go home when they had finished with their work without any consideration for how much work the others had left to do.

In Foucault (in Knights and Vurdubakis 1994) one could say that the employees' avoidance could be viewed as self-knowledge in the way the employees in the housekeeping and the kitchen department knew how they could avoid helping others by working slower or go home when they were finished with their work tasks. However their resistance had limited effect on the situation they were in and it did not change the conditions. In some ways one could say that they actually made it worse for themselves by not helping each other. If they had helped each other, it is possible to think that their overall work pressure, work load and also strain injuries would have been reduced.

Knights and Vunderbakis (1994) write with reference to Foucault when it comes to resistance;

“Another useful reminder of the possibilities for mutual appropriation and interdependence between practices and resistance and particular relations of power, is how practices and discourses that are in opposition at one level may be mutually supportive at another” (Knights and Vundurbakis 1994:180).

When the housekeeping and kitchen employees are resisting by not helping each other they contribute to maintaining the structure and supporting the division of labour that they actually are opposing to. As Knights and Vunderbakis (1994) writes; *“Power does not mechanically reproduce itself. It presupposes and requires the activity/agency of those whom it is exercised”* (Knights and Vunurbakis 1994:184)

6.2.3 LANGUAGE, EDUCATION AND A GOOD REPUTATION IN PALESTINE

In this section I will show what opportunities and limitations the employees in Palestine had, their conflicts and how they handled them. In the end I will discuss the difference between the housekeeping and the kitchen department in Norway and the hotel in Palestine.

I asked Majd, one of the receptionists in Palestine, what opportunities the employees in the hotel had to find other jobs or make a career in the hotel. Majd told me that education was important. And also that people get more respect if they have education. He also told me that it was better to say that you worked in a reception than to say that you worked in the housekeeping department. He told me there were few to none opportunities to make a career in the hotel, but this was because of high unemployment in Palestine and because the employees in the hotel already occupied the different positions.

I asked him if there was any chance for the housekeeping employees to get a job in the reception. Majd told me it was not, but the reason was because they did not speak English. In the interview with the hotel manager, Saed, he said; *“I started to work as a housekeeping employee for free in a hotel in Jerusalem. I worked my way up to become a manager. Right before the second intifada I got the job as a manager in this hotel”*. I asked Saed what kind of opportunities the employees in the hotel had to make a career or get other positions. Saed said; *“Since I have been working my way up I know all about their work tasks and how they should be done, I can easily see who does a good job”*. I asked him if any of the employees had got other positions in the hotel. He told me that one of the waiters had got a job in the reception. Saed also told me that all the employees have the same opportunity to make a career in the hotel.

In chapter 5 I showed that all the employees in Palestine had an oral contract with the hotel manager, Saed. After talking to several of the employees about their salaries I found out that the employees' salary varied from between 420\$ to 1000\$ a month. The hotel manager, Saed told me that the employees were free to negotiate their salaries and also their working hours individually with him.⁵⁵ Regarding this Saed said;

"I do not just base my decisions on their argumentation but also on the employees general work efforts. I evaluate the employees over time and I notice what they do. The employees' who always comes fresh to work and do a good job has a higher chance of getting more salary".

Black (1998) writes; *"In simple societies, vengeance typically appears between structurally interchangeable groups comparable in size and resources, such as tribes, clans, or families"* (Black 1998:76-79). I will in the next section show that the employees' opportunity to individually negotiate with the hotel manager opened up for conflicts, rivalry, rebellion and vengeance between them.

SLANDERING AND RUMOURS - REBELLION AND VENGEANCE

After being on a trip with one of the employees, see chapter 2, I got to see some rivalries between some of the employees. I was told that some of the employees slandered and told stories about the other employees to the manager to put themselves in a better light. The employees were provided with two apartments. One of the employees, Abbud, told me it was better to be in the apartment he was in because some of those who stayed in the other apartment told everything to the hotel manager.

It was very little privacy for the employees who lived in the apartments. If the employees were not in the hotel or in the apartments the other employees could question what they were up to. It was mostly the younger employees in the lowest position with the lowest salary who slandered.

I believe that the slandering can be seen as a form of rebellion against the low salary. At the same time I also believe it is possible to think that slandering can result to vengeance. Black's (1998) characteristics of extreme-vengeance are equality, social distance, immobility, functional independence. I do not believe slandering can be seen as extreme-vengeance, and this maybe also why some of Blacks (1998) characteristics do not fit with what I found,

⁵⁵ I acknowledge that employees in Norway also can negotiate their salaries and work hours individually with their leader or the company director. At the same time as I showed in chapter 5, all the employees in the hotel in Norway had the same wage agreement and their working hours were also regulated through agreements with the labour union, in some ways they had more equal rights. In Palestine on the other hand it was the manager who decided the minimum wage level and how many hours the employees could work.

however I will show and argue that some of the characteristics fit well. When it comes to equality I have showed in this section that it was the youngest employees, in the lowest positions with the lowest salary who slandered. At the same time I have also showed that they as the other employees in the hotel had equal opportunities when it came to making a career in the hotel. I will also in section 6.3 show that the employees in Palestine in many ways had the same limited opportunities because of the society they were living in. There was not any social distance between the employees who slandered about each other. But they were all immobile at the time I observed.

Black (1998) writes; *“Individualized vengeance, including the defense of honor, characteristically involves parties of equal standing (...)* (Black 1998:76). Black (1998) also refers to Pitt-Rivers 1966:31; Berger, Berger, and Kellner 1973:86: *“(...) A man is answerable for his honor only to his social equals”* (Black 1998:76). From how I understand Black (1998) vengeance only occurs between equals. As I have already showed in section 6.2.2 I believe that vengeance also can come from people with more power. In this situation the vengeance does not come from someone with more power, however the slandering to the hotel manager can result to consequences for another employee. This is the reason why I also call it rebellion because the slandering was a rebellion against the employees’ salary. Vengeance happened because the employee who was slandered about slandered back to the manager about the employee who had slandered.

In Luhmann’s (in Gulbrandsen 1999) theory rumours are seen as influence and not power. But what if the employee who is slandered about gets less work and by that also less salary? In my opinion this is power with reference to Lukes (2005) and his claim that influence can be seen as power, especially if the hotel manager listens more to some employees then he listens to others. I also believe that as long as the employees see that other employees get higher salary or more working hours through slandering they will do the same. This can therefore also be seen in the light of Luhmann (in Crubellate 2007) theory about double contingency as long as people accept the signs and symbols they will also continue to act on the expectations of expectations. This norm, slander gives benefits, will become institutionalised and things will remain the same.

I believe the slandering in the hotel could have been reduced if all the employees had a standard contract with equal rights and not an oral contract where they had opportunity to individually negotiate working hours and salary. When contracts are ‘personal’ and based on

the hotel manager, Saed's opinion and not standard and formal, there can be a danger that his decisions will be biased. It is plausible that Saed might get along better with some of the employees than others.⁵⁶ This can result in that Saed might not see the faults of those he gets along with or maybe he sees the other employees' faults as more salient.⁵⁷ I believe the reason why the older employees did not slander had to do with that they already got the hours and salary that was possible for them to claim. This is also why I believe an impersonal and standard wage system would have reduced some of the slandering problem, because then the employees would have lesser motive for slandering.

EDUCATION, LANGUAGE-REBELLION AND VENGEANCE – BUT DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES

In both Norway and Palestine, education and language seemed important to get a job or to make a career. In both countries the housekeeping job and the dish washing job were seen as less valued than other jobs in the hotel. The employees in the lowest positions were also those who rebelled against the company. At the same time there was also an evident difference between the two countries. In Palestine the employees in the housekeeping department and those who did the dishes were young, aged between 20 and 25 years (the leader was 32) while in Norway the age difference was between 20 and 60 years. This can mean that the housekeeping job was more temporary for the employees in Palestine than it was for the employees in Norway. The hotel manager, Saed in Palestine told me it was possible for all the employees in the hotel to make a career. That he had this opinion may be due to having started as a housekeeping employee himself when he was young. This was in contrast to how it was in Norway where it was not possible for the housekeeping employees to make a career in the hotel. A further difference was that the employees' resistance in Palestine was more visible for the other employees. And also in contrast to Norway the employees' resistance could affect the other employees in a very negative way. In Norway the employees' resistance could also to some degree affected the other employees but at the same time it was not harmful for them as it could end up being in Palestine. This possibly shows a disadvantage with having time and opportunity to communicate. It might create rivalry and conflicts between employees.

⁵⁶ I found out that one of the chefs and also one of the employees doing the dishes was in the hotel manager's family. In the interview with the hotel manager, Saed, he told me that he treated them in the same way as all the other employees and that he had a professional relationship with them at work. (I believe to some degree this was true because his family members were also living in the shared apartments). But it can be questioned, what if the hotel needed to fire people because of economic problems, it can be assumed that Saed would not have started with his own family members.

⁵⁷ In psychology, "*consistency theory in general (Abelson et. Al., 1968) posit that people seek out, notice, and interpret data to reinforce their attitudes*" (Fiske and Taylor 2008:217)

6.3 MORE OPPORTUNITIES –KNOWLEDGE AND RESOURCES

In this section I will show that some of the leaders and employees in Norway and Palestine had more opportunities than the others.

“YOU REALLY HAVE TO WANT TO WORK IN THIS BUSINESS - IT’S BADLY PAID”

The reception manager, Eva, had been working in the hotel for ten years. Eva had started as an apprentice in the reception, after that she got the job as assistant manager in the reception and then later the job as the reception manager. Eva said; *“I have really worked my way up, I hope I one day will become a hotel manager”*. Eva told me that when she started as reception manager many employees had quit working in the reception. Eva told me that she did not take it personally, because many of those who worked in the reception were students working part time and it was natural that they did not work there for so long. Eva told me it was possible to make a career in the hotel, but you really had to show that you wanted it and have initiative.

Lise worked in the reception full time. I asked her if she had applied for the assistant receptionist job which recently had been vacant. Lise told me she had not and also that she did not want the job, she said; *“It is a crap job, you get a lot of responsibilities and not that much more money”*. Lise and Trine talked about how low the salary was in the hotel business. One of them said: *“even the reception manager and the hotel manager do not earn that much money”*. Trine had been working in the reception part-time for two years. She wanted to quit and do something else when she was finished with her studies.

This can be viewed with Luhmann’s (in Crubelatte 2007) theory. The employees’ expectations of their opportunities in Norway were coherent with Norwegian values. Education and language leads to “better” jobs and opportunities. These norms and values can be seen as “highly institutionalised” in the Norwegian society. The receptionist considered their jobs as something temporary unless one was planning to make a career in the hotel business. Their experience of their work can be seen as consistent with how this type of work is valued in the Norwegian society and also by the hotel industry itself with reference to article I showed to in Dagbladet.no in section 6.2.1.

“I OWE THE HOTEL MONEY”

Even though the employees in the reception had other opportunities they also had some latent conflicts. The employees in the reception had to cover economical mistakes they made with their own money. Lise told me that she owed the hotel money. She had given a guest a room

but not managed to charge the guests visa card. As I understood her she was mad about it and did not know what to do. She did not know if these rules were legal, and she did not know who she could ask about this other than the reception manager. And as the other receptionist she was not a member of the labour union. Trine told me that she owed the hotel 104\$ and that she had owed them for many years after an error she had in her cash register. This got me thinking that maybe it was just a threat to make the receptionists more careful with handling money. But later Nina who worked part time in the reception told me that she knew someone who had to pay 160\$. She said to me; *“If I ever experience that, I will refuse to pay, because then there will be almost nothing left of my salary and I need all the money I get”*.

This was a latent conflict over rules, between the employees and the reception manager. As I showed chapter 5 these rules violated the work environment act. The employees did not think these rules were fair, at the same time they did not know if it was legal or not. Since all the employees I talked to in the reception went to the reception manager, Eva if they had problems, they had no one else to ask about these rules. As long as Eva stood by these rules it is difficult to see that she would change her mind when it came to the consequences of “violating” these rules. Most of the employees in the reception told me that they liked Eva. This can probably make it hard for the employees to go against her. It can therefore be assumed that there are small chances that these rules will change as long as the employees only direct their problems to Eva. In this way the receptionist also in some ways as the housekeeping employees were “deluded”, by the company’s symbolic authority and it shows once again that power can be at work inducing compliance by beliefs (Lukes 2005:136). Since this conflict did not come to the surface while I was observing I do not know how the employees solved it.

As I showed in chapter 5 there was some confusion about the company rules in the reception and also that some of the employees and the leader were breaking them. I believe that this can be seen as resistance. Clegg (1994) writes, *“(...) the bases of resistance, its triumphs, anxieties and failure. Such stories are infinite: they know no end and any collection of them will be but a small testament to the will of resistance”*. (Clegg 1994:296-297). Clegg’s (1994) theory has its source in Foucault’s view on power and the subject. In my opinion maybe Foucault has it right when saying power is everywhere and also that it is possible to add to this, everywhere where power is one will also find resistance. Knights and Vurdubakis (1994) write that Foucault has been criticized for saying “power is everywhere” because it has been argued that if power is everywhere it leaves no space for resistance. Knights and Vunderbakis (1994) write;

“Power and resistance should not be understood as having an origin in abstract ‘human agents’ but as having specific conditions of existing at a particular sites: Power relations involve agents that are constituted in a specific form in a particular location” (Knights and Vunderbakis 1994:184)

I believe resistance can be seen as unintentional and unintelligent in the same way as power. Clegg (1994) write that resistance requires consciousness, and those who resists have a consciousness of doing so. At the same time Clegg (1994) writes that it does not have to be articulated but it requires a minimum of reflexivity. In this sense it is difficult to argue that the receptionist, the kitchen and also the housekeeping employees resisted. Because the interpretation of their actions would be that the kitchen employees used their rights, the receptionists were insecure about the company rules and the housekeeping employees did not want to work fast because they did not want to help the others. I disagree with Clegg (1994) I believe that people can resist without knowing that they resist in the same way, as power can be both unintelligent and unintentional, with reference to Lukes (2005). I believe that using the computer, snuff and the hotel’s bar can be seen as resistance. Because, the receptionists actions were opposing rules given by the company and I believe through this it can be said that their actions is a resistance against the company’s power.

“KNOWLEDGE IS POWER”

The former kitchen chef, Lars in Norway told me the conflict about overtime was one of the reasons why he quit. Lars said to me that the hotel and service industry was generally a tough business. At the same time he said; *“Since I am an educated man it’s maybe not that easy to exploit me. Because when you are educated, you know your rights. Think about how many that gets exploited, because they don’t know better”*.

The former kitchen chef, Lars had resisted with persistence with reference to Collinson (1994). Collinson (1994) writes when it comes to resistance with persistence; *“subordinates seek to demand greater involvement in the organization and to render management more accountable by extracting information, monitoring practices and challenging decision making processes”* (Collinson1994:25). Lars had technical and organizational knowledge which led him to confront the top management with the problems he had in the kitchen. This resulted in a bitter conflict between Lars and some of the top management. This conflict and also that Lars had to work so much overtime made him decide to quit on the day. Because of Lars educational background and knowledge he knew that he had other options to get a job as the receptionists in the hotel. That he was in a position where he could quit on the day could be interpreted as the company had no power over him.

KNOWLEDGE AND HAVING OPPORTUNITIES

Ali, one of the chefs in Palestine spoke Arabic, English, Hebrew and German. He had also been living in Germany. He had much work experience and was educated in hotel management. During my stay in Palestine Ali tried to get work permission in Israel, because he had got a job offer there. But he did not get it. Ali often complained to me how he did not like to work in the hotel. He said, *“I am not like them (the other employees) and I don’t want to try to be like them either”*. Ali told me that life was hard and that it was difficult to support his family with the low salary he got in the hotel.

Since all the employees struggled with this it was difficult for me to understand why Ali reacted so differently from all the other employees. Maybe it was because he had been abroad and experienced how different life could be. At the time several of the employees had been working in Jerusalem before and they also had experienced that life could be different and better. Ali stood in contrast to the other employees by being more focused on himself and his own problems than the group as a whole. All the other employees seemed to have an implicit understanding of each other and sharing the same problems, while Ali in some way made the same problem as something else. In Norway the former kitchen chef said that *“power is knowledge”* but cannot knowledge also make you feel even more powerless if you do not have the opportunity to do anything about the situation you are in and when you also know that there are other job opportunities “out there”?

I got the impression that Ali in some ways felt more powerless than the other employees. The reason may be that he already had what was needed to get another job, and there was nothing more for him to do other than wait for an opportunity to arrive. The employees I talked to in Palestine told me that there was no point for them to applying for a work permission in Israel because they had been in jail (for throwing stones), or they were too young.⁵⁸ They were therefore seen as a threat to Israel and would not get work permission anyway. Working in the hotel in Palestine was therefore the best alternative they had. Ali had never been in jail and he therefore had other alternatives. He knew that it was possible for him to get work permission in Israel but that it would take time. When I came back to Norway I was told that Ali had got a job and work permission in Israel. I do not know how the other employees reacted since this was after I had left.

⁵⁸ When I was in Palestine I was told that young men in general were seen as a threat to Israel, therefore there was no point for them applying because they would not get permission.

The hotel manager, Saed told me that after he had been working in the hotel for 13 year he had told the owners that he wanted to quit. The owners had offered Saed a much higher salary and convinced him to stay. This stands in contrast to the opportunities the employees had in the hotel. I do not think that they would have been offered a higher salary if they had told Saed they wanted to quit. I believe they did not even have the opportunity to consider quitting. Another time I was standing in the restaurant talking to some of the waiters, the owner, Abba, comes by to greet the employees. The employees told me that he did that from time to time. Abba came up to us and we talked for a while. During this conversation Abba, mentions that he has an American passport and because of that he was free to go anywhere, also to Israel if he wanted. I did not feel that the employees reacted to his story. At the same time I did, because I knew that unlike him (and me) they were not free to go anywhere. I got the impression that since the employees had lived under these conditions for such a long time they almost took- it-for-granted that others had more rights and were freer than them.

SUPPRESSED BY MYTHS IN NORWAY – SUPPRESSED BY THE SOCIETY IN PALESTINE

Because of the top managements view on the housekeeping employees' in Norway, it was not possible for the housekeeping employees to make a career in the hotel. In the reception in Norway the employees knew they were only working there temporary until they could find something better, or make a career in the hotel business. The former kitchen chef had the opportunity to quit on the day. Both the receptionist and former chef knew that it was possible for them to find other jobs and through that it could be said that they had more power and opportunities then some of the other employees, especially the housekeeping employees.

Since I spent little time in the kitchen in Norway I do not know how the employees experienced their opportunities. That they had taken courses which were provided by the hotel can be interpreted as they had an interest in their work. At the same time they had failed. After this they did not want to try again. That some of the kitchen employees had been working in the hotel for over 20 years could be interpreted as they did not have other opportunities but it could be also be interpreted as they liked working there. Since I did not get to see or hear much in the kitchen in Norway it is difficult to give any proper interpretation of their situation, other than that I noticed that they were very aware of their rights to take time off.

In Palestine all the employees felt that they were in a hopeless situation and there was nothing they could do about it. I also discovered that there were some inequalities between the employees and even more between the top management (the hotel manager and the owner) and the employees. Wikan (2002) writes that; *“By exaggerating external differences, internal differences between the members of a group are downplayed (...). (...) and thus gives a false picture of homogeneity”*(Wikan 2002:310). That Ali’s attitude contrasted the other employees’ attitudes made me think that I maybe had overlooked the fact that there were more individual differences between the employees than I saw. This can also have to do with language. Not all the employees spoke English and therefore some of them did not have the same opportunity to be as open towards me about their feelings as Ali was.

Those two months I observed in the hotel I saw that the employees had a strong commitment to each other and that they were a unified group. Ali was in a unique position because he had opportunity to apply for work permission in Israel which none of the other employees had, even not the hotel manager (he had been in jail for throwing stones when he was 15). However, the difference between the employees and the hotel manager and also the owner was great. The hotel manager and the owner lived in better areas outside the city centre with their families, while the employees lived in shared apartments during their work periods (which were almost constant). The manager earned 3000\$ a month while the average salary for the employees in the hotel was 650\$⁵⁹ a month. At the same time I believe that I was more aware of these differences than the employees was. I experienced that they almost took it for granted.

It is also in its place here to ask; what is wrong with working in the housekeeping, reception and in the kitchen? Is it any better do be a director or a hotel manager? And who decides that? There is obviously a salary aspect,⁶⁰ but is salary the only thing that decides how much a person and their work is valued?⁶¹ Merton (1996) writes with reference to W.I Thomas *“If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences”* (Merton 1996:183).

Sollund (2006) writes that the employees in “Charm” seemed to like their job. At the same time she also writes that they told her that they had learned to like it. Sollund (2005)

⁵⁹ I acknowledge that this difference is approximately the same difference as one finds in Norway where the company director earned about 17485\$ and the employees 4196 \$ (before tax in a month). At the same time if one sees this in the light of that many things in Palestine was on the same price level as in Norway. It is therefore evident that the wage difference was a bigger problem in Palestine. I do not by that mean that I do not question the extreme wage difference there was between the director and a regular employee. But it goes beyond this paper to discuss this.

⁶⁰ I acknowledge that also type of work could have been relevant here.

⁶¹ In Foucault’s view *“The truth is a discursive construction and different scientific fields (doxa’s) point out what is truth and what is false”* (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999:22)

writes; *“it is also likely that the work becomes meaningful by the housekeeper’s stress on the importance of their work and because of the response they get which confirms that they are doing a good job”* (Sollund 2006:302). Even though everybody’s work in “Charm” was well defined they all helped each other to get the work done, the housekeeping manager helped and even the director helped (Sollund 2007). It can be assumed that the employees had learned to like their job in Sollund (2007) study because their work was arranged in a way that it made it possible to like it. I believe this can be seen as use of power with reference to Lukes (2005).

I believe this shows that it is important to differ between the outcomes of power use. If the use of power results in that the employees feels more valued, get less strain injuries, get more opportunities to socialize at work and it creates a better work environment. It also shows that even though power can create compliance by influencing desires and beliefs (Lukes 2005) it can be productive (Foucault in Sandmo 1999) but it does not necessarily have to be disciplining and controlling but it shows that it also can create freedom and opportunities (Aakvaag 2008).

In Palestine, despite the division of labour and the differences between some of the employees and also between the employees and the hotel manager, they had a good work environment. In addition the employees were unified, and almost all the employees had equal opportunities. It is possible to think that if the top management in Norway had valued the housekeeping employees (and also the kitchen employees?) work higher and opened up for that the housekeeping employees could make a career in the hotel. It could be assumed that it would have made it easier for the housekeeping employees to believe that they and their work had an important value and also to see and believe that they had other opportunities.

6.4 SOLVING CONFLICTS

I will in this section show that conflicts in Norway and in Palestine were solved through settlements and negotiations. I will argue that few problems and conflicts were solved in Norway in contrast to Palestine. In the end I will discuss the differences and similarities between the two hotels.

SETTLEMENTS AND NEGOTIATIONS

The housekeeping manager, Maria, in Norway hoped and believed the employees would come to her directly and not talk above her head in the corridors. The reception manager told me that the employees came to her if there were problems. In the kitchen I got the impression that if they had problems they had to talk to the hotel manager. None of the employees in the

housekeeping department told me that they had gone to the housekeeping manager with their problems. A couple of the employees in the housekeeping department told me they had been told to come for a meeting with the company director because of a conflict. The receptionists told me that they could speak to the reception manager, Eva, at the same time, as I understood, for some of them it was difficult because they liked her.

In the interview with the company director Knut, he told me that that there were some problems in the housekeeping department. Knut had the impression that most of the women in the housekeeping department were happy with their work. And that the men working there were probably those who felt the most that they should find other types of jobs. Knut had offered some of the men in the housekeeping a janitor position⁶² but they had not been interested. Knut had also proposed that the employees in the housekeeping should try to work more in teams but the employees had not wanted this either. Knut said “*when it all comes down to it, they lack a will to change things*”. I did not hear about these propositions when I observed in the housekeeping department.

When it comes to the employees’ ‘lack of will to change’, it can be questioned if it maybe was a fear of being even more pressured on time. As I showed in chapter 4 it is likely that companies who change into a more organic form do so because of profit rather than in the interest of the workers. Since the employees in the housekeeping already were pressured on time, it can be assumed that they perceived change as something that would result in even more pressure.

As I wrote in section 6.3, power can be productive and be used to create better conditions and work environment. It is also in the employer’s right to organize and reorganize the company. I believe if they do it for the benefit of their workers even though at first the workers might experience it as something negative it can turn out to have positive effects.

The company director, Knut, told me that the employees came directly to him when they had problems. Most of the employees I talked to told me that they did not know or barely knew Knut. I therefore asked Knut if he knew all the employees in the hotel and also if all the employees, in his opinion, knew that they could come to him. The top management office was two blocks away and I was thinking that it could be intimidating for employees to go there

⁶² It could maybe be questioned why Knut had not offered any of the woman a janitor position. As Foucault (in Aakvaag 2008) point to, people construct the world they live in and denote and classifies it. As already written I have not looked at the gender perspective in this paper, it therefore goes beyond this paper to elaborate on it.

and talk to Knut alone. Knut acknowledged the problem that his office was located in another building and told me that when the employees came to him they were normally two or three. At the same time, Knut told me that he had spoken with almost all the employees, but then he rephrased it and said; “*They all know who I am*”. I believe it is plausible that Knut knew all the regular employees, especially those who had been working in the hotel for several years, but it can be questioned if he knew all the call temps and the part time workers. I did not get the impression from those I talked to that they knew Knut.

Knut told me that there recently had been a conflict in the hotel and that he and the employees involved and their leader had sat down together and found a solution to the problem. Knut told me that normally also the leader of the concerning department is present at these meetings. The fact that Knut did not have anything with the daily operation of the hotel and also that his office was located in another building make it possible to view him as a neutral third party. If Knut were considered a neutral third party it can be said that the conflicts in Norway were solved through settlements. Black (1998) write; “*Settlement is the handling of a grievance by a nonparticipant third party*” (Black 1998:85).

Black’s (1998) characteristics for settlements are inequality, relational distance, heterogeneity, isosceles triangulation and organizational asymmetry. These characteristics fit well with how the hotel in Norway was organized. However it can be questioned if there was an isosceles triangulation between the company director, the leaders and the employees. Since Knut was responsible for the company, he had strong interest in it. Because of this it is difficult to see that Knut could be seen as a neutral third party. It is also possible to think that Knut had a better relation with some of the leaders and employees than others, as I argued when it came to the hotel manager in Palestine. I therefore believe these meetings could be viewed more as negotiations rather than settlements. At the same time Black’s (1998) characteristics of negotiations are equality, cross linkages, organizations, homogeneity and accessibility. None of these characteristics can be said to fit with how the hotel were structured and organized in Norway. Black (1998) also writes;

“Negotiations is less likely among unequal parties. Superiors usually obtain what they want from inferiors with little or no bargaining, whereas the latter may have trouble even initiating negotiations with the former” (Black 1998:83)

I disagree with Black (1998) and as I will show in the next section there were often negotiations between the employees and the hotel manager in Palestine. I also believe that when there are conflicts it is in both parties best interest to solve the conflict. At the same time

I agree with Black (1998) that inferiors/employees can find it difficult initiating negotiations with their leaders. This I have also found in the hotel in Norway, very few of the employees I talked to went to their leaders when there were problems. I also agree with Black (1998) that superiors can obtain what they want and that they have more power. At the same time I mean Black (1998) leaves little room for the superiors to understand and relate to their employees and also to have an interest in that conflicts are solved (and not maintained which I believe is bound to happen if superiors/employers force their will through no matter what).

Knut told me that he did not involve the union representatives when there were problems or conflicts. The general impression I got from the top management and the leaders in the hotel was that the union representatives did not do what they were supposed to and that they were using their positions for their own benefits.

The union representatives worked as all the other employees in the housekeeping full time and had the same workload as the rest of the employees. It can be questioned if the representatives did enough when it came to informing about the union, since very few employees were members of the union and there was little knowledge about it and who the representatives were. But it can also be questioned if the top management and the leaders gave the representatives time and opportunity to be involved. I believe it could be difficult for the representatives to act as expected when others do not expect them to act. In Luhmann's (in Crubellate 2007) view one can say that the use of labour union will not be "institutionalised" if no one expect the union to do anything. It is difficult to see how the employees could get to know about the union representatives if the leaders did not involve the representatives when there were problems and conflicts.

WHAT CAN WE DO? – THIS IS LIFE IN PALESTINE

When I asked the employees in Palestine about their work situation I always got the same answer; "*What can we do?*" The employees needed money to support their families and send their children to schools. Ali told me that in Jerusalem the salary was double of what they got in Palestine. Many of the employees in the hotel had been working in Jerusalem before, but after the Oslo Accords and the second intifada they did not have permission to work there anymore. All the employees in Palestine felt the same 'powerlessness' and there was nothing they could do about their own situation. Most of the employees in the hotel worked double shifts or wanted to work double shifts. Two of the employees also had a fulltime job in addition to working fulltime in the hotel.

I asked Khaled how he thought the occupation affected the workers situation in Palestine. He told me that many people are unemployed and this forces the wages down. At the same time he also said that he understood the companies; *“Of course they don’t want to give more salary if they don’t have to, they will always find employees who are willing to work for low salary”*.

Almost all the leaders and the employees in the hotel were in the same situation. They all wanted to work as much as possible. They worked approximately ten hours each day or more, especially the waiters and the employees in the reception. I asked them why they did not ask the manager to employ more people. They told me that they did not want that because then it would be less work for them. Many of the employees were often tired. But they did not complain much about it, because everyone in the hotel, but also in Palestine were in the same situation.⁶³ As long as the salaries were so low and that employers always could find someone who was willing to work for a low salary this situation was not going to change. Clegg (1994) writes when it comes to knowledge and resistance; *“One knows that one is an exploited wage earner but the routines of everyday living and life (...) have greater salience than ones ‘exploitations’”* (Clegg 1994:293).

As I showed in chapter 3 throughout the history Palestinians efforts to mobilize has been recognised as terrorist activities and put down by Israeli military. Israeli military has strong control over the Palestinian area and also over the Palestinian economy. Ozguc (2010)⁶⁴ writes with reference to Larner 2000, p, 13:

“(...) The Wall is not simply a physical barrier, but is a performative act: it produces and ranks bodies, space and time. It constructs certain identities by locating them in certain places at certain times. It works as a “system of meaning that constitutes institutions, practices and identities in a contradictory and disjunctive way” (Ozguc 2010:2).

The Wall in Palestine can be seen in the light of Foucault’s theory of panopticon and that the Wall has a strong disciplinary function in making Palestinians into docile bodies (Ozguc 2010). Ozguc (2010) agrees with this but argues at the same time that the Wall also can be seen as creating room for resistance and counter hegemonic practices. Ozguc (2010) calls this the third space with reference to Edward Soja (1980; 1999). Even though this space is primordially given, its use and meaning is a product of social translation, transformation and experience (Soja in Ozguc 2010:8). Ozguc (2010) further write that a third space is not a complete space and will never be complete because it is always in its process of becoming.

⁶³ Those I talked to in PGFTU told me that it was like this all over Palestine. I asked if this was some of the reason for the high unemployment. They confirmed to this.

⁶⁴ http://apsa2010.com.au/full-papers/pdf/APSA2010_0135.pdf

I asked Majd, one of the receptionists, if the employees talked about rules and their rights. He told me that there had been much talk about salary lately and that all the employees had written a letter to the hotel manager, Saed, and asked for a higher salary. They had given Saed two weeks to respond. If he did not respond and do something about it, Majd told me that the employees were planning to go to the labour union with their case.

In spite of that many of the employees told me that they had no expectations of the labour union or the legal system and also no belief that they could help them, they still were thinking about getting help from the union. The employees' strong feeling of unity and their will to unite and fight can maybe be understood if one looks at their long historical struggle and the Palestinians will to never give up. As I wrote in chapter 3 with reference to Farsoun and Aruri (2006) the Nakbah in 1948 is a central element in modern Palestinian history and it created among the Palestinians a psychological bond and a strong feeling of identity and unity. Ozguc (2010) writes; "*Palestinian lives are not bare lives, but de-facto lives which are always in the state of 'becoming'*" (Ozguc 2010:10).

The employees in the hotel in Palestine were not passive receivers and docile bodies of their society. They were planning to go to the union for help to get a higher salary. They were resisting and trying to change their situation. Ozguc (2010) criticize Agamben (1998) for seeing Palestinians as passive victims and reduce the Palestinian space simply to its physical existence shaped by Israel. Ozguc (2010) writes; "*Such an approach ignores the fact that the Separation Wall is not simply a product of the Israel sovereign power emanating from above*" (Ozguc 2010:9). Ozguc (2010) refers to Weizman (2007) who in detail has outlined the route of the Wall and that it is under constant change not only because of government but because of actors as real estates, construction companies, Jewish settlements and court decisions and that these actors should be seen as independent actors creating their own agendas. The employees contradicted themselves by saying that there was nothing they could do, at the same time as they did or at least, tried to do something.

This shows, as I have argued, that everywhere where there is power one can also find resistance and people are not necessarily aware of that they are resisting or have opportunities to resist.

OPEN DISAGREEMENTS AND NEGOTIATIONS

During the two months I was in the hotel in Palestine I only witnessed two episodes where some of the leaders and employees had an open disagreement. I was sitting in the kitchen one day together with some of the kitchen staff and one of the housekeeping employees, Shadi. The housekeeping leader, Rami, came and started to yell at Shadi in Arabic. I did not understand what he was yelling about. I only saw that Shadi got angry with him. When the leader left I asked Ali, one of the chefs, what it was about. Ali told me that the leader wanted Shadi to work a double shift the next day, and that Shadi did not want to. All the housekeeping employees had to work double shifts. Shadi had asked for time off and the housekeeping leader had told him that he had to work. It was the housekeeping leaders' responsibility to plan how the other employees were working. Shadi had as all the others employees' chosen to work in the hotel on the same terms as the others and therefore it was in Rami's right to decide when Shadi had to work.

I asked Ali if it was normal to yell like that among the employees. He told me it was not. Ali said that the housekeeping leader was young, and that he did not know how to handle these things. I asked Ali if it ever happened that he and the other chef talked to each other in that way. Ali just laughed at me and said that they were never doing that, he said that they were grown men. I was standing in the reception some weeks later talking to the receptionist, Majd, when Ali comes to write on the timesheet. Ali noticed that someone had changed it. He asked Majd who had done it. Majd told him that it was the other chef Mostafa. Ali asked Majd to change it back but Majd told him that Ali had to go down and ask Mostafa about it. Before this episode Ali had told me that both he and Mostafa were the head chefs and that they had equal positions. Majd told me, while Ali was down talking to Mostafa, that it was Mostafa who was the head chef and also the one responsible for making the timesheets. When Ali came back he told Majd that Mostafa had made a mistake and told Majd to change it back. I do not know why Ali earlier on had told me that he had the same position as Mostafa. Maybe it was to impress me, or maybe it was how he thought it should be.

The employees in Palestine seemed to address disputes and problems immediately (negotiated) before they turned into conflicts, besides from the slandering problem. Black (1998) write with reference to Gulliver 1979:5; "*Negotiating is the handling of grievance by joint decisions*" (Black 1998:83). The characteristics, for negotiation, as already said, are equality, cross-linkages, organization, homogeneity and accessibility. The employees in Palestine could be viewed as an equal group with almost equal opportunities, they were

organized and they had access both to each other but also to the hotel manager and to the labour union. They were also a homogenous group.

The hotel manager, Saed told me that when there were problems with employees Saed always tried to look for solutions and not fire them. Saed said; *“I once saw it necessary to place one of the employees in the other hotel. I also had one employee that did not work very well with the customers but I did not want to fire him I therefore found a solution to it”*. Saed told me that it was not easy to find a job in Palestine, especially for the older employees and he said *“I have a very high threshold when it comes to firing the employees”*. This I believe is an example that contradicts Black (1998) view on negotiations between superiors and inferiors and it shows that superiors also are interested in finding solutions that works well also for the inferiors or as in this case, the employees in the hotel.

6.5 EQUAL CONTRACTS, TIME AND OPPERTUNITY TO COMMUNICATE AND A NEUTRAL THIRD PARTY

In chapter 5 I showed that all three departments in Norway operated as their own semi autonomous fields. Because of this there was no communication between the departments and therefore also no conflicts between the departments. All the conflicts were internally in each department and revolved around completely different things. In the housekeeping the employees did not feel trusted when they were sick, the call substitutes felt almost forced to work, in the reception it was about the compensation money and in the kitchen they felt understaffed and also as the former chef said, he did not feel that the top management understood the problems in the kitchen.

The only ones who used their rights or referred to the law in Norway were the kitchen staff who did not want to work overtime, the former kitchen chef who quit on the day, and the housekeeping manager who believed changing the sick leave rules would be the solution to the problem with sick leave. They were therefore the only ones in the hotel who used the institutional environment for ‘solutions’ to conflicts or as a mean for avoidance. I got the impression that very few of the employees in Norway actually had anyone to talk to when they had problems and I believe that this led to their resistance, avoidance and rebellion. I believe that this had to do with the hotels organizational form and because they did not have time and opportunity to communicate, but also because of the power relations in the hotel and that some had very few opportunities in contrast to other employees in the hotel. In both

Norway and in Palestine it was possible for the employees to go directly to the company director, Knut, or the hotel manager, Saed. However, Saed was much more accessible for the employees than Knut was, because Saed had his office in the hotel and all the employees knew him. It can therefore be questioned if Knut actually was a more neutral third party than Saed was. Because Knut was not directly involved with the employees on a daily basis and therefore it might have been easier for Knut to see things objectively than it was for Saed.

In Palestine there were problems and conflicts internally in the departments and also between the employees in different departments. The employees mostly had open disagreements that they sorted out at once. I believe this had to do with that the employees' had time and opportunity to communicate. I have showed that the employees used slander as a way of 'resisting' and to get in a better position with the hotel manager. I believe this had to do with the power relations in the hotel. I have showed that it was the young employees who were in the lowest positions and had the lowest salaries who slandered. That the employees could negotiate their salary individually with the hotel manager could lead to conflicts and competition between the employees. Almost all the employees in the hotel in Palestine were members of the union and they were therefore active users of the institutional environment for conflict solving.

The findings in Norway and Palestine show the importance of equal contracts on equal terms, and that all the employees are given equal opportunities. It also shows the importance that employees have time and opportunity to communicate (and to unite and "fight"). And also the importance of a neutral third party, as a labour union that can contribute in settlements, but also to give the employees knowledge about their rights.

7. CONCLUSION

In this paper I wanted to find out what significance the institutional environment, the organizational form and power relations had for how leaders and employees communicated, solved conflicts and the work environment. I have showed that the two hotels were mechanistic organized. But it was different in Palestine because they had time and opportunity to communicate. I also found that both hotels had become isomorphic with their environment. I also showed that both hotels could be seen as semi autonomous field operating with their own rules. Because there was no communication between the different departments in Norway each department could be viewed as a separate semi autonomous fields while the hotel in Palestine could be seen as one field.

The fact that the employees in Palestine had time and opportunity to communicate led to that they, in contrast to the employees in Norway, had a more common understanding about legal rules, company rules and the labour union. In both the hotels I found there were different power relations and also inequalities between the leaders and the employees and also between employees. In both Norway and Palestine they viewed housekeeping work as less valued. But in contrast to Norway it was possible for the housekeeping employees in Palestine to make a career in the hotel. When it came to conflicts I found that there were more latent conflicts in Norway and also that the employees in Norway had few opportunities to solve problems and conflicts. I believe that since the employees in Palestine had time and opportunity to communicate they had more open disagreements. This made it easier for them to negotiate before problems turned into a conflict at the same time it also led to some rivalry and slandering among the employees.

I believe this study has shown that changing to a more organic form not necessarily creates a better work environment and that what is maybe more important is that work should be arranged in a way that gives employees time and opportunity to communicate. I believe my findings show that it is important to do comparative studies with other countries and cultures.

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ATTACHMENTS

The legal articles presented and used in this paper from The Palestinian Labor Law NO (7) for year 2000.

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