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From the Hall of the Mountain King to Manhattan
A Qualitative study of export of the Norwegian model

Masteroppgave i sosiologi

Trondheim 2011

Institutt for sosiologi og statsvitenskap
Fakultet for samfunnsvitenskap og teknologiledelse
NTNU – Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet

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Cover: “Movements at the office per day”

"No-orge mor No-orge vi dyrker din gamle kultur
Ja Norge vårt Norge paradis med demokrati og flat struktur."
Ja Noorge, Stian Carstensen

Acknowledgements

Pappa, du har lært meg å skrive. Mamma, perfeksjonismen (med positivt fortegn) har jeg nok fra deg. Dette er resultatet!

Det er mange som skal takkes, det blir derfor vanskelig å fatte seg i korthet:

First I would like to say thank you to Snøhetta and to all the informants for making this possible. Special thanks to Jenny for organizing the interviews at the Oslo office and getting me in contact with the office in New York. Your energy is impressive and no doubt contagious! I wish you all good luck with you're projects!

En spesiell takk til min veileder, Elin Kvande. Hver veiledning startet med et blidt "Der e du ja!", og frustrasjon ble med ett snudd til inspirasjon. Dine konstruktive innspill og positive tilbakemeldinger har fått meg på riktig spor og minnet meg på hvorfor jeg gjør dette: Fordi sosiologi er utrolig spennende og artig! Og takk, Hege Eggen Børve, for fantastisk intervjuhjelp og trivelig selskap i New York!

Takk til NTNU som, med varierende grad av hell, har gjort sitt beste for å gjøre meg til studerende. Takk til studentpolitikken, konsernstyret i SiT og fantastiske Trondheim for å ha gjort meg til student!

Jeg vil si tusen takk til mine to uunnværlige nestledere på hvert sitt hold, Amund og Marit, for å gjøre livet mye lettere i de travleste periodene. Mange, mange takk til Ingjerd for korrekturlesing: Der jeg har slurvet har du ryddet opp.

Hanne, av deg har jeg lært at ved å fokusere på det positive i livet, er alt mulig. Du har en beundringsverdig styrke! Om jeg får bare halvparten av denne når jeg blir stor, skal jeg være veldig fornøyd.

Kaja, du skal ha æren for temaet i oppgaven. Du kom med ideen om å bruke Snøhetta, og bidro til at jeg har fått jobbe med et veldig spennende prosjekt!

Kjære flotte jenter i Trøndelags Sosiologiske Husmorlag (TSHL), hva skal jeg si om dere? Mastertida hadde ikke vært det samme uten. Mye latter, godt bakverk, faglige samtaler, trøstende ord og ikke minst mye god vin er bare en brøkdel av deres bidrag. Herligere sosiologer finnes ikke!

Til alle dere som har bidratt med hyggelig samvær, adspredelse, smil og oppmuntring gjennom hele prosessen: Dere vet hvem dere er, og dere er manifestasjonen av motivasjon!

En million takk og varme klemmer til min bror, Tølløv, og til Silje for alltid åpen dør, familiehygge, god mat og fortreffelig kaffe på mine mange, men travle Oslobesøk. Ikke minst takk til tantes søteste Mira for lån av prinsesserommet og –senga! Bedre sted å sove i Oslo, skal en lete lenge etter.

Men verdens største takk går uansett til min utrolig tålmodige, forståelsesfulle, støttende og omsorgsfulle samboer, Lars Kristian, og til min fantastiske mamma og pappa! Uten dere hadde ikke denne oppgaven eksistert. Deres uforbeholdne støtte og motiverende ord har dratt meg opp av de mørkeste hull, sørget for at jeg aldri har gitt helt opp, og heiet meg fram til lyset i enden av tunnelen. Og jeg er så takknemlig for det. Dere er de aller, aller beste!

Abstract

The world is becoming increasingly more globalized, and different organizational practices are being exported and adopted by companies around the world. This creates challenges for companies operating across boarders. And for the Norwegian model, it is a threat to Norwegian working hours. This thesis will examine what happens to the Norwegian model when it is being exported to a country with a different institutional context, i.e. a different welfare state regime than the Norwegian. Can the Norwegian model be exported, and how does it translate into an American context? The answer to the question is *yes*. The Norwegian model can be exported, but what we see is an adaptation to the institutional context in the host country. Using time practices and time norms as a point of focus, we see that in the process of adapting the model in the architecture company Snøhetta's New York office, negotiations are taking place among the employees and the management. It is not only the different welfare state regimes and institutional context of the United States and Norway that challenge the Norwegian model in general and working hours in particular, the knowledge work in itself also constitutes a threat. Having a strong emphasis on time disciplining regulations becomes an important factor when dealing with this threat.

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1 Introduction

> *If one places an atomic clock at the bottom of the Empire State Building and another one at the top, after a while one will see that the one at the top goes faster.*
> *Erlend Loe, Naïve. Super*

1.1 The globalized world

There is an increase in economic interdependence in today's world economy, and an increasing amount of companies own and do business in more than one country (Osmundsen 2005). These changes create challenges for the companies when it comes to handling social, political and cultural differences across the boarders.

Compared to other western countries the Nordic working life is highly regulated, and state regulations and labor market institutions are of great significance (Bøvre 2008a). This indicates that for Norwegian companies, international co-operation often implies being introduced to a deregulated working life. How important the national institutional context is for the companies depends on the gap between the local institutional context and the norms of the different partners involved. The institutional framework and the cultural structures in the host countries are probably of great importance when it comes to the possibilities the companies have to implement systems and norms that are developed in the home country (Løken, Falkenberg & Kvinge 2008).

The Norwegian architecture company, Snøhetta, is probably most famous for projects such as the Alexandria library and the Oslo Opera House, as well as for the work they are doing on Ground Zero in New York[1]. It was this project that led Snøhetta to establish an office in New York in 2005, and it has played a great part in putting the company's name on the map (Snøhetta b).

Creating a name outside of Norway is not the only impressing fact when it comes to this company. When opening the New York office, Snøhetta wanted to transfer Norwegian working policies to the new office instead of adapting the American way of organizing work. The goal was to create a "Norwegian" Snøhetta culture in New York, with for example collective bargaining, 40-hour weeks and five weeks of vacation (DagensNæringsliv 2009, Thorsen 2009a). Snøhetta landscape architect,

[1] National September 11 Memorial and Museum (Snøhetta a)

Knut Bjørgum, says in an interview to Dagens Næringsliv (2009) that this way of organizing work was unfamiliar to the Americans, but that they have come to appreciate it. He says that in the U.S. it is not uncommon to juggle two jobs and work double shifts to make ends meet. This is in deep contrast to what is called the *Norwegian model*[2].

There are several Norwegian studies that examine the export of Norwegian traditions when Norwegian companies are established outside of Norway (Bøvre 2008a, Løken et al. 2008, Osmundsen 2005). When both Børve (2008a) and Løken et al. (2008) examine Norwegian work traditions they conclude with they *not* being exported when Norwegian companies set up in other countries. This is why Snøhetta is such an interesting case. In her case study of a Norwegian owned knowledge company located in Norway with international affiliation, Børve (2008a) discovers that international cooperation threatens Norwegian work traditions. The companies try to adapt to expectations and norms engrained in the international market, and these adaptations represent a break with Norwegian work life traditions. Løken et al. (2008) say in their report that the Norwegian work traditions to a very small extent are being exported when Norwegian companies establish offices abroad. One explanation was that the companies saw them selves as international, and even though the head office was in Norway they did not regard themselves as particularly Norwegian. Both these cases show the opposite of what Snøhetta wanted to do at the New York office.

The economist Joseph E. Stiglitz (2007) writes that countries that wishes to increase their competitiveness are told that they have to increase the flexibility in the labor market. This implies a lowering of minimum wages and a weakening of employee's welfare. Stiglitz explains that in addition to this, taxes on capital and business income must be decreased. As a result this will lead to a weakening of the basis for investments in the workers welfare services and social security net. This way of organizing work differs from the Norwegian model. Scandinavian countries have shown that there is an alternative way to meet globalization (Stiglitz 2007). Even though the Scandinavian countries are highly integrated in the global economy they

[2] Also referred to as the Scandinavian or the Nordic model. In this thesis I will use the term *Norwegian model*.

still manage to provide strong social security nets. It is *because* of these policies and not *despite* them these countries have been successful (ibid).

It is interesting that a Norwegian firm like Snøhetta has international success with the Norwegian model as an "ideal", as Norway and Norwegian companies are often regarded as uncompetitive on the international market because of the generous welfare state (Barth & Moene 2008). Since an increasing number of Norwegian companies establish offices abroad one natural question would be whether they bring with them elements from this model on a *company level* – what is often referred to as the *Norwegian micro model* (Hernes 2008, Løken et al. 2008).

The Norwegian model has undergone a lot of criticism from globalization and welfare pessimists who believe that a generous welfare state and an including working life is not economic sustainable. The welfare state contributes to a society with increased social equality, but it is also said that it makes companies less competitive because of the high costs. One of the key ideas behind the welfare state is that it is going to contribute to distributing social benefits among the population, but it can also enhance production (Barth & Moene 2008). Norway is at the productivity top when it comes to competitiveness that builds on macro-economic environment, how well the institutions function, and the country's technological readiness. The Norwegian unemployment rate is low compared to the rest of Europe, and in addition Norway has a low wage dispersion, which indicates social equality (Barth & Moene 2008, Hernes, Grimsrud and Hippe 2006). The paradox then is that Norway rank high in terms of economic performance indictors that, according to (neo-)liberal economists, presuppose liberal arrangements, contrary to the specific profile of the Norwegian model (Claussen 2009). Hernes (2008) argues that the macro perspective is not sufficient when it comes to explaining the position Norway holds in international rankings, and that we need to look at the micro model that consists of wage negotiations, formalized regulations concerning participation, and practical and sustainable cooperation for the development of the company. Hernes also talks about social capital as a key explanation for Norways position - how trust enhances production. I will return to this point in chapter 2.

A strong workers union and a well-developed welfare state are characteristics of the Norwegian model (Barth & Moene 2008, Hernes et al. 2006). A high level of union density that has shown to have many positive effects identifies Norway: A considerable amount of employees and employers are organized and the collaboration between them has a long history and has in many ways become institutionalized. One example is how wage negotiations are carried out in an orderly fashion with two years of labor peace guarantee as a measure to reduce the level of conflicts. Less conflicts leads to less loss in production, in addition the predictability for both parts are high because the organizations agrees to binding agreements on behalf of the employees. All this can help reduce the effect of a recession (Hernes et al. 2006).

In this thesis I wish to take a closer look at what happens to the Norwegian model when it is being exported to a different institutional context, and what challenges companies are faced with when they establish offices in countries with different welfare policies than in the country the parent office is situated, how they seek to solve them, and how the challenges are experienced by the employees in the company. Snøhetta have said that they want to make a Norwegian Snøhetta culture at the New York office, and this is what makes the company for an interesting case.

1.2 Research question

The overall research question for this master thesis is:

What happens to the Norwegian model when it is being exported to a country with a different welfare state organization?

To answer this question I have used the architecture firm Snøhetta as a case, and conducted interviews with employees at their offices in Oslo and New York. I will explore what characterizes the Norwegian model, and see how it is influenced by and influences welfare state policies and work organization. In order to do this I will look at it through the company's time culture, time norms, and time practices. In studying two distinctive offices of the same company located within different institutional contexts, it enables me too see what the institutional contexts have to say for how the Norwegian model is practiced.

1.3 The structure of the thesis

In order to answer the overall research question I will in chapter 2, present relevant theories and previous research on globalization and internationalization of companies. I will also look at institutional differences when it comes to organizing work, the welfare state and time in this chapter. In chapter 3, I will present three research questions based on the presented theory. These questions will create the basis for the research chapters. In chapter 4, I will give an introduction of the research methods I have used when gathering data, and assessments regarding ethic and analysis, as well as a presentation of Snøhetta. In the three research chapters 5,6 and 7, I will take a closer look at working hours, vacation and parental leave. In chapter 8, I will review the findings from the research chapters, and I will view Snøhetta in a perspective that sheds light on how institutional constraints influence time practices in the company. I will also consider the possibilities for further research on the Norwegian model and internationalization.

2 Welfare state regimes and working life

But New York is probably not the most hammer-conducive place in the world.
People who live there probably have completely different ways of releasing tensions.
Why should I hammer and make a fool of myself in New York?
Erlend Loe, Naïve. Super

2.1 Welfare state regimes

The welfare state term is relatively new (Normann, Rønning & Nørgaard 2009). It is often claimed that Bismarck laid the foundation in 1883 when extensive social insurance plans for workers were conducted in Germany. But it is also said that the basis for the welfare state was created in the 1960's and 70's, at the same time as the laissez-faire ideology let go in Europe and the active state started to emerge and the fight for the right to vote and social welfare started.

In a book, from 1990 Gøsta Esping-Andersen writes about three different welfare state models, what he calls "the three worlds of welfare capitalism". According to Esping-Andersen (1990) we will have problems understanding the challenges related to the welfare state correctly unless we apply a welfare regime approach. Viewed from either the citizen's or the society's perspective, welfare in the end comes from a combination of the family, the market, and the state. Based on this, Esping-Andersen comes up with three different welfare state regimes: The liberal, the conservative and the social-democratic welfare state model. In this paper I will concentrate on the liberal and the social-democratic welfare state model, as they are the most relevant for the research question.

In his book Esping-Andersen[3] (1990) argues that if one looks at international differences in social rights and social stratification one will find qualitative differences in the organization between state, market and family. Both social rights and social stratification is shaped by the relationship between state and market in the distribution system. One can say that these differences are connected to how the

[3] It should be noted that the regimes have been criticized for among other things a lack in consistence between the archetypical regimes and data from the nations that are included and the division into three regimes (Thorshaug 2008). He has also been criticized for not including women. Some of this critique has been met in more recent works. For example in the book "Why We Need a New Welfare State", where the authors discuss the aged and transition to retirement, the welfare issues related to profound changes in working life, the risks and needs that arise in households and in child families, and the challenges of creating gender equality.

states emphasize welfare. The type of welfare will be qualitatively different, and the priorities will also vary compared with other activities such as warfare, law and order, or the promotion of profit and trade.

In countries with a liberal market regime one sees that work is being emphasized over welfare: means-tested[4] welfare dominates, and the public insurance arrangements are modest (Esping-Andersen 1990, Thorshaug 2008) . In countries characterized by the conservative welfare state model they are concerned with preserving the traditional family and the family function as the main provider of welfare. Whereas the state and the market is of less importance when it comes to welfare. Because they believe in universal rights it will be problematic for someone with social-democratic values to rely on the market to cover fundamental welfare needs because they see it as unfair. For a laissez-faire liberal, trust in the welfare state will be dangerous because it prevents freedom and efficiency.

2.1.1 The liberal welfare state regime

As stated above means-tested welfare and modest insurance policies dominates the liberal welfare state regime. (Esping-Andersen 1990). The dominating view is that it is the market that to a large degree will give you the benefits you need, which indicate that this model emphasizes work over welfare. This can be seen as connected with traditional liberal norms for work ethic, which has limited the process of social reform: The limit for welfare equals the inclination of choosing welfare over work. As a result the rules that regulates the right to receive support is very strict and often associated with stigma, and the support is also quite modest. This indicates that the welfare services mainly help those with low income, usually the working class. The state encourages the market, either passively by guaranteeing a minimum of welfare, or actively by subsidizing private welfare services. We see examples of the liberal welfare model in e.g. Australia, Great Britain and the United States (ibid).

[4] Means-tested benefits means that financial assistance is only given to those who is unable to cover basic needs due to poverty or lack of income due to disability, sickness, unemployment, or caring for children.

2.1.2 The social-democratic welfare state model

The social-democratic model is the least common of the three welfare state model, and we find it in the Scandinavian countries (Esping-Andersen 1990). In this regime the social democracy is by far the dominating factor behind social reform. The main idea is that the market needs correction and that the state has to intervene to prevent inequality. The Scandinavian welfare state model is relatively new in an international perspective (Normann et al. 2009). The foundation for today's Scandinavian welfare states came with more permanent social democratic governments in the 1930's and 1940's.

In contrast to the liberal welfare state model where means-tested welfare dominates, the principle of universalism holds a strong point in the social-democratic model (Esping-Andersen 1990, Esping-Andersen 2002). Instead of accepting a division between state and market, and working class and middle class, the model underlines equality based on highest standards, instead of equality based on minimum needs. A welfare state that is based on universal rights results in safety and a long-term approach for the workers. One can say that in a welfare state that has the universal principle as a foundation there is a culture where uneven distribution of power, wealth and prestige is undesirable and hard to accept (Hatch 2006). They are unwilling to accept a skewed distribution of wealth, which comes to show in the high income tax in the Nordic countries.

2.1.3 Family policies in a welfare state perspective

Looking at the relationship between the change in family patterns and family policies the Nordic welfare states make for an interesting case (Ellingsæter & Leira 2004). Esping-Andersen (1990, 2002) talks about two different forms of family politics, *familialized* and *de-familialized*. The Nordic countries represent a more de-familialized reproductive politics than what we see in the rest of the Western world, and according to Esping-Andersen (Esping-Andersen 1990, Leira 2004) this is because the social-democratic welfare state model is more de-familialized than the liberal and the conservative model. Through increasing the economic independence for women a de-familialized politic decreases the individuals dependence on the family. But where the familialized politics are strong, the family is to a large degree responsible for its own welfare.

The United States is an example of a more familialized welfare state, but the welfare services are becoming more and more de-familialized (Esping-Andersen 1990, Leira 2004). Even though the U.S. moves towards a more de-familialized welfare state, they have chosen a different way of organizing it than the social-democratic welfare states. In the liberal welfare model it has been important to maintain a distinction between the role and responsibility of the public authorities' and those of the family. For example in the United States the authorities responsibility for care tasks are minimal, this implies that when the solutions cannot be found within the families themselves they can turn to the market and get welfare from commercial actors. This differs from the welfare policies in the social-democratic regimes who emphasize that welfare is a state responsibility. According to Esping-Andersen "*the social-democratic welfare model has actively de-familialized welfare responsibilities with two aims in mind: One, to strengthen families (by unburdening them of obligations) and two, to strive for greater individual independence"* (Esping-Andersen 2002: 13). And in order to minimize the degree to which individuals' welfare depends on their fortunes in the market, the social-democratic model has also actively *de-commodified*[5] citizens' welfare needs. Through regulations the state decides the national framework, and it also carries some of the costs (Brøgger 2007).

2.2 Work organization

When countries put different emphasis on areas connected to the welfare state, it can create challenges for companies who operate across nations. It can create difficulties in an internationalization process when it comes to a successful integration of the foreign divisions and the parent company (Osmundsen 2005). One of the biggest challenges in these types of integration processes happens when the culture of the parent company and the culture of the local office meet. Lack of knowledge, language skills, and also lack of experience in working abroad are all important reasons for why organizations experience internationalization as a challenge. While legal and economic conditions to a great extent are organized through laws and regulations, the socio-cultural questions are largely interpretative. How the companies handle this is important for the employees, and it is also

[5] Commodification refers to in what degree welfare services are free of the market (Esping-Andersen 1990). When welfare needs are being de-commodified they are provided to all and not linked to the market process.

important for the companies' progress (ibid). In this thesis we will see that both legal and economic conditions also create challenges for the companies' practices.

The way the welfare state is organized is of great importance for how the working life in different countries is organized. As we have seen, Esping-Andersen (1990) organizes the welfare states into three different regimes. He argues that we can study different market regimes based on the same principle for classification as with the welfare state regimes (Esping-Andersen 1990, Thorshaug 2008). With this in mind it can be interesting to not only look at how Norway and the United States organize the welfare state, but also how work is organized in these two countries.

In order to understand how different countries' businesses work one must also have knowledge of the differences in social institutions and practices (Løken et al. 2008). The businesses are shaped by the culture they were created in. As a result they will try to find well-defined paths when establishing themselves abroad. But in order for companies that operate in different cultures to work, they also have to make it up as they go along. A lot of research has been done on the challenges connected to transmissions of cultural codes and attitudes across boarders, and the institutional framework and the cultural structures in the host country seems to be of great importance for the companies' potential to implement practices and norms developed in the home country (Løken et al. 2008). As we also will see in this thesis, the organization of the society, the economical system, organizations, legislation and agreements create the framework that determines the possibilities for implementation.

2.2.1 Knowledge companies and the new working life

As a *knowledge company*, Snøhetta will in many ways be influenced by the nature and the organization of *knowledge work*. Knowledge work is often understood as jobs with a high degree of problem solving and competence requirements, as well as requirements concerning creativity and non-standardized working conditions (Alvesson 2004, Børve & Kvande 2006). In these companies, the core activity is based on the intellectual skills of a great portion of the labor force, they usually have an academic education (but this is not self-evident) and relevant experience

(Alvesson 2004). Education is seen as an indicator of competence and also works as a legitimation of expert status and high fees and salaries.

The organizational structures of knowledge companies are often flexible and decentralized, and the employees are given a lot of influence and individual responsibility for their own work (Børve & Kvande 2006). This type of work is often regarded as exiting and challenging, with a large degree of freedom. Because of this, knowledge companies and knowledge work is often labeled *greedy* and *seductive* (Børve & Kvande 2007, Rasmussen 2002). The word seductive is also used when describing the individualization that has come with the "new working life" (Skårn 2006). All this indicates that the nature of knowledge work challenges the principles of the Norwegian model, especially when it comes to working hours.

2.2.2 The Norwegian model

The Norwegian model is from a *macro perspective* often described as a well-organized democratic community with a predictable relationship between the actors in the working life (Hernes 2008, Løken et al. 2008). Through extensive systems of regulation and laws and treaties, the institutional practices in Norway stands out compared to other countries (Bøvre 2008a). These laws and treaties ensure the employee's right to participation at the work place when it comes to representation and as an individual employee. Common requirements and interests on the national level balance local representation and powers of negotiation (Claussen 2009).

The Nordic welfare state model is generally regarded as a model where the state and the local authorities play a major role through comprehensive regulation of economic, social and cultural spheres within the frames of a capitalist economy (Esping-Andersen 1990, Ramsdal 2009). The Norwegian model is closely associated with the policies and organization of the Nordic welfare state (Claussen 2009). This work life model is recognized by a high rate of unionization among employees and a high degree of employer organization, relatively centralized national organizational structures, a strong presence of trade union organization on the workplace level, a national hierarchical system of collective bargaining on the societal level as well as in the companies, and the tripartite cooperation between trade unions, employers'

organizations and government when it comes to establishing economic guidelines, labor market regulations and work environment (Claussen 2009, Westenholz 2011). In a ranking of OECD countries, Norway proves to be one of the countries with the highest level of labor protection (Strøm 2009).

The Norwegian model is based on ideas of industrial and economic democracy. During the 20th century, a growing number of workers in the private and the public sectors became unionized, giving Scandinavian countries the highest rate of unionization in the western world, and ensuring that the institutionalized bargaining system between the two sides of industry occupies a strong position (Westenholz 2011). This democratic aspect is important because it ensures basic rights, as well as clarifies the responsibilities and obligations the different parts in the working life have. This is also one of the core elements in the social-democratic welfare state model (Strøm 2009). One reason for this is that during the process of unionization the social-democratic parties held a strong position in the Scandinavian countries and placed the development of the welfare state on the agenda (Westenholz 2011).

As I mentioned in the introduction, it can be difficult for businesses to establish the Norwegian model in countries with a different welfare state regime and institutional context than what they have in Norway. The Norwegian model builds on the tripartite cooperation, and trust between the parties, as well as a welfare state that creates safety, is essential. Westenholz (2011) sees two main challenges to what she calls the Scandinavian way of organizing[6] by involving employees in participating in decision making in the company: An increasing number of mobile individuals and globalization of the economy. She raises the question of "*how do we study the impact of globalization on the Scandinavian way of organizing?".* While some scholars consider globalization to be a macro phenomenon, Westenholz argues differently. The way she sees it, the impact of globalization has to be studied as a *nested macro and micro process* in which institutional actors meet in local contexts and negotiate the institutional order of organizing in concrete practices. Because of this we have to identify new types of meetings between institutional actors from Scandinavian

[6] This can be seen in connection with what I talk about as the "the Norwegian model"

companies and institutional actors from foreign countries and companies when studying globalization (Westenholz 2011).

There are a lot of elements that make out the Norwegian model, and it can be looked at from different angles and in different ways. One can draw on characteristics like the tripartite cooperation, the distance between manager and employee, and the flat salary ladder, but it can also be examined from different levels. Westenholz (2011) and Hernes (2008) talk about the *micro* and *macro* perspective on the Norwegian model. In this thesis I will use the micro perspective, i.e. examining the Norwegian model on a societal and corporate level.

With export of the Norwegian model as a point of interest it is very exciting to look at the Norwegian model from the societal and the corporate level. It will be interesting to examine how businesses that wishes to implement the Norwegian model when they establish offices outside of Norway present, perceive, and apply these elements in the new office. This is why I want to take a closer look at Snøhetta and see what elements they have brought with them to the New York office and how they perceive and make use of the model there.

2.4 Institutionalism

With an increase in internationalization, different theoretical approaches that try to understand how globalization influence the nations' working life has appeared (Bøvre 2008b). Roughly one can say that the debate and the research concerning globalization can be divided into two: It is a question of convergence (universalism) or divergence. According to the universalists we have to understand globalization as a developing process where social and cultural national differences are being smoothed out so that the world becomes more homogenous.

On the other side we have the supporters of divergence. A development of this view is what we call the new institutional perspective (Bøvre 2008b). Multinational companies can be regarded as created within specific national institutional contexts, and these contexts will shape how they are institutionalized. In this view, companies are regarded as socially constructed, and the national institutional context becomes important when it comes to understanding how global organizations are formed.

With today's global progress this is especially interesting when trying to understand how organizations and practices are shaped on a local level. Institutional factors are seen as more important than rational factors such as technology, company size and commercial affiliation when it comes to shaping organizations and management practices (ibid).

2.4.1 New institutionalism[7]

The understanding of organizations as societal systems that are influenced by social and cultural forces, was refined with the arrival of the new institutional perspective in the mid 70's (DiMaggio & Powell 1991, Osmundsen 2005). It can be seen in relation with John Meyer's publication of two articles in 1977, "The Effects of Education as an Institution" and "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony". These two articles pointed to many of the key aspect of new institutional thinking (DiMaggio & Powell 1991).

According to studies carried out within the new institutional tradition, companies who are established outside of their own national boarders often implement the practices that have been successful in the parent company, regardless of where it is situated (Bøvre 2008b). But organizations are also regarded as open systems that are influenced and shaped by their surroundings. With an increase in globalized or multinational companies, we see that organizational and leadership practices to a greater extent are being exported between and within companies.

Research and studies involving institutions have seen a revival (DiMaggio & Powell 1991). In some cases this development is a reaction to the support around behaviorism, which rose in the decades around 1990. It examines collective political and economic behavior as a consequence of individual action. But in a world where social, political and economic institutions have grown bigger, more complex and more resourceful, this way of thinking has undergone a lot of criticism because it does not take social context into consideration. The fact that institutions again have become a field of interest is closely linked to the work of functionalists like Parsons and Selznick, who studied the connections between politics, economy, and society (ibid). The effort of uniting the research focus of these traditions with a modern

[7] Also referred to as the neo-institutional perspective (Claussen 2009)

development in theory and methodology is an attempt of giving new answers to old questions.

New institutional theory seeks to give a sociological perspective on how institutions interact and in what way they influence the society. It builds on an understanding of reality as socially constructed (Bøvre 2008b). The new institutional approach sees institutions as individual variables and looks at cognitive and cultural explanations (DiMaggio & Powell 1991).

Normative institutionalism is developed within the new institutional theory (Osmundsen 2005). It explains how norms and values define what is the accepted practice in a company or institution. In companies with offices in more than one country collisions between the different norm-systems can occur, which can create problems for both the company and for the workers. Because the Norwegian work life is strongly regulated, this can be seen as especially challenging for Norwegian companies abroad. The companies' effort to adapt to the expectations and norms in the international market leads to a break with Norwegian work life traditions, especially when it comes to the cooperation between the worker's and employer unions and the regulation of working hours (as we will see later).

2.4.2 The American and Scandinavian new institutional tradition

In his book "Trender og translasjoner. Ideer som former det 21. århundrets organisasjon", Rørvik (2007) writes about both the American and the Scandinavian new institutional tradition. In the American tradition a reorientation took place from the mid 1990's. It challenged the believe that institutionalized elements can be adopted without triggering changes in the company's practices and without being changed after they have been adopted. This has lead to an increased interest in examining what actually happens when institutionalized ideas are being introduced (Røvik 2007).

The Scandinavian new institutional tradition tries to explain how organizations handle external ideas of reform (Røvik 2007). One approach looks into whether the pace of the implementation and type of reform idea is determent when the introduced ideas are to be founded in actual changes in the institution. It is possible

to change institutions, but the changes happen slowly because sudden changes that threaten the institutions' identity often fails (ibid). If the reform ideas are to be accepted they have to be consistent with already existing conditions in the company like e.g. technology and values. The transnational approach is about how organizations make use of popular ideas that are being distributed. It is inspired by Latour's criticism of social scientists' understanding of how ideas are distributed (ibid). Latour argues that the models for understanding the distribution of ideas to a great extent is inspired by physical laws of motion and delay. They do not take into account that the actors are continuously changing the ideas they receive, and that they spread different versions of them. In that way the ideas can be seen as socially constructed.

Taking this into account, there are several reasons why institutional and new institutional theory makes for an interesting backdrop for this thesis. Primarily, I want to give a sociological perspective on how institutions act and how they influence and are influenced by the society, and these two theoretical perspectives try to understand how globalization influence the nations' working life. New institutional theory points out that an increase in global, multinational companies leads to an increased distribution of management practices and organizational practices across countries and within organizations. At the same time, studies within new institutional theory show that companies implement practices from the parent company (Bøvre 2008a). This is in line with what Snøhetta wanted to do at the New York office: They wanted to bring the culture and the practices they had at the Oslo office to the office in New York. As a whole new institutional theory makes for an interesting framework for understanding the influences larger societal forces have on actors such as individuals, organizations and states (Osmundsen 2005).

2.5 Time

> *It obviously has little to do with the earth. It's just something somebody has decided. I like that. Strangely enough, I feel time becomes more tangible that way.*
> *Erlend Loe, Naïve. Super*

What is time? If you ask a hundred different people, I am sure you will get a hundred different answers. It isn't the easiest concept to grasp, yet we talk about it as a matter of course everyday. Concretely, you can say that time is a measuring system used to sequence events. But time can be so much more complex than that. You can

have too little of it, or too much. Sometimes you don't have it at all. You can have a good time or a bad time. Time can go by so fast, whilst sometimes it seems to not move at all. In this chapter I will take a closer look at time and how it can be understood as socially constructed. I will also look at time in the sense of working hours and how social, cultural, and institutionalized structures interact with our concept of time.

As I mentioned above, time can be seen as a measuring system. But time can also be understood as something less scientific, as a concept that is socially constructed (Ellingsæter 2009, Sigurdson 2008). It means that the perceptions and values we experience when it comes to time is a result of human interaction. Social theories about time have generated a move from abstract scientific questions to a question of social practice, and in sociology today it is a wide acceptance that time is socially constructed and that the society's time practices must be seen as a social convention (Ellingsæter 2009)

In society we use time as a tool for coordination, guidance, and regulation (Sigurdson 2008). One example is how time is essential in the formal organization of work and how we experience work. The experience of working hours is influenced by cultural ideas, norms and values, and the meaning of time varies in different cultures (Ellingsæter 2009).

There are different ways of looking at the connection between working hours and time. It can be seen as a question of what came first, the chicken or the egg. First, we can say that the cultural ideas that create the base for how we experience time also create the base for the institutionalized concept of time, i.e. laws and regulations concerning time in a society. The regulations have occurred in the way they have because of the culture in a given society. But you can also turn it around. Institutional constraints, social organization, the values in a society and the welfare state regime are all part of creating the time cultures and structures. The Norwegian normal working day is a result of the social-democratic welfare state regime that values work-life balance, and it has later become a part of the Norwegian time culture.

So what came first? The way I see it, the answer is both and neither. My perception is that institutionalized structures are formed from the cultural ideas. At the same time the cultural ideas are influencing the institutionalized structures. And they keep on influencing each other in a constant discourse, so that with time a certain work hour culture will evolve and develop, and eventually become formalized and institutionalized.

There are several metaphors connected with time and working hours, and some are more familiar than others (Ellingsæter 2009). A word that to an increasing extent is used in job announcements is *flexibility*. Either the employer is looking for flexible employees or the job is flexible, or it is both. Another metaphor that might be more familiar to American workers than to Norwegian is *face time*. It means that you are at the office simply to be present at the work place, what you actually do is of less importance. The idea is to show your face to the boss and the other workers, letting them know you are there and you are dedicated. This metaphor can in some ways be seen together with another, *hard work*. My first association when I hear that is hard, physical work, but it seems like the term more and more is used for working long hours. In another sense, the hard worker or the hard worker culture could also be referred to as *the long hour culture* (Kvande 2007).

2.5.1 Time regimes

The term *time regime* can be said to refer to the regulation of time and to cultural understandings that support the regulations (Ellingsæter 2009). It indicates that there is a connection between how time as a social category comes to show in different societal levels and areas, and it points out that time organization is a cultural category generated by social actors. It can be argued that the industrial capitalist and later post-industrialist development has created specific configurations of time structures and time cultures on different social arenas, for example paid and unpaid work and leisure. The time structures and cultures are specified in the social institutions, social practice, and mental orientations (ibid).

When Ellingsæter (2009) writes about time regimes she associates it with the industrial society a la Charlie Chaplin's Modern times, but the term is just as relevant in the post-industrial society, though maybe in a different form. The development of

the post-industrial time regime will vary both in form and pace in different countries (ibid). The reason is that the industrial time regime has been organized differently across nations, which influence the progress.

Because time regimes are created in a national context, societies will develop different regimes, and the institutional regulations, social practices, and cultural norms will therefore be based on different views on time (Ellingsæter 2009). The various ways of organizing society generates the differences, and one example is how the welfare state policies create different time regimes. Since the welfare state regimes in the United States and Norway differ from each other, the countries' time regimes are significantly different. We see this for example in the regulation of working hours, rights concerning vacation and leave, and different cultural time norms in the working life.

2.5.2 Time cultures

One way to view *time cultures* is that they are a result of the nations' time regime. In a time culture we will find connections between policies concerning time, as well as differences in how time is used (Lauritzen 2000). The structures influence the time culture and give opportunities and limitations that affect the *time norms* and *time policies*. Time culture includes *time policies, time norms* and *time deviation*. Basically, time culture is about what structures, values, norms, and symbols about time that exists and dominates within an organization. It also says something about how we are supposed to relate to time, i.e. workday, overtime, night shift. If a normal working day lasts eight hours, exceeding hours will count as overtime, but if the view on how many hours a normal working day lasts changes, it will also change the view on what counts as overtime.

There has been a change in Western family and work life in the past 10 to 20 years, which has led to a decline in the industrial time regime (Ellingsæter 2009, Kvande 2007). As stated above, the industrial time regime is often associated with a standardized work culture that affects the incentive and career structure. In an industrial society the formal work contract regulates the working hours. Standardized working hours imply that workers have a set number of working hours with a clear division between work and leisure. One example is a strong regulation of overtime. In the "new working life", the standardized working culture

has to a great degree been replaced by new time norms and time cultures (Børve & Kvande 2007). Working late becomes, according to the new norms and cultures, an expression of commitment and interest for your work. Moral ties and time norms that require total commitment replaces the formal work contract that has regulated working hours. This indicates that the new model for working hours regards success as a result of hours spent at work.

Because the time structures and cultures in society are influenced by processes at the work place and vice versa, working hours must be understood in connection with additional central time categories in society, i.e. family time and leisure time (Keynes 1972). Different time logics apply to different working conditions, which lead to different forms of rationality with different rules and principles for action. The demands from the organization affect *time practices*, which again affect the employees' experience of time.

2.5.3 Time norms

While time regimes can be said to influence the time culture, the time culture again can be said to shape the *time norms*. The change in the industrial time regime has led to the rise of a flexible time regime (Ellingsæter 2009, Kvande 2007). The new time regime seems to lead to longer working days and an intensification of work. As I stated above, this leads to a perception that success and hours spent at the office is closely related (Kvande 2007). The workers are evaluated based on how dedicated they are to their work, i.e. how many hours they are willing to work. Long hours, working in the weekends, work travels and so on implies that you are an involved and dedicated worker. What we see is that new time norms are being influenced by a change in the time culture that was created as a result of a change in the time regime. Time norms like these might lead to a stigmatization of those who are not able to live up to them, and to a time culture without limitations when it comes to working hours.

All this is why time is an interesting topic when examining Snøhetta. As I have mentioned earlier, internationalization of Norwegian companies puts pressure on Norwegian time practices. This implies that increased globalization, transnational companies' networks across boarders, international trade's influence on work, and the effects of global competition and flexible management leads to changes in

working conditions and working hours (Børve & Kvande 2007). Sørhaug (2001) talks about a shift from being *on time* to being *online*. With this he means that it was when earlier used to important for the dedicated worker to be on time, it is now important to be online. And technology has enabled workers to be reachable at all times. With smartphones, VPN clients and the sort you can check your e-mail and log on to the company server anywhere anytime. We are becoming a world of OOORs and OAHs, i.e. Out Of Office Repliers and Open All Hours (Brûlé 2011). The demand of always being able to reach is a disciplining factor that becomes more and more evident in companies with a global attachment (Skårn 2006). How will this affect Snøhetta and their wish to implement a normal working day, five weeks of vacation and significant leave arrangements?

2.6 Negotiations and conflicts

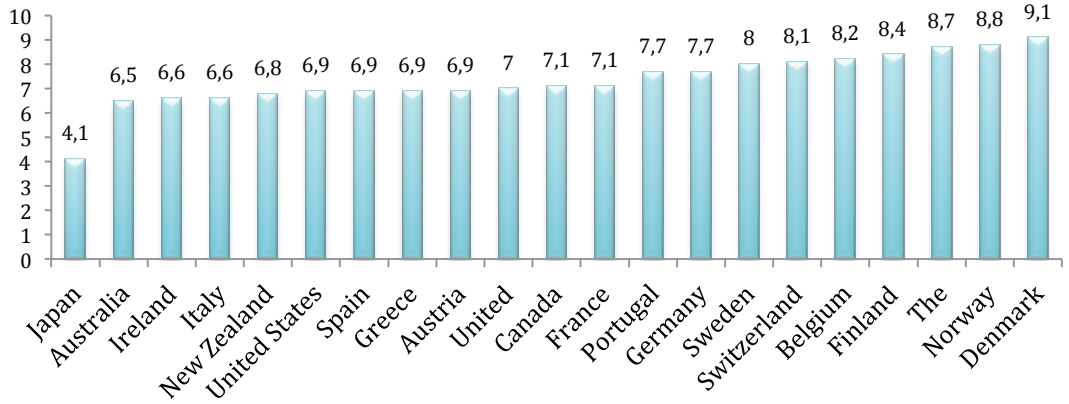
Ellingsæter (2009) says that negotiations will be central in the understanding of how working hours change as a social practice. According to Strauss (1978), negotiations appear in many forms, and it appears in all areas of life. This comes apparent with the many synonyms connected to the word, such as bargaining, compromising, making deals, reaching agreements after disagreements, mediating, et cetera. From this, Strauss states that negotiations are one of the possible means of "getting things accomplished". It is used so that an actor (that could be a person, group, organization, nation etc.) can get done what she wishes to get done. (Strauss 1978, Forsyth 2006, Jacobsen & Thorsvik 2002). For negotiations to take place between parts with different interests, one premise is that the interests to some degree are concurrent and that the parties have some common interests that tie them together in a wish to reach an agreement (Jacobsen & Thorsvik 2002). It should be noted that there is a crucial distinction between agreement and negotiation: one can agree on something without negotiating, though having an agreement allows rom for negotiation (Strauss 1978). That is if the agreement begins to break down. In order to illustrate how processes in organizations must be seen as the outcome of continual negotiations Strauss, uses the term *negotiated order* (Kvande 2007, Strauss 1978). It refers to how meaning is created and maintained in organizations, with a particular focus on human interactions (Strauss 1978).

2.7 Work-life balance

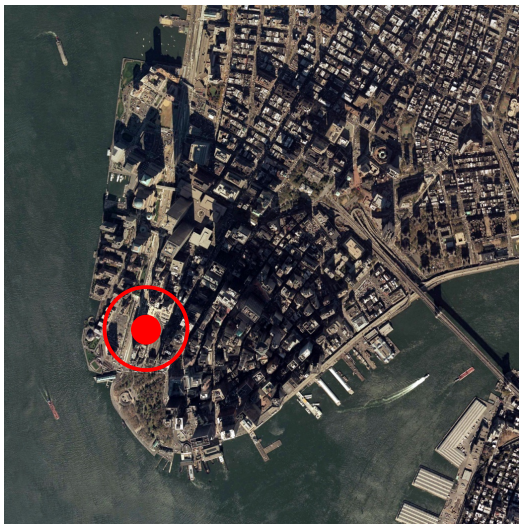
In the previous chapters, I have looked at different ways of talking about time. But why is time important when it comes to working life? In OECDs Better Life Index (OECDa), two of the indicators for estimating a country's work-life balance are "working hours" and "time devoted to leisure and personal care". The argument is that *"evidence suggests that long work hours may impair personal health, jeopardize safety and increase stress"* and that *"the amount and quality of leisure time is important for people's overall well-being, and can bring additional physical and mental health benefits"* (OECDa). The third and final indicator is the "employment rate for women with children". Finding a healthy balance between work and daily living is a challenge, not only for employees but also for employers and the government and society as a whole (see figure 1). For who is responsible for facilitating a sustainable work-life balance? Taking the different welfare state regimes into account, it is not hard to understand that there are different views on who is responsible for this. In the United States, for example, the state does not take part in the negotiations of how time is distributed between work and leisure, and the demands of most American companies is so severe that it influences family life (Lauritzen 2000). This is very different from Norway, where the Working Environment Act to a great extent regulates the employees' working hours (Arbeidsmiljøloven 1977).

It will be interesting to see how and if negotiations concerning time are taking place at Snøhetta as a result of efforts to implement the Norwegian model at the New York office.

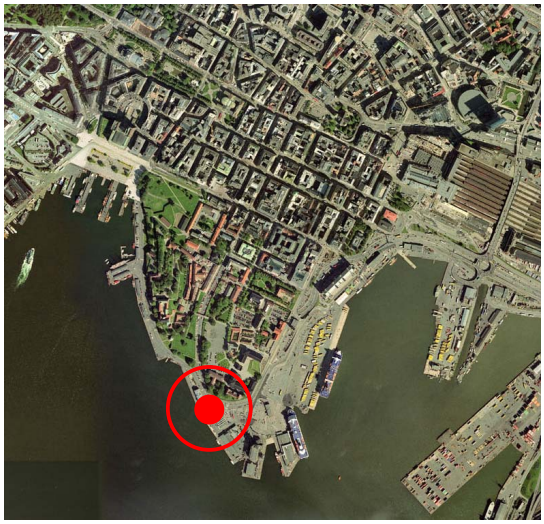
Figure 1 Work life balance



Numbers from OECD



NYC – 25 BROADWAY, BOWLING GREEN



OSLO – SKUR 39, VIPPETANGEN

3 Research model and specification of research questions

There are obviously things I don't understand about my brother.
There's even more I don't understand about time.
Erlend Loe, Naïve. Super

As I mentioned earlier I want to look at what happens to the Norwegian model when it meets the international working life. I will explore the characteristics of the Norwegian model, and see how it is influences by and influences welfare state policies and work organization. From this my overall research question became:

What happens to the Norwegian model when it is being exported to a country with a different welfare state organization?

Drawing on the theoretical points presented in the previous chapter, I will try to shed light on this core questions. Building on this I wish to examine the Snøhetta culture more closely. In order to do so, I will with basis in the theory concentrate my analysis around time practices. Through examining the time practices at the two Snøhetta offices, I will look at what the institutional contexts have to say for how the Norwegian model is practiced.

3.1 Time in the Snøhetta culture

When you read or listen to interviews with Kjetil Trædal Thorsen or Craig Dykers, you hear them talk about "the Snøhetta culture", and you can detect a certain joy and excitement as they mention this. But what is "the Snøhetta culture", or rather what was it meant to be, and what is it today? Both the employees and the management at the Snøhetta offices talk about the Snøhetta culture as something encompassing and unspecified. I have specified the term as an attempt to operationalize: Basically I talk about the *Snøhetta time culture* and the *Snøhetta organization culture*.

When they opened the New York office, Snøhetta wanted the office to offer some of the same social policies and welfare services we see in Norway to their employees in New York. As mentioned earlier some of these policies were five weeks of vacation, flexi-time, normal working hours and significant parental leave (Thorsen 2009a). All of which are unusual in an American working context (I will elaborate on this in chapters 5, 6 and 7).

3.2 Time practices in an international perspective

Because of the highly regulated Norwegian working life, we see a lot of laws and regulations that endow workers rights (Osmundsen 2005). In a world where the boundaries between countries and time zones gradually are fading, a regulation of the workers time seems to be increasingly significant. We are becoming progressively more globalized and time practices will be of great importance for a lot of firms. One example of the importance of time in a globalized world economy is the story of Samoa who changed time zone in order to make communication with it's key neighbors, Australia and New Zealand, who are a day ahead, easier (BBC 2011). From being 21 hours behind Sydney (-11 GMT), Samoa is now 3 hours ahead (+13 GMT).

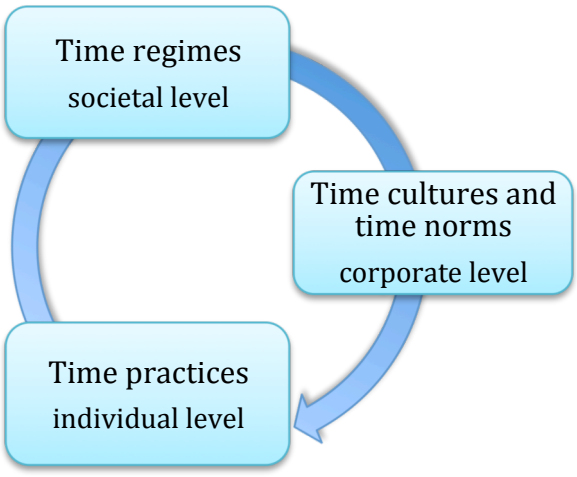
For companies operating in the international arena the market is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. And as an increasing number of economies become dependent on everything from logistics and final assembly to bank transfers from South-Korea, Taiwan and Singapore, the Asian workday will start to affect the working hours in Oslo, London, Madrid and New York. Knowledge companies often has to adapt to the "normal", which is defined by international trade which operate continuously throughout the day in all time zones around the world (Skårn 2006).

Even though the world is becoming more and more globalized, we still see a huge difference in time practices around the world. These practices are shaped by cultural and institutional mechanisms. As I have presented in the theory chapter this is in accordance with studies based on the new institutional approach where multinational companies are seen as socially constructed (Børve 2008 a). They are created within specific national and institutional contexts, and these contexts will shape how they are institutionalized. New institutional theory also says that in companies with offices in more than one country one might experience conflicts between the different norm-systems (Osmundsen 2005). With time practices as the source of investigation, it will be exciting to see whether this is the case with Snøhetta. Maybe especially so because Snøhetta has had such a long Norwegian history and strong Norwegian organization culture, and the goal was to transfer this culture to a different national and institutional context almost without being influenced.

3.3 Time practices in a welfare state perspective

I argued that the Norwegian model is closely linked to the principles and organization of the Norwegian welfare state (Esping-Andersen 1990, Thorshaug 2008, Westenholz 2011). It is likely to believe that the same can be said about the American way of organizing work life and the American welfare state. Both the welfare state regimes and the two models create the basis for the different institutional practices, laws and regulations we see in Norway and the United States, e.g. when it comes to time. They can be said to create the basis for the time regimes in their respective countries. In this master thesis I will use *time regime* (Ellingsæter 2009, Hatch 2006, Skårn 2006) in order to try and describe institutional *time practices* (Kvande 2007) on the societal level. It is interesting to see how the different time regimes influence both the *time culture* (Børve & Kvande 2007, Kvande 2007) and the *time norms* (Børve & Kvande 2007) in Snøhetta. In other words: how time is practiced at Snøhetta. A bit simplified one can say that time regimes are created on a societal level. They influence the time cultures and time norms that exist on a corporate level. And finally we see how these two create an understanding and interpretation on the individual level: How time is practiced. Which in turn can be said to influence the time regimes.

Figure 2 Model of time organization on the societal, the corporate and the individual level



This classification will be central in my further analysis of time practices.

In the beginning of this chapter I stated that I wanted explore in what way time is practiced in the Oslo office and the New York office. Are there any differences in time practices between the two offices? And if so: What are they? I also want to look into how the Snøhetta culture is affected by the practices in the already existing culture in the two countries. In order to do so, I have created three questions based on three of the social policies that are included in the Snøhetta time culture; normal working day, vacation and parental leave:

1. How are the time practices connected to the length of the workday in the Oslo office compared to the New York office? What are the time norms, how are they negotiated and what factors and elements play a role in this? Do the New York office experience conflicts between the tome norms in society and the time norms at the office?
2. Which time practices do we find when it comes to vacation in the New York office? And how do they compare to the Norwegian practice?
3. Are there any differences in time practices when it comes to parental leave between the offices in Oslo and New York?

These questions will be the foundation for three analysis chapters, which will have time practices as an overall theme. I will seek to answer these questions and explain the differences between Norway and the United States when it comes to the regulation of work hours and see how the different norm-systems shape the time practices in Snøhetta New York and Snøhetta Oslo. In chapter 5, I will examine how the time practices connected to the length of the workday are at the Oslo office and how they are at the office in New York. In chapter 6, I will look at what time practices we find when it comes to vacation in Oslo and New York. And chapter 7, I will seek to identify possible differences in time practices when it comes to parental leave between the two offices.

4 Research methods

> *It gives me the sense that many people are in a position similar to mine. They know a helluva lot, but they don't quite know what to do with it. Nor are they certain about the difference between what is wrong and what is right.*
> *Erlend Loe, Naïve. Super*

In this chapter I will describe the choices I have made when gathering and using the research data. First, I will give a presentation of the case company and the informants, and explain how I have gathered the data. I will also argue for why the research design I have chosen is related to and relevant for the research question. Finally, I will discuss how the material has been used, and the researcher's role in the interpretation of the material.

4.1 Using case study as a research method

It is important to note that this thesis is not written on behalf of Snøhetta[8], but is using Snøhetta as a case study. The aim is to use Snøhetta to investigate what happens to the Norwegian model when it is exported to a country with different institutional practices.

One characteristic of case studies is that they aim to study an extensive amount of information about few examples or cases, and that they focus on one or more examples that represent the case(s) (Thagaard 2002). The main point is to achieve extensive information about the example the research is studying. There are different perspectives on what a case study is, but one is that these types of studies examine the phenomena in their natural context, and where the study is based on different sources of data. This perspective is common in the literature on case studies (ibid). An important objective of case studies is that they have a more general aim than the more descriptive studies that also rely on different methods. As a result, case studies can be related to research that is specifically aimed to achieve knowledge that goes beyond the example the study focuses on. In my case I want to look into the time practices at Snøhetta and how they are influenced by the institutional contexts in order to say something about what happens to the Norwegian model when it is being exported.

[8] Commissioned research

This thesis can be said to be a comparable qualitative case study: I am studying the same company but two offices situated in two different institutional contexts. In this case I can see how the national conext influences the time practices in the two companies.

A case and a case study cannot be of value in and of themselves according to the conventional view (Flyvbjerg 2004). They have to be linked to hypotheses, following the hypothetico-deductive model of explanation. Flyvbjerg (2004) disagrees with this view, and identifies five misunderstandings about case studies as a method of research, all of which indicate that it is theory, reliability, and validity that are at issue: The very status of the case study as a scientific method. He argues that

> there does not and probably cannot exist, predictive theory in social science. Social science has not succeeded in producing general, context-independent theory and has thus in the final instance nothing else to offer than concrete, context-dependent knowledge. And the case study is especially well suited to produce this knowledge (Flyvbjerg 2004: 392).

Sometimes research is not all about proving something, but about learning something (Flyvbjerg 2004). Bowen (2006) argues that qualitative research does not start with hypotheses or preconceived notions, but that it in accordance with its inductive nature, involves the researcher's attempts to discover, understand, and interpret what is happening in the research context. In my opinion this makes case studies in general, and comparative qualitative case studies in particular, an excellent research method: By going deeper into for example a company, the researcher can pick up on and detect certain tendencies, phenomena and differences that might have been discovered to a lesser degree by use of other methods.

4.2 Snøhetta AS

The case company, Snøhetta, is an architecture firm with its first, and for a very long time only, office located in Oslo, Norway. In 1987, the landscape architects Johan Østengen, Berit Hartveit, Inge Dahlman and Alf Haukeland moved into an office in Storgata in Oslo, together with the architects Kjetil Trædal Thorsen and Øyvind Mo (Fløgstad 2004). The idea was that they were going to share the office and combine landscape architecture and architecture in the design process. The office was

situated on a loft over the Oslo pub, Dovrehallen[9], and it therefore became obvious that they had to be called Snøhetta[10].

In 1989, Kjetil Trædal Thorsen, Øyvind Mo og Christoph Kapeller from Snøhetta participated in an international architecture competition for what was to be the new library in Alexandria (Fløgstad 2004, Snøhetta b). They invited several architects to take part in the work as assistants; two of them were Craig Dykers from the United States and Per Morten Josefson from Norway. This was in many ways the beginning of the Snøhetta adventure. Christoph Kapeller, Craig Dykers and his wife Elaine Molinar moved to Oslo and joined the office, and Snøhetta was established as an Inc. Today there are two partners left, and they are also the only two partners in Snøhetta at the time: Kjetil Trædal Thorsen and Craig Dykers.

As I wrote in the introduction, Snøhetta opened an office in New York when they won the National September 11 Memorial and Museum. So today Snøhetta has two offices on two different continents with English as the office language in both offices. Both offices have jobs in different parts of the world, but the New York office mainly deals with assignments in the Americas and Canada. The Oslo office has jobs in different parts of Europe, as well as some projects in the Arabic world and Africa (Snøhetta c).

What can be said to be special about Snøhetta and the organization of the two offices is that even though they belong to the same company, they are quite independent from each other in many ways. They have their own projects, their own work contracts, they employ new staff independently of each other and so on.

Snøhetta is a fairly small company with roughly 100 employees, whereas 72 of them work at the Oslo office and 26 at the office in New York. It is an even spread when it comes to gender, with almost 45 percent of the staff being women.

4.3 Different sources of data

As a part of this case study, I have used three different sources of data: *observations*, *interviews* and *documents*. Using more than two methods is called triangulation, and

[9] The Hall of the Mountain King, from Henrik Ibsen's Peer Gynt
[10] Snøhetta is the highest mountain of the mountain range of Dovrefjell

aims to confirm the data or results (Ryen 2002). It has been argued that observation could validate the interview data, though this has been a point of critique (ibid). Another way triangulation is used is to deepen the understanding of different aspects of the same topic, i.e. make the research more complete (ibid). The advantage of using data triangulation is that one can make the most of the different methods in order to shed light on a phenomena from different angles (Skårn 2006). Observation is well-suited to study the relationship between people because it enables the researcher to focus on how individuals relate to one another socially (Skårn 2006, Thagaard 2002). The observations were done in connection with the interviews. They were carried out at the Snøhetta offices in Oslo and New York, and this enabled me to make some casual and informal observations. The document used in this thesis is the *"Employee Guidelines for Snøhetta New York 2011".* The Employee Guidelines contain regulations of normal working hours, vacations and holidays, lunch breaks, parental leave, pay negotiations, and the rights and duties of the employee representative, as well as general working provisions and employer and employee obligations.

In addition to this, I have used Snøhetta's own web page as a source of information about the company, as well as articles about Snøhetta, interviews with Kjetil Trædal Thorsen and Craig Dykers, lectures held by Kjetil Trædal Thorsen, and the book about Snøhetta written by Kjartan Fløgstad (2004). The web page and interviews give an insight into how Snøhetta wants to be perceived and what they want to communicate to the outside world. All this has been useful both before and after the interviews so as to get a better understanding of the company.

4.4 Getting the informants

In this thesis I have interviewed 19 employees: Seven from the office in Oslo and twelve from the New York office. They were a mix of architects and landscape architects, at least nine different nationalities are represented, and they have a broad variety of years of experience both at Snøhetta and as architects in general. Six of the informants have children. In order to obtain a broad variation of informants, I sent a list to Snøhetta with different criteria and preferences I had regarding the informants. They were about age, gender, years of experience, whether they had children or not, and preferably someone who had been to the New

York office (for the employees at the Oslo office). In addition, I have interviewed Craig Dykers, Elaine Molinar, and Jenny Osuldsen, who have worked as key informants and helped with a lot of the Snøhetta history and the ideas behind the company.

To be able to use Snøhetta as a case I contacted the management director at Snøhetta Oslo, first by e-mail and after a while I placed a call. Because it was a busy period for Snøhetta when I called, the management director was a bit hesitant to let me come and interview the employees, she was afraid it would take up too much of their time, and they had had a lot of people doing research and interviewing the employees already. But when explaining the extent of the interviews and the number of informants I wanted, she became positive and set me in contact with Jenny Osuldsen, who became my contact person at the Oslo office and helped with organizing and setting up the interviews there. Though it took some time to establish the necessary contact with Snøhetta and gain entry, once I was accepted to conduct the interviews I experienced nothing but helpfulness and overwhelming positivity. This shows that even though Snøhetta is a busy company, where the employees have limited extra time on their hands, they go "all in" and are committed to be open and inclusive. This also came to show in incredibly quick e-mail responses, and how we were met and included in the community lunch at the Oslo office.

After the interviews in Oslo, it became clear that we had to do interviews at the New York Office as well. And when the financing was settled in May 2011, I contacted Jenny Osuldsen who set me in contact with Elaine Molinar at the New York office. Elaine sent me a list of the employees at the New York office to choose from, with information about years of experience and years working for Snøhetta, type of architect, age, nationality, and whether they had children or not. This gave me the opportunity to choose a broad variety of informants. Though most of the informants are between 30 and 39 years old. This is because I to a large degree wanted to interview employees who were either parents or in the age group where thinking about having children was relevant. This also has an effect on the years of experience, the younger the employees the fewer years of experience and vice versa.

I have used my informants differently. I have some key informants who have given me an overall picture of the thoughts and ideas Snøhetta had for the company, especially when it comes to time. To have a closer look at Norwegian understanding of time practices I have used the architects at the Oslo office. They also contribute to some degree to the U.S. understanding of time culture because they all have been employed at the New York office for a longer or shorter period of time, and they can give the outside perspective of general American working life as well as the inside perspective of the Snøhetta culture. And finally, the employees at the New York office, who will give both the general perspective of American working life as well as the inside perspective of Snøhetta New York and the foreigner's view on Norwegian working life. Because Snøhetta has so many international employees, some of my informants will also contribute with experiences from other countries and cultures. All this will help provide a broad perspective on time practices and time norms. The architects' backgrounds are especially interesting in this project because their culture and experience has a lot to do with how they see the Norwegian context and how they understand the Snøhetta culture and the time cultures which I will focus on, such as the length of the workday, vacation, and leave.

Even though the informants represent a broad variety of people, many of their stories and reflections around Snøhetta are relatively similar. To me this implies two things: One that Snøhetta as a company to a large degree seeks to obtain a common understanding of its values and history among the employees, and two that the employees are used to people doing research on them and the company. It is therefore reasonable to believe that the employees talk about the topics the researchers have presented, and as a result they have developed similar ways to reflect upon certain questions.

Listing of the informants' characteristics

Gender	Age	Years at Snøhetta	Office	Have been employed in	Education from	Worked in other firm
Female	40-49	15-20	Oslo	New York	Norway	Yes
Female	30-39	10-15	Oslo	New York	Norway	Yes
Male	30-39	1-5	Oslo	New York (first)	Western Europe	Yes
Male	30-39	10-15	Oslo	New York	Southern Europe and Norway	Yes
Male	30-39	1-5	Oslo	New York	New York	
Male	30-39	10-15	Oslo	New York	Norway	No
Male	30-39	1-5	Oslo	New York (first)	United States	Yes
Female	50-59	3-5	New York		United States	Yes
Female	40-49	1-3	New York		Central Europe	Yes
Female	30-39	3-5	New York		United States	Yes
Female	40-49	3-5	New York		United States	Yes
Female	20-29	1-3	New York		United States	No
Male	30-39	3-5	New York		Scandinavia	Yes
Male	30-39	1-3	New York		United States	Yes
Male	30-39	3-5	New York		United States	Yes
Male	30-39	3-5	New York		United States	Yes
Male	40-49	3-5	New York		United States	Yes

4.5 The data material

4.5.1 Creating an interview guide and conducting the interviews

When I was to write the interview guide, I got inspiration from other researchers who have rdone qualitative interviews within the topics of about globalization and working life for inspiration (e.g. Bøvre 2008b, Skårn 2006). With this and the Norwegian model as a point of reference, I created a broad interview guide where I used central characteristics from the Norwegian model as a basis for the different topics and questions. The main topics ended up being about work in general, working hours, work culture, parental leave, family life, and globalization. The reason for the broad perspective was that I still was unsure about what exactly I wanted to examine deeper.

After conducting and transcribing the interviews, I read through them and saw that there was one topic that stood out and repeated itself: Work-life balance. And it became clear that this was what I wanted to take a closer look at. This can be seen as a type of open encoding of data, which is one of the traits of the *grounded theory* tradition (Skårn 2006, Strauss & Corbin 1990). In this tradition, the discovery or definition of a topic is supposed to happen on the basis of different encodings, and the researcher should be able to provide meaning to data in order to develop theories that are based on the data. From work-life balance, time became a natural topic, and I decided to look at the Norwegian model through examining the time culture and time practices at the two Snøhetta offices. Examining how the institutional context influence the time culture and practices is also interesting since earlier research says that Norwegian time practices are threatened by the internationalization of Norwegian companies and that globalization leads to changes in working conditions and working hours (Børve & Kvande 2007, Bøvre 2008b).

The interviews have been conducted by three different people: My supervisor and professor at NTNU Elin Kvande, associate professor at The Nord-Trøndelag University College, Hege Eggen Børve, and myself. In Oslo Elin Kvande and I divided the two days of interviewing between us, and in New York Elin Kvande and Hege Eggen Børve conducted the interviews, while I took notes and observed. The interviews were semi-structured in that we had certain topics we wanted to talk about, but the questions where not quite as fixed and they varied to some degree

between the interviews depending on the answers we got from the informants. The semi-structured interview to some degree resembles a normal conversation, but with a larger element of questions and key words that the interviewer intends to ask the informant (Ryen 2002).

4.5.2 Analyzing the material

The grounded theory approach calls for a continual interplay between data collection and analysis to produce a theory during the research process (Bowen 2006). According to Bowen (ibid), data collection, analysis, and theory stands in a reciprocal relationship with one another, and this is also true for this thesis. When doing the analysis, I kept going back to the theory and the data to get inspiration. In this way I changed between working with the analysis, theory and data, and they were constantly building on each other. This is called an inductive analysis, which is the principle technique used in the grounded theory method. It means that the *"patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis"* (Bowen 2006: 2).

The theory created the foundation for how I encoded the material. Before landing on the topics and themes for the three research chapters, there have been several stages where different choices have been made. The main stage was when I decided that I wanted to examine what happens to the Norwegian model when it is being exported. From this the interview guide was created. The second stage was when encoding the interviews. Work-life balance stood out as a clear topic, and I decided to focus on this. Then the question became: How do I examine what happens with the Norwegian model in light of work-life balance? It was when looking through the interview data from the New York office it became clear that time would be central in the analysis. The time norms at the New York office appeared as quite different from the time norms at the office in Oslo, and therefore time culture became a relevant term to use. Reading through the parts of the interviews that dealt with time norms, it became clear that I had to look at time practices and how they influence the work-life balance, and how they are being influenced by existing time regimes, time cultures, and time norms. In order to examine this I decided to look at how time is practiced in specific situations. Thus I ended up creating three research

question concerning time practices related to the length of the workday, vacation, and parental leave. Using the data material to contribute to the theory and research question in this way can be seen in connection with *sensitizing concepts* (Bowen 2006). Sensitizing concepts have been referred to as "those background ideas that inform the overall research problem" (Bowen 2006: 3). It can be used by the researcher in examining substantive codes with a view to developing thematic categories from the data.

4.5.3 Anonymity and presentation

Anonymity

A basic principle for ethical research is confidentiality (Ryen 2004, Thagaard 2002). This principle implies that the researcher makes sure to anonymize the informants when presenting the results of the research. In some cases creating anonymity can be difficult as researcher is divided between maintaining the informants anonymity and presenting the results in a way that meets the requirements for reliability.

My first challenge when it came to anonymisation was whether or not I was going to use the company's name. The inspiration for the topic of this thesis came from Snøhetta and the fact that they wanted to implement the Norwegian model in the New York office, and create a Norwegian Snøhetta culture in New York. If I were to anonymize the company I feel that I would have lost some of the important aspects of Snøhetta that contributes to this thesis. Both Snøhetta's history and their thoughts and ideas around duplicating the offices make for an interesting background when examining what happens to the Norwegian model when it is being exported. The way this problem was solved was by talking to key persons at Snøhetta asking if they wanted the company to be anonymous. Using the company's name was not a problem for them, and I got permission to use the name "Snøhetta".

The fact that I did not keep the company anonymous made it more difficult to anonymize the informants: the employees. Snøhetta is a fairly small company with roughly 100 employees: 72 at the Oslo office and 26 at the New York office, and this makes it easier to recognize the informants based on different criteria. In order to deal with this I have first of all given all the informants fictitious names. Second, I have tried to give as little and diffuse information about the informants as possible,

but still as much as needed to give a sufficient understanding of their position and perspective. There is a possibility of other employees at Snøhetta and people close to the company recognizing the informants, but my experience when doing the interviews was that there was openness among the employees around the fact that some were being interviewed as part of a Master's project. In some quotes Jenny Osuldsen and Craig Dykers have been cited with their full names, this is because the contents of the quote makes it difficult or impossible to anonymize the informant. But the quotations do not contain any sensitive information; they are simply about the ideas and the process connected to the establishing of the New York office.

In chapter 7, the informants are employees with children, this group is particular small so in order to make it more difficult to identify them I have anonymized them a second time, i.e. given them different names from what they had in chapters 5 and 6. It will still be possible for other employees to find out who they are, but they cannot be connected with quotes in the previous chapters. Though the anonymisation can be said not to be optimal, I regard it as sufficient. The reason is that the topics and quotations are not controversial or containing sensitive information. They are simply used to gain a perspective on the employees' time practices and their experience of and thoughts around time practices and time norms in the Snøhetta offices in order to see if time is perceived differently in different institutional contexts.

Presentation

As I first started writing this thesis I wrote in Norwegian, but after being in New York and doing interviews there, I decided to change the language to English. This was because I wanted the material to be available to all the informants and not just the Norwegian speaking ones. As a result, I have translated the quotes from the interviews that were done in Norwegian. I have been very careful to maintain the original meaning and intention in the translated quotes, so that the informants experience that what they have said has been cited correctly. In some cases where there has been no doubt of error in the quote, I have made corrections, still with a strong focus on maintaining the original meaning of the quote.

4.5.4 The researcher

Objectivity in research is difficult, which makes it important for the researcher to clarify his or her position (Skårn 2006, Thagaard 2002). One aspect of the researcher's position can be tied to the researcher's knowledge about the environment being studied. For me this has been two-fold. I have good knowledge about and am familiar with Norwegian working life since I am Norwegian myself (cf. Thagaard 2002). This can lead me to overlooking important aspects of Norwegian working life and ignore certain information that appear in the interviews because I take it for granted. But it can also be easier for the researcher to understand the environment being studied when it is familiar. When it comes to American working life, this area is more unknown and unfamiliar to me. This might create a bias. When conducting and analyzing the interviews from New York, my Norwegian background can lead me to misinterpret the informants. When the researcher is unfamiliar with the environment being studied, the challenge is to understand new situations (ibid). In addition, work-life balance has been a point of interest for a long time, and I am skeptical towards the development of the long hour culture in the "new working life" (for more about the new working life see for example Torp 2005). This requires me as a researcher to be reflective throughout the research process and be aware of the potential dangers when it comes to analyzing the material. My personal view will always be in the back of my mind while analyzing, thus the ethical responsibility of preserving my informants perceptions and the consideration of the theoretical background will have to work together in the further analysis.

5 Working hours: All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy

This morning I found a book in my brother's bookcase. It's in English and deals with time and the universe and everything.
I flipped through some pages, but started sweating and had to put it down. It was too much for me.
Erlend Loe, Naïve. Super

5.1 Introduction: different institutional contexts

In the following chapter I will draw a picture of how the different institutionalized practices in Norway and the United States influence the cultural practices at the Snøhetta office in Oslo and the office in New York. I will focus on *time norms*, *time cultures* and *time practices* and how they develop. I want to examine how time norms and time practices are *negotiated* at Snøhetta and how they are played out. First I will analyze the practices and norms at the Oslo office, before I go to New York to examine how the norms and practices are there. Conclusively I will compare the two offices and see if there are any differences in the negotiation of time in Oslo and New York.

In order to do so, I have used my informants differently. Roughly the informants can be divided into two groups: those who have worked in the New York and the Oslo office and those who have worked only in New York. Snøhetta is also a company with a lot of international workers, and they will in addition give a broader international perspective. This can be seen as a third group of informants.

In his book Essays in Persuasion from 1931, John Maynard Keynes writes about the expectations he had for the economy for the next hundred years, and what the economic possibilities for his grandchildren would be (Keynes 1972). It is the western industrialized world Keynes describes in this book. According to Keynes predictions the need for labor will be greatly reduced, because technological and scientific innovations will replace human labor to a great extent, and in that way contribute to a shortening of the workweek. Keynes projected that a normal workweek would be reduced to only 15 hours. It didn't go as he predicted. We still work a lot, though there are great variations from one country to another. The Norwegian workweek is 37,5 hours, which is a big contrast to the States, where the workweek lasts much longer, and many often work two jobs (Bøvre 2008b, Ray & Schmitt 2007).

The length of the Norwegian workweek must be seen as a result of historical negotiations between The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO[11]) and The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO[12]), and the workers fight for the ten-hour day (later for the eight-hour day) (Nicolaisen 2001). Norwegian working hours are regulated through the Working Environment Act (Arbeidsmiljøloven 1977) and trough different collective agreements. Even though the term "normal working day" is never used in the law, one can argue that the concept of a normal working day is maintained through the regulation of leisure between working periods (Arbeidsmiljøloven: § 51, Nicolaisen 2001) and the length of one work session (§ 46)[13]. Section 46 in the Working Environment Act states that a workday should not exceed nine hours a day and 40 hours a week, whilst § 51 says that if a workday lasts longer than five and a half hours, the worker should have at least a half an hour break. As well as being regulated through the Working Environment Act, the normal working day of seven and a half hour has become the norm among Norwegian workers.

But so what? What happens if a workday exceeds nine hours, or a workweek is longer than the statutory 40 hours? The answer, again, is to be found in the Working Environment Act (§ 10-6), and the answer is called *compensation*. In § 10-6, subsection 11 and 12, compensation for overtime is specified as either an increase in pay with at least 40 percent or with time off. Both the normal working day and overtime compensation are essential ingredients in the regulation of the Norwegian workday.

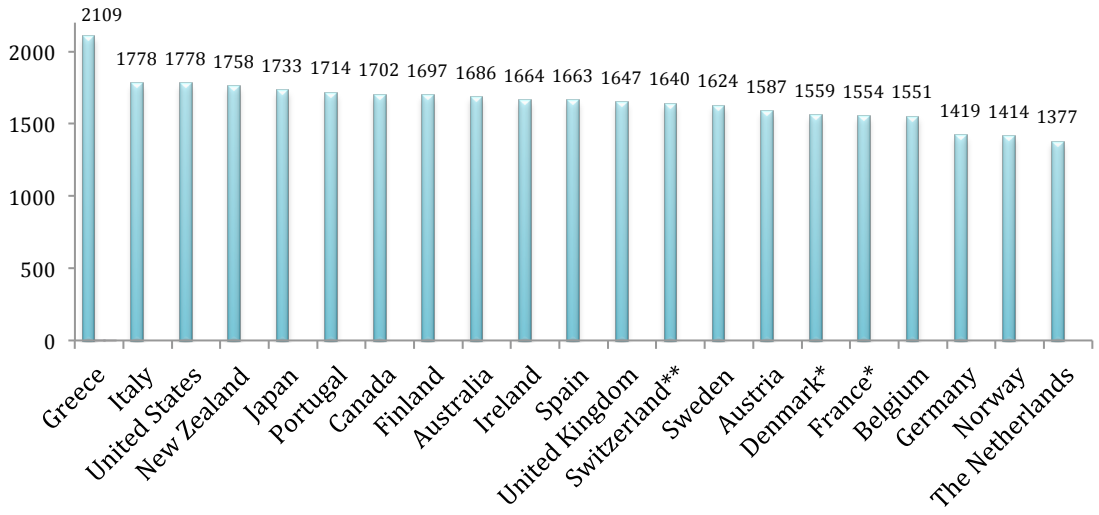
When it comes to labor laws in the United States, it is a bit more complicated, or at least it seems so looking at it with Norwegian eyes. The United States labor law is a collection of state and federal laws. The federal laws override most state and local laws. They establish minimum wages and overtime rights for most workers in the private and public sectors, while state and local laws may provide more expansive rights. On the official pages for New York State Department of Labor Standards (Department of Labor) you can find what seems like several different specialized

[11] The Norwegian Worker's Association
[12] The Norwegian Employee's Association
[13] Also see §10-4

laws concerning labor in one way or another, e.g. the labor law, the Taylor law (Public Employees Fair Employment Act) and Employers' Liability. For the untrained (non-local?) it is a myriad of confusing documents making it hard to get an overview. But none of the New York state laws concerning labor and work seems to say anything about working hours, overtime compensation or vacation. There can be several reasons for this, for example that this is covered in a federal law. This indicates that the focus on workers rights is limited.

If we compare the United States with other OECD countries we can see a clear pattern when it comes to working hours, paid leave and vacation (I will return to the two latter in chapters 6 and 7). According to numbers from OECD (OECDb) the average U.S. worker works approximately 1750 hours a year, compared to the Norwegian average of 1414 hours a year per worker (see figure 3)

Figure 3 Annual average hours actually worked per worker, 2010



Numbers from OECD

* Numbers from 2009

** Numbers from 2008

From this there seems to be different institutional contexts in the two countries when it comes to regulating the workday. Snøhetta wanted to introduce a Norwegian work culture to a country with traditions and thoughts about the organization of working life that appears to differ a lot from the Norwegian. This might lead Snøhetta New York to move away from American traditions and towards

more Norwegian traditions, and as a result of that end up somewhere in the middle. In that case Snøhetta New York can end up being neither American nor Norwegian, and the employees will potentially have to negotiate with their own culture, other American architecture firms and the Norwegian heritage. This can be seen in connection with new institutional theory where it is stated that companies with offices in different countries can experience an collision between the different norm-systems (Osmundsen 2005). This being the case, will it lead to tensions between the New York and the Oslo office? If so, what kind of potential tensions might we end up seeing?

In the process of setting up the office in New York, there were discussions on what the new office should be; should it be a copy, a satellite or completely independent from the Oslo office? The idea was to duplicate everything; same employment contract, five weeks of vacation, parental leave, a 40 hour week (Thorsen 2009a). The thought was that it would make it easier to move between the processes from one office to the other. The word *"clone"* started being used.

> *From the management in Oslo it was very clear that we were to try to translate the same values we have built, and try… And then this whole "clone" word was used in some situations, and that was… Craig didn't care for it. He thought it was very difficult because he felt that this office was a new satellite and that we sort of had to start from scratch. So we already had a little conflict when it came to how we were going to do things.*
> *Hannah*

Hannah, a Norwegian who came from the Oslo office to New York to help with the start-up of the office there talks about some of the challenges they had. Even though Craig has lived over half his life in Europe and several of those years in Norway, he is still carrying with him an American rucksack containing a cultural knowledge and understanding of the American work society. This gives him an understanding of how much the institutional contexts have to say, and he sees how important it is to take this into consideration. Maybe this was the reason why he did not want to directly clone the Norwegian office.

5.2 Early bird catches the worm: Time cultures in the Oslo office

The time is almost half past eight in the morning, and the Oslo office is already buzzing with life, hardly any of the workstations are empty. You hear the clicking of

a keyboard, the coffee machine making one of today's first cappuccinos, a high, piercing laugh comes from somewhere inside the open landscape. One of the first things that hit me is; how come Norwegians are perceived as a silent, introvert people? This office is everything but. Energetic is the only world to describe the wall of atmosphere that hits you. And it sort of overtakes you. Why would you ever go home from an office like this, filled with life, laughter and fun? Wait, did I just get *seduced*?

In occupations where the boundaries between work and leisure is blurry, and the work is so seductive that it at times seems impossible to walk away from, it can be challenging to maintain the ideal of the normal working day. Long hours has almost become a credo in the architecture business; it's a part of the whole image of the architect as an artist, free spirited and creative. Hannah is talking about the *"wish to create something"*, they are idealists that want *"to move the world with architecture"*. A rather modest vision, in other words.

> *I think it's a mixture of wanting to… create something. At the same time it's… Personally it has a lot to do with idealism. We're so bold that we believe that some of the things we do actually… it's permanent. We work with the environment in that way that this is a place where human beings are supposed to live and children are born, and it influence a whole generation. We have a social responsibility. And with creativity and doing some "risky business", we can do more than what the plans say we should do.*
> *Hannah*

According to a qualitative examination on anticipatory socialization amongst British architects there is some evidence that those who enter the architectural profession have been socialized into believing that creativity is a key characteristic of their chosen career (Dainty, Ison, Powell & Sang 2009). This also suggests that some architects have chosen this profession because they *are* creative and *want* to exercise their creative skills, and they think of themselves as artists. Hannah describes architecture as a social responsibility. No less. With that as an ideological base, leaving work at a reasonable hour is no doubt challenging. Hannah says that they can always do more, and that makes it difficult to set limits to the work. She continues:

> *We will always try to reach a little higher. And when you want to reach a little higher you will off course step outside the boundaries of the seven and a half hours*

you have at your disposal. Several are thinking about the projects in the evening and creating ideas, drawing them, doing research and some read and…
Hannah

She says that the wish for always reaching a little higher comes in conflict with the normal working day. This is one of the difficulties with *limitless work* such as architecture, and also with working in a knowledge company (Kvande 2007). Even though you physically leave work, it's difficult to mentally leave *work* because your brain and your thoughts are always with you. And with the Internet, VPN clients and all these technological tools that enables you to connect to the job server and everything you need, it is even more difficult. The whole nature of knowledge work challenges the principles of a normal working day.

To be able to obtain a normal working day in knowledge companies like this, it is important with structures that help enhance the ideal of the normal working day.

Yes, I am… I have been through a lot and worked way too much. So I've experienced long periods with… and taken a lot of responsibility and worked extremely much. And so… It was actually before I went to New York, because then it was of course the fact that I was both project leader and worked on five projects at the same time, and in addition being one of those stand-up general managers (sic.). It wasn't vise. No it wasn't. Here we can work… I think we've been better at not being architect martyrs, because there are a lot of them. (…) There are many that… you work and work. And you can draw yourself to death, there's no one who thanks you for it and those details doesn't get any better on that building. So this thing about reaching level is very important to me.
Hannah

Hannah feels that the architects at Snøhetta Oslo are getting better at not being what she calls *architect martyrs*. She explains it as those who just work and work and never stop. The whole idea of the architect martyr seems to be norms that have been handed down from one architect generation to another. This could be said to create some normative principles on how architects regard themselves, which again comes to show in time practices. The way Hannah sees it it's quite common among architects, it is all part of the limitless work. Therefore "reaching level", or as I have chosen to call it, *optimizing,* becomes important to her. By this she means that it is important to know when to stop. Architecture is never done and you can always change a detail somewhere, but at some point you need to put down the pencil and say: "This is good enough". You have reached a satisfactory level. Your work is

optimized. This can be seen as part of defining Snøhetta's thoughts about how to spend your time. They are creating a time norm saying that at some point your work is good enough and you need to stop working on it.

> *It's [architect martyr] when you just work and work and work. And then… if you take a finished building, let's say the Opera, amazing architecture. And people who hate opera, is clinging to it. You can draw on something until you become crazy. You've tested it, is it eleven or nine millimeters, or is ten more suitable? How about a little angle, or is it gonna be straight? You can keep on until you die. What you need to say is: this is where it ends. And when you come to the building site they didn't do it like that anyway. But you need to be able to think: "It turned out better".*
> *Hannah*

In her book Doing Gender in Flexible Organizations Kvande (2007) says that the limitless work situation really comes into play when a project has to be concluded, and it's in these situations you really see all the elements of the *greedy organization*. Snøhetta is a company that works on a lot of competitions, and with that comes intense periods of hard and long work when the projects are to be completed. Even so, Snøhetta seems to avoid appearing as a greedy organization in these periods. Being very conscious about work-life balance, the company has managed to take some measures making this manageable even in the most intensive periods. We asked Hannah whether or not there were someone or something that helped set boundaries when it came to overtime, or if it was the individual's responsibility. In occupations where there are no restrictions or regulations to prevent the workers from keeping on working for ever, it is often the employees responsibility to say "stop" and create limits for his or her own work (ibid). Hannah explains that in Snøhetta the whole company tries to help with creating boundaries, and it is not supposed to be up to the individual to do this. They have systems that are supposed to pick up on these things, but when a project is to be concluded there is always a lot of work.

> *It's not supposed to be [the individuals responsibility]. It's meant to be systems, but we know that when it comes to competitions, when it's getting close to submitting, it's just to… "Ok, we're three on this team. I've made a budget and this is how much time we'll use". (…) I see that you need to work the whole of the last weekend, are you prepared for that? Ok! We reserve that weekend".*
> *Hannah*

To help with the challenges of overtime and long hours in the finishing stage of a competition, the project manager and the architects working on the competition discuss the time use with each other. You can talk of a sort of *planned overtime* as an attempt to create structure in an unstructured situation. The architects are prepared to put in some extra hours, but they know to a great extent when these extra hours will occur. What we see is how they collectively negotiate and in that way create predictability for themselves. The planned overtime deviates from the norm, and it becomes clear that this is a special situation. These structures help the individual to create boundaries. But as Hannah goes on, you get an understanding of the difficulty in obtaining these boundaries:

> *We have a lot of discussions. The economy has been really bad… when it comes to the budget… it says that you can't work longer than this. And then people stop writing down their hours, right? But still keep on working.*
> *Hannah*

The economy and the budget puts a limit to how much they can work overtime, and instead of keeping to those hours, the employees stop writing down their actual working hours, making it hard for the management and the project leaders to keep track of how much they actually work. When this happens it is difficult for the company to help set boundaries, and it will to a large extent become the individuals responsibility. The employees' actions when not writing down their hours remove the responsibility of setting the boundaries from the management over to the employees themselves.

A regulation of working hours helps the employees and gives an important signal of the importance of a good work-life balance. The Norwegian model has undertaken critique for not being effective and competitive enough. Snøhetta's experience with regulating working hours stands in contrast to this. By creating boundaries for working hours and giving the employees the possibility of time off, they have experienced more relaxed and effective workers. Regulations like this contribute to predictability for the workers.

> *Yeah, I know that too… It's one of the most productive cultures. Because… and I think that is because if you, if you come early to work, you know you don't have to do face time, which is an American expression for sitting at your desk doing nothing… you just work when you're there and then you go home and you have you're family, and you work when you're at work.*
> *Edward*

Taking Edward's word for it, it might seem like this can be seen as connected with time culture. The normal Norwegian workday is usually thought of as lasting from eight thirty in the morning to four in the afternoon. You are expected to come in early, and you know how many hours you have to your disposal. It might seem like this kind of regulation helps the workers make more effective use of their time, and in that way enables them to leave at "the right time". Talking to the employees at the Oslo office I experience that they take the normal working day seriously, and that it is a good tool for the employees when they are to set boundaries for their own work. It has become a part of the office's time norms, and makes the working day more predictable.

For Norwegian workers this type of regulation is in large perceived as an initiative to secure a healthy balance between work and leisure. But for those who see this from the outside, the normal working day might be interpreted as Norwegian workers being "lazy" because they are leaving work early. Several of the Americans we talked to in New York felt that Norwegians were leaving too early, also some of the foreign architects now working in the Oslo office, had had the perception that the Norwegian employees at the Snøhetta New York office left early. Edward puts it this way:

> *Yeah. My perception was they left early. I think at the time they were actually doing overtime, because we of course had sometimes a lot of work to do. But still… there is a recognized better balance between how much one should work and how much one should have a home life.*
> *Edward*

Edward is employed at the Oslo office, but he was first employed at the office in New York. He has his education from England, and has also worked for some firms there before coming to the States. This gives Edward a lot of experience with working in countries with a liberal welfare state regime, but less when it comes to working in a social-democratic welfare state. His first experience with Norwegian working life was in an American context, at the New York office, and he felt that the Norwegians left the office early. In retrospect he sees that they probably were doing overtime. It seems like Edward interpreted the situation from an American perspective with American time practices as a foundation for his assumptions. After working at the Norwegian office for several years, he has been subjected to the Norwegian time

regime, through the Work Environment Act, and the time norms and time practices at the Oslo office. It appears like this has created a different understanding for the length of the workday and what ripple effects the normal working day bring. Edward explains further about his experience:

> *My experience is that it is a better recognition of what it takes to live a full and fulfilling life. Which is not just about the office. And that sometimes in our work we need to work more, that's true.*
> *Edward*

Edward talks about a better recognition of what it takes to live a full and fulfilling life. What he experienced from the Norwegians in New York was exactly that. It was time practices and norms formed by the Norwegian normal working day and the idea of a healthy work-life balance. And it seems to be so grounded in Norwegians that they, if the conditions are right, are able to execute these time norms and time practices outside the Norwegian border as well.

A final interesting aspect with Snøhetta Oslo is how the lunch break is organized. The lunch is prepared by a cook and is put out at 12 o'clock and tidied away again half an hour later. Because the food is only available for a limited period of time all the employees eat their lunch together at two long tables situated in the open office landscape just a few meters away from the workstations. This no doubt contributes to a social environment, and maybe also a creative one. But this can also be seen as a sort of time-discipline. By keeping the architects in the office during the lunch break, Snøhetta Oslo will get the most out of their employees, the likelihood of them "talking work" also during the lunch break is big.

5.3 "I'm shutting everything down, we're going home!": Time cultures in the NY office

Working hours was an important topic when Snøhetta started the New York office. They wanted their workers to be rested and up to the mark, so they decided to bring with them the Norwegian normal working day to New York. They wanted to encourage their employees to leave work at "a sensible hour", which in Norwegian ears seems like a fairly easy and straightforward project. But it turned out to be easier said than done. The reasons are largely cultural and institutional contingent, or at least believed to be. I will return to this point later. So how were the time

norms and time practices executed at the New York office? And were there any conflicts between time norms in the society and time norms in the company?

When we arrive at the NY office at 9 am, the office is still pretty empty. Only a few of the architects are waking around with a cup of coffee about ready to start the workday. The mood is quiet and relaxed. When I asked the New York office architects when they usually got in in the morning they answered that they arrived at the office around 9-9.30 am.

> *Ok, ok. Uhm… Well, ok. I can… Maybe talk about today. Well, I'm getting up, alright, at whatever… 7.45. Then I go to the office, I ride the subway or the bicycle, takes me half an hour. Then I'm at the office between nine, nine thirty. (…)And then I leave, usually now, between seven, seven thirty. Again because I… We could leave earlier but I still feel a bit funny leaving too early.*
> *Chloé*

Cholé says she leaves the office around seven, seven thirty. It is interesting to hear Cholé talk about the length of her workday. She is not an American citizen and has only worked in the States for a short period of time, but in a similar work environment for several years prior to this. Despite the comparatively short experience with American working culture, she thinks that it is difficult to leave work *"too early".* When asked what too early is, she answers:

> *Well, I think you know… Theoret… Well, I guess now we have summer hours, so whatever it is from nine, nine thirty, minus 45 minutes lunch hours, plus nine hours I guess that would be… six, six thirty, maybe seven. I don't know. So…*
> *Cholé*

What Cholé says is that she could go home earlier if she wanted to, but it feels *funny.* This indicates that Snøhetta New York opens up for leaving work earlier than what seems to be the norm in New York working life as a whole, but that the employees find it unfamiliar and difficult. What we see is a conflict between time norms in the society and the time norms in the company, and that the society's time norms appears in the company's time norms as well. We can say that the ideal of the *long hour worker* comes in conflict with the Norwegian normal working day. And in that way the employees come in conflict with what the company tries to establish; a healthy work-life balance. Because of the established time norms in the American culture, the long hour culture is no doubt present at the New York office. But what

might be different at the Snøhetta office compared to other architecture offices in New York is that Snøhetta promotes going home early.

> *We promote early going home. That being said, many of the staff is not from Norway so they have a different… In their head, it's hard for them to go home early, and even when you tell them, I walk in here sometimes and I say "I'm shutting everything down, we're going home". And people are still like "No, I wanna stay". So that is a different kind of thing, so my general comment is that we should promote it. If people want to stay and they feel good about staying, they should, and we shouldn't tell them no. But we do put a lot of pressure on people to go home early.*
> *Craig*

Craig says they promote going home early. This indicates an attempt to bring out elements of the Norwegian working day at the New York office. By emphasizing that they want their employees to go home early Snøhetta New York sends a signal to their employees that there is more to life than staying late at the office. But Craig also says that if the employees want to stay late they cannot force them not to, it is too inherent in the culture. In doing so, it moves the responsibility for obtaining a healthy work-life balance from the company to the individual. This is problematic for several reasons. Employees who feel passionate about their work, who describes architecture as their hobby as well as their occupation, and who says that architecture is never done, will probably find it difficult to draw the line for their own work. When they in addition to this is socialized into a culture were working late hours is seen as a criteria for success, setting limits to their own workday is not without difficulties. But Cholé says that after starting at Snøhetta she has seen a big change in her workday, and that she is working shorter hours now, compared to what she did before.

> *The working hours have been greatly reduced. Much, much less. Reduced to, yeah, to just… (…) You're educated, you have working experience, you're grown up, your profession, it is assumed that you know exactly how much you have to put in, that you get your work done. Like getting treated as an adult, is… Yeah, it's something I've been used to, and now I have that again. Which is, which is very nice. (…) And also… I do actually find it… it's good to have a cut off time at the end of the day, even if it's five, six, seven or eight. But then you tend to really try to reach that personal deadline of yours. And then it's open ended, and I've been working in offices where it's been open ended, and you can stay 'til ten eleven, it's just… You're getting defocused, it's actually… I find it is not as efficient. And again we're all professionals, you know when you have to put in the few extra hours.*
> *Cholé*

Cholé talks about *cut off time*, that you have a defined time of the day when the workday is supposed to end, and how this helps with structuring the workday. It becomes a personal goal to reach that time, and to be done with that days work. It makes the limitless work less limitless, and it challenges the existing time practices. This is what we see with the regulated working day in Norway; by creating a standard for how many hours a workday should be you make it easier for the employees to obtain a good balance between work and leisure. But as I have pointed out earlier, this is especially difficult in knowledge companies like Snøhetta where the border between work and leisure is faded. One might say that a regulation of working hours is particularly important in these kinds of companies, and therefore the promotion of going home early as Craig talks about becomes significant. Despite the fact that Snøhetta New York does promote early going home, Nigel has seen a change in working hours as the office has increased in size.

> *So there's definitely a kind of change in the way the office works when it increased in size a bit. (…) We didn't just get an increase of 16 people, we actually got an increase of like 20 people and it happened super rapidly. So I think some of the things that we used to talk about, early on, like when I was first here, didn't necessarily get translated into the new group as much as it probably should have. So I think slowly the hours have kind of increased because there's not necessarily that knowledge of the Norwegian or the... (…) I mean there's a few people that have been around longer than I have that stay longer than I do, but for the most part people that are leaving earlier are the ones that have been here longest. That's part of why I don't think it… Because they were never formally introduced to these ideas. Or they felt uncomfortable following through on it, because I think everybody knows about it.*
> *Nigel*

Nigel is an American working at the New York office, his statement shows is that the working hours at Snøhetta New York seems to be changing as the office changes, and that there is a constant negotiation going on when it comes to working hours. He believes that the new workers haven't been introduces to the ideas and the thoughts that have influenced and shaped the Snøhetta time culture, and because of that the length of the workday has been pushed forward. What this indicates is that for Snøhetta to be able to obtain the 40-hour week as a part of their time culture it is important to tell the "Snøhetta story" so that employees can identify with it.

Kvande (2007) writes that the development of limitless time cultures within the flexible time regime implies that the employee's work in total-commitment organizations. They require that most of the employee's time is spent in the organization. This is the opposite of the time culture Snøhetta wants to have at their offices, both in Oslo and in New York. Snøhetta sees that the value of having activities outside the office, and in doing so the employees will become more motivated and more creative. Snøhetta believes that time off work enhances creativity. Nigel talks about how they have out-of-the-office-trips to encourage the workers. Before he started working in the New York office he had heard that Snøhetta was different from other architecture companies when it came to working hours and the sort.

> *I mean even in like American design schools, and I've only gone to school in America so I don't know the difference. But you know… basically everyone devotes so much time and effort into what they are doing, that they just become burned out, exhausted, with work. (…) So I had heard about Snøhetta… they had a totally different approach to it and… There are encouragements, you know, like in the office. They've actually set it up that they kind of forced you to leave at certain times, and they forced you to actually do things that aren't office related. (…) And like, when I was first here there were a lot more study trips, 'cause we were a bit smaller. We actually all went to Oslo, in the first four months that I was here. (…) You actually have to experience things instead of just sitting behind your computer. Nigel*

A reputation of Snøhetta as a work-life friendly company was one of the things that drew Nigel to the office. The fact that Snøhetta appears as a company that promotes a better work-life balance than other New York offices no doubt gives them an interesting edge, and maybe even a competitive one. Nigel also talks about the life before you come to work in an architecture office, the life in American design schools. The educational institutions can be said to be the first meeting with the architecture life and culture for the young people who are attending, and the expectations they are met with and the experience they gain is likely to form their view of their own occupation. So when Nigel talks about all the time and effort they put into their work at the school to the point where they become burned out and exhausted, it creates a picture of that architect martyr that Hannah was talking about.

George's experience with late hours from working at the New York office is that you are at the office to please the boss, and to show him, with mere presence, that you're a good worker. But coming from the "outside", i.e. the Oslo office and a Norwegian culture, he does not really understand this practice, it does not seem to be either more productive nor enhance creativity.

> *I'm thinking that… I couldn't see that it resulted in more…. Neither more creativity or more productivity. It's face time at the office, it's sort of a classical American thing. You might say that in periods the production went up, but… No, I don't really think so.*
> *George*

George uses the time metaphor *face time* to explain the practice as he sees it. With face time it's all about being seen. What you actually do is secondary. In Edward's eyes face time is *"an American expression for sitting at your desk doing nothing"*. Several of the employees at the Oslo office that have experienced American working life have commented that much of the time the New York office workers have spent at the office, they have perceived as face time. So even though they seemingly spend more time at the office and work more, it is not necessarily so. The long working days could be avoided with more effective use of time. As George explains it the long hours are a part of the whole American culture. American working life is more hierarchical than the Norwegian. You have the big boss on top that makes most of the decisions, and his (it is usually a he) opinion of you is very often crucial for your career.

> *It's a whole different work ethic. It's very important to stay for a long time at the office for the American employees. That you don't leave… you don't leave before the boss goes home, and… But in Norway we're more used to that we… that it's allowed to go home because you're picking up kids at the kindergarten or, yeah, that the workday finishes between four and six. The normal in New York ended up being that you always were at the office between nine and seven, or something like that. Six, seven, at least.*
> *George*

George talks about an American work ethic, and that according to this working late has become the norm in American architecture firms. The structures and the expectations influence the workers time practices and they end up staying late at the office as an indication of their dedication to the work. When he was working for a different architecture firm in the U.S. Daniel also experienced face time:

> *In The States you feel like you have to work long hours, so you work long hours. A lot of face time. It's like, people look at you. (…)Because it's like you know if I say "Well, I'm gonna take a free day on Friday" "Free day, huh?". It's just like… That's the feeling you get. You can't do those… So that's a big difference. Small thing, but it's your time, very valuable. And again, people are quick to sort of forget, because you're working and all that sort of stuff, but you have that option here. You more have that option. To control your time.*
> *Daniel*

Listening to Daniel the norms become more evident. His description of American architecture firms gives you the feeling of the employees being watching by the others working there, and therefore face time becomes an important aspect of ones workday. Daniel wants to be in control over his own time, and feels like he is getting that at Snøhetta, as opposed to how he felt at the other firm. Because of the lack of free time and possibility to manage his own time, he ended up lying to his employer in order to take a long weekend abroad.

> *I never forget one time I decided I wanted to go to Amsterdam, to Holland, for a little long weekend, and I called in sick from the airport instead of saying "I'm going to take a day off". I called in sick. Heh... You know what I mean? That was the sort of way to get around it…*
> *Daniel*

It almost seems like when not having a regulated workday the dedicated, long hour office worker is pressured into finding ways around the system so that a better work-life balance can be achieved.

According to Lauritzen's (2007) dissertation, working long hours and doing a lot of overtime shows that the workers are dedicated to their job, and this is often seen as a sign of success. We have seen a move from standardized working hours to new time norms and time cultures. According to these new norms and cultures long hours becomes an expression for commitment and interest for your work. The formal work contract seems to be replaced by moral ties and time norms. This means that the new model for working hours closely links success with amount of hours worked. It seems to be especially accurate when it comes to American workers; it fits with their already deregulated working life and their hierarchical structure. And this is what Snøhetta wants to challenge. Nigel tells us about his working hours before coming to Snøhetta, and how he felt that it was expected from him to work long hours:

Well, no one ever says that, but typically… I mean before I came here, yes, I was… Like a 60 hour week was a really common week. And the thing is that you… it's never stated… But it's kind of just expected that you'd do that, and even if you don't have work to do, you just kind of [stay late].
Nigel

Several of the architects I talked to at the New York office used the fact that they were American and had grown up in the American culture as an explanation for why it was hard for them to leave the office early. They are culturally socialized into staying late, and it almost seems like you need to draw this out of them.

And I used to be one of the worst in terms of staying late and, you know I… one of the last few in the office almost every single day. Leave late and… Just there was a lot to do and it's… I would say architecture is definitely my passion so as you can, I'm sure all understand that architecture is never done. You know you can work on it until… So it was something that I did not because I had to, or because I was forced to, but just something that I just felt very passionate about.
Julia

Julia is born and educated in the United States, she is passionate about her work and used worked long hours because she wanted to not because she had to. She says that there was a lot to do, but is quick to add that architecture is her passion. She also talks about how architecture is never done but that you can work and work on something, again she is quick to say that she worked long hours because she wanted to. These are typical characteristics of the knowledge work: The work is regarded as exiting and challenging, and it becomes seductive.

5.4 Comparing the two: Telling the Snøhetta story

If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea[14]*.*

In this chapter I explored how the time practices connected to the length of the workday are at the New York office compared to the Oslo office. I wanted to examine how these time norms were negotiated and what the important factors and elements was in this negotiation. I also asked the question of whether the New York office experienced conflicts between the time norms in society and the time norms at the office.

[14] Un-sourced quote attributed to Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

To try to implement a normal working day to a society where there is a strong long hour culture is no doubt an ambitious project. When you also try to implement it in an occupation that, regardless of culture, is prone to work long hours, it sounds like a hopeless task all together. In general knowledge work is moving towards the limitless, but despite this we have seen that Snøhetta strive to obtain the normal working day in both offices.

In Norway this goal might seem more reachable. There is a strong institutional norm telling what the normal working day is. And there are laws and regulations that enhance the whole concept of a seven and a half hour day. This does not mean that the normal working day is not being challenged at the Oslo office. It is, but in a different way than in the office in New York.

In Oslo Hannah talked about the architect as the idealist who wants to create, and who always wants to reach a little higher. The architect as an artist perspective, as I see it, comes in to conflict with the normal working day. If you always can do that something extra, it will be difficult to leave at what is perceived as a sensible hour. But as the norms of the society have become a part of the norms of the office, the ideal of the normal working day seems to be withheld. The time practices related to the normal working day is both accepted and respected by the employees at Snøhetta Oslo. And talking to them you almost feel like they try to excuse themselves when they say that they in periods work long hours. It seems like Snøhetta Oslo is in sync with the rest of the society, and the employees and management do not have to negotiate with each other to be able to obtain the normal working day. The conflict and the negotiations rather seem to be between the time norms of the office and the society in general, and architecture as an occupation and Snøhetta as a knowledge company. With increased globalization in general and more and more projects outside the Norwegian border, holding on to the normal working day will become even more challenging for Snøhetta. And if they want this to continue to be a part of the Snøhetta time culture it will, in my opinion, be mainly the management's responsibility to facilitate and make structures that will enable the employees to maintain a normal working day. But it is also the individual employees' responsibility; if they stop writing down their hours, as we have been told, it will be

difficult for the managers to know the actual amount of hours worked. Loyalty to the company does in this way become a challenge to the normal working day as well.

The experience of the Oslo office stands in contrast to the experience of the New York office. It seems almost to be the other way around; they have to excuse why they are not working longer hours. The challenge for the normal working day there seems to be the norms of the society. They are trained to regard working late as a synonym to being a dedicated worker, and therefore they find it difficult to leave the office "early". The long hour worker time regime comes in conflict with the Norwegian normal working day.

The architects at Snøhetta New York look towards Norway and compare themselves to the Oslo office. Because the external conditions in Norway is significantly different than in the States, it will be impossible to give the American workers the same social benefits as we see in the Oslo office, and even more so as the company grows. It will simply be too expensive. So when the New York employees compare themselves to the Oslo employees, this might create some conflicts: The time norms in the American working life come in conflict with the time norms in the Norwegian working life. But the architects at the New York office do not only compare themselves to the Oslo office, they also compare themselves to other New York firms and their employees. When turning the focus that way, the employees feel like they come out on top. They experience that they have better social benefits than all other New York architecture firms it is natural for them to compare themselves to, and a better work-life balance. All of the informants said that they felt that they had reduced their working hours and that it was a better appreciation of the balance between private life and work at Snøhetta than in other architecture companies.

This implies that how they experience their own situation is relative to who they compare themselves with. The challenge for Snøhetta New York is that they are stuck between the American culture and the Norwegian heritage; they sort of get an extra sleeping partner with the Norwegian traditions. The Snøhetta culture is mainly based on Norwegian working traditions and has its roots in a history written in Norway, traditions that for foreign workers will be unknown and unfamiliar. In my opinion it will be very important to keep this history alive and to tell and retell the

Snøhetta story to the workers employed at Snøhetta New York. For how else are they going to identify with the values and the ideas that the company is built on?

To be able to obtain the healthy work-life balance Snøhetta wants to have, both offices take various measures. The management in both offices promote going home early and try to a great extent to encourage the workers to leave the office early. In Oslo they also make a plan for the overtime work, especially when it comes to completing a competition, so that it will become more predictable and easier to fit in with the rest of your life. In addition to this there are two concepts that I want to point out. In Oslo Hannah talked about *optimizing*. As I see it this is an important initiative when it comes to creating boundaries. It helps the employees to understand that at some point work just needs to be work, and they need to go home. In New York Craig talks about *focusing time*. What he means by that is that the employees need to use their time more effectively. To me these two concepts are much about the same thing; making systems for creating boundaries and implementing an understanding for a common time culture. Optimizing and focusing your time, if followed, becomes a part of the time norms in the company, and they create an understanding of what is expected of the employees. But who sets the standard for when your work is optimal? And when do you know if you have focused your time sufficiently? As I see it this has to be a negotiation between the employee and the company, eventually it might become a part of the company time culture, the Snøhetta story, but kept on being challenged and negotiated for the better for the employees. And in the alleged words of Antoine de Saint-Exupér it will: Teach the employees to yearn for a healthy work-life balance.

6 Vacation: All play and no work makes Jack a mere toy

> *I fainted because what I was doing was so much fun that I didn't have time to take a break.*
> *Erlend Loe, Naïve. Super*

6.1 Introduction: Government standards

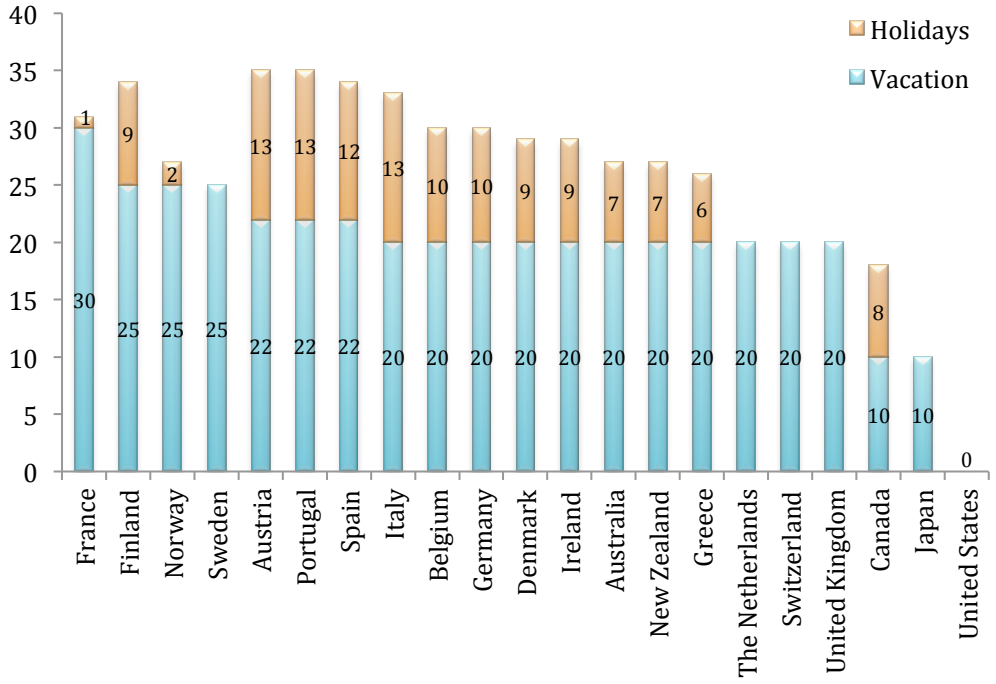
For Norwegians "hytta"[15] is something special. For many it represents a sanctuary, where you go to get away from the stress and noise of the city. Atle Nielsen (2010) det er writes in the book Hytteboken that the cottage is a place where people retire to and that you have more time when you are at the cottage. More time to read and to relax. The Norwegian vacation is relatively young, just 125 years ago vacation was not common for Norwegian workers. This was in a time when the industrial workers often worked ten and twelve hours a day, and as a result the fight for the eight-hour day started. After Parliament passed the eight-hour day in 1919 the right to vacation became a high priority for the labor unions. The process was slow, at the end of the inter war years normal workers had managed to negotiate twelve days of vacation. It was not until 1947 that Norway, as the last of the Nordic countries, got its own vacation law (2010). All workers then had a statutory right to three weeks of vacation. In 1964 this expanded to four weeks, and it has just grown after that with the introduction of the fifth week of vacation in 2000, and longer vacation for workers aged 60 and up (Ferieloven 1988, Nielsen 2010). It is important to note that we are talking about *paid* vacation. That is: As a part of the Norwegian tax system, the workers are being deducted a certain percentage of their salary (a minimum of 10,2 percent for those under 60, and 12,5 percent for those over), which will be disbursed, generally in June (Arbeidstilsynet) Today Norwegian workers have the right to 25 days of paid annual leave (Ferieloven 1988, Ray & Schmitt 2007).

One of the things Snøhetta wanted to bring from Oslo to New York was the five-week vacation (Thorsen 2009a) One possible difficulty with this is the different institutional practices in Norway and the United States. As we have seen, Norwegian time regimes concerning vacation have emerged after many years of demands from the workers union and negotiations between them and the employer organizations. This has not been the case in the United States, and the time regimes when it comes to vacation look quite different (Ray & Schmitt 2007).

[15] The cottage, or vacation home

As noted in the previous chapter, the annual working hours for a U.S. worker are significantly longer than in European countries (Bøvre 2008a, Ray & Schmitt 2007). One reason for that is that workers in the United States are less likely to receive paid annual leave and paid public holidays. Those U.S. workers that do receive paid time off get far less than workers in comparable economies (Ray & Schmitt 2007). As the only advanced economy in the world, the United States does not guarantee its workers paid leave. Adding paid public holidays to the equation the gap between the United States and the rest of the world grows even bigger. As with vacation, the United States does not offer paid public holidays at all (see figure 4). There are no government standards when it comes to guaranteeing paid time off. This can be said to be one of the reasons why one in four workers has no paid leave and no public holidays, and why the average worker in the private sector receives only approximately nine days of paid leave and about six paid public holidays per year (ibid). If we take paid annual leave and paid public holidays granted by employers into account the gap is slightly reduced, but the lack of statutory provision results in considerable inequality of leave and paid public holiday provision in the United States.

Figure 4 Paid annual leave and paid public holidays, OECD countries, in working days



Numbers from OECD

At Snøhetta New York I am told that the standard vacation time in the States is two weeks, in addition they have time off in connection with certain public holidays (such as 4th of July, New Years etc.). Implementing a five-week vacation in this kind of institutional setting will not only be an economical challenge, it will also be a logistical challenge and an institutional challenge. In addition it represents a break with the existing norms, which might add to the challenge (Osmundsen 2005).

In this chapter I will focus on the New York office and see what time practices we find concerning vacation at the office, and how they compare to the Norwegian time practice. I will also examine the potential tensions that evolve when the Norwegian model is introduced.

6.2 "I hate all this free time, quality of life": Practicing vacation

As we have seen there is a great difference when it comes to vacation in Norway and the United States. For Edward, coming to Scandinavia was a conscious decision of *"opting out of the rat race"*, and he was not interested in following the same rat race as, in his words, his *"culture led to believe is the right way; running around for no money"*. To him the long hours and lack of vacation he experienced when working in the United States is not worth it. He says that the whole experience of coming to Snøhetta Oslo has changed him fundamentally. On the question if he could have reacted differently Edward just laughs: *"An adverse reaction? I hate all this free time, quality of life"*. Vacation to Edward has become a *quality of life*, and this is what Snøhetta wanted to bring to the New York office.

When talking to the Snøhetta employees in Oslo I was told that at the very beginning the New York office employees were given five weeks of vacation. Jenny, one of the Norwegian architects who came to New York to help with the start up of the office, said that she insisted on five weeks of vacation even though she was told it would be too expensive. Her argument was that they were Snøhetta and they had to offer these kinds of social benefits to their employees regardless of where the office was situated.

> *I was like "Five weeks of vacation". Nooo… It's not possible, says Craig, we can't afford it, it doesn't exist in the United States… "I don't care. You know what, we're Snøhetta, we have to give the social benefits…*
> *Jenny*

Jenny's focus on labeling Snøhetta as a company that offers certain social benefits comes in conflict with the actual economy of the company, as well as the American vacation norm in general and the Snøhetta time culture in specific. For her the most important thing was to hold on to the Snøhetta culture so that they would stand out from other U.S. architecture firms by offering that little extra. And for Jenny that seems to mean an implementation of a Norwegian vacation standard almost regardless of the cost. This can be seen as a way of branding Snøhetta New York, and creating a competitive edge for the office.

Ethel, who like Jenny came from the Oslo office over to New York to help with the start up, also felt that giving a reasonable amount of vacation was important. When first settling in New York, Snøhetta was still a pretty unknown architecture firm, despite the fact that they had won the memorial ground competition, and Ethel therefore saw vacation as a way to attract architects to the office:

> *In another way you can say that what we also got from that discussion was that Snøhetta was really an unknown office. Despite the fact that we had won an in itself interesting competition, few people knew who we were and how we worked and all that. If you want to be an attractive place to work in New York, the fact that you can offer this kind of family friendly flexi-time solution, vacation scheme, like what we have, helps you attract good workforce.*
> *Ethel*

Listening to the architects talk about implementing five weeks of vacation at the New York office it becomes clear that this has been a point of discussion as well as negotiation at the office, where culture and attractiveness stands on one side and the company's economy and the American society stands on the other. As I said in the beginning of this chapter there are no government standards when it comes to paid leave in the United States (Ray & Schmitt 2007). This is in many ways in line with the liberal welfare state regime; vacation practices are left to the marked, and it is the employees' responsibility to negotiate vacation individually with their employers.

When it comes to the office discussions concerning vacation two points seem to stand out: One is the question of *how many weeks* of vacation Snøhetta New York should offer to it's employees, the other seems to be a question about *vacation versus salary*.

6.2.1 Time or money?

Compared to the American standard of two weeks (depending on the employer), Snøhetta offer their employees significantly more vacation. But that does not mean that the implementation was an easy task. One of the problems that occurred was probably due to cultural differences. In this case I am talking about culture as in American working life culture, and the rules and regulations that are connected to the institutional context. These rules and regulations are what American workers are accustomed to relate to, and they create the basis for their expectations. For the employees at Snøhetta New York we can say that what they expected from a firm located in the United States was different from what was the reality in Snøhetta, and that resulted in misunderstandings. For example, Hannah had a discussion with one of the American employees at Snøhetta New York who did not realize that they were talking about paid vacation:

> *(…)[she] said "But I don't want [a five-week vacation]". I asked her why and said that it was more important that they had a proper vacation, because they would have much more to give when they came back. But then, of course, she didn't understand that it was paid. Because that isn't common either."*
> *Hannah*

For a Norwegian worker it is almost given that vacation means *paid vacation.* This is not quite as obvious for an American worker, as we have seen above, and the difference in understanding created some communication problems when trying to implement the five-week vacation. But even when this was specified, there were some "bumps in the road".

When it became clear that they talked about *paid* vacation, the first point of discussion ended up concerning vacation versus salary. As I have said earlier, individuality is strongly engraved in the U.S. working culture and this might come to show in the question of salary versus vacation. Fraser (Syltevik & Wærness 2004) has looked into the terms dependence and independence and discovered that independence in today's American society is linked to earning your own money and being a paid employee. Dependence then is seen as being reliant on the welfare state or the family to support you, while the ideal of self-sufficiency as a universal norm builds on an ideal that paid work creates independence. It seems like the strong individuality and how the welfare state is organized is closely linked. Because there

are no government standards and therefore no guarantee for paid leave for American workers, they have to depend to a great extent on their own abilities to negotiate (Ray & Schmitt 2007). Noel is educated in the United States and worked at the New York office before coming to Oslo, so he is familiar with American working life and culture: He explains that negotiations are central in the American working culture:

> *And like five weeks vacation was never heard of in New York. But the year before I left I was involved in some negotiations and I would say half of the office would be willing to forego say two weeks of vacation for an increased salary. And most people in the office I think would have been happy to throw the salary ladder out in favor of having individually negotiated salaries. So that's how… That's what people are accustomed to in the U.S. and people are generally more, I think, comfortable with that, also because they see it as a way that they can get more; If I can negotiate on my salary then I can get more money.*
> *Noel*

Noel says that for some employees the amount of vacation became a question of the amount of salary. As Noel says it American workers believe negotiations to be a way to get the things you want from your employer, either if it is increasing your salary, more vacation, or longer parental leave. This individual negotiation, he says, is something most Americans are accustomed to and comfortable with. And at Snøhetta New York this resulted in discussions concerning vacation versus salary. Paid vacation opened up the possibility for negotiating, or bargaining; setting vacation up against salary.

6.2.2 Defending social policies: vacation

Despite the fact that Ethel is educated in Norway and works at the Oslo office and in that way is more familiar with the Norwegian working culture than the American, she understands the conflict between keeping the Snøhetta culture and adapting to the American society. To her a compromise might be to reduce the amount of vacation days some, offer either vacation or flextime[16], or reducing the salaries.

> *You can't both offer full flexi-time and all vacations and have it work with the rest of the American society. And you can't do it all American with a really steep [salary] ladder and at the same time maintain the Snøhetta culture. So the dream was to offer something significantly different, then you will attract the best*

[16] It should be noted that flextime has not been implemented at the New York office.

> *workers anyway. (…) And maybe people are willing to reduce their salaries in order to get the freedom of flexi-time and vacation.*
> *Ethel*

Getting people to see the value of vacation, and with that accept a reduced salary, might be the way to maintain the Snøhetta culture, the way Ethel sees it. She thinks vacation is an important aspect of the Snøhetta time culture, and to her it represents *freedom.* What we see here is how the institutional constraints in the U.S. come in conflict with the social policies at Snøhetta. The social policies at Snøhetta is created in a Norwegian environment and based on Norwegian institutional constraints, and not American. Nigel is an American who works at the New York office, and vacation is also something he is concerned with. When he is asked to label the core values of Snøhetta he starts talking about vacation and free time:

> *(…) it sounds weird when I'm talking about it cause I don't want it to sound like it's all about vacation time or free time or anything like that. But I mean those are kind of the initial things that come in, so it's like, you know… When I first started it was five weeks of vacation, which is totally abnormal. Like two weeks is normal in the U.S. and not even that.*
> *Nigel*

In the employee guidelines for Snøhetta New York for 2011 it says that employees are entitled to 20 days of vacation based on a five-day working week, which translates into four weeks of vacation, and not five as first intended. In addition they have roughly ten days of public holidays. Several of the employees we talked to pointed to the financial crisis that emerged in 2008 and to Snøhetta's economy as a reason for the change from five to four weeks of vacation. Sophie is an American and has worked for Snøhetta New York for about two years. She talks about some of the processes that were going on when she started:

> *When I started here it was kind of at this point… How Snøhetta was going to change to a more New York office, because we were having financial problems. I mean the salaries were imported from Norway, they are obscenely high, and so… The vacation time was a really big issue because, again that was also imported from Norway, and that doesn't really work for a New York schedule I guess, because everywhere else they get two to three weeks standard. And we were having five weeks. They wanted to strip it down to three weeks. I think a lot of the employees that were there that had had the five weeks were really upset, because they felt that they had believed in a particular, I guess, philosophy or system, you know, what Snøhetta stood for. Not that they were vacation days, but that that gave employees time to relax and recuperate. So… That was kind of a huge issue.*
> *Sophie*

Sophie explains that vacation time was a really big issue, and that the employees saw it as a part of the company's *philosophy*. Not the vacation time itself but what it represented to the employees. The proposal of reducing the vacation time from five to three weeks can be seen as a treat against the social policies Snøhetta New York have been giving their employees. At the same time this also offers a treat against the Snøhetta *"brand"* of being a family friendly office with focus on work-life balance. As we saw above, for Ethel vacation represented *freedom* and Sophie talks about vacation as an opportunity to relax and recuperate. Vacation, it seems, represents something more than the actual weeks in question, it also gives a signal to the employees; that time and effort they put in to the work is valued and appreciated. But why is it a goal to have employees that have these experiences of vacation as freedom, and being valued and appreciated? What good can these feelings bring to the company?

Hernes (2008) talks about *social capital*[17] in the Norwegian micro model, in short the term can be said to be the degree of trust, reciprocity in social relations, common norms and actors who are closely linked. According to Hernes the Norwegian model helps create trust that in turn enhances social capital, which again creates productivity. So when Sophie and Ethel talks about feeling valued and appreciated Snøhetta can be said to be building social capital, and thus enhancing productivity. Sophie continues to explain about the proposal of reducing the amount of vacation:

> *A year and a half or two years ago, it seemed much more tumultuous. Like the managing director at that time wanted to cut back on everything and make it really standard and New York. But that was… I guess the plan or the direction that she was going to take it in, and I feel like the structure was already placed within the office about the employees being able to talk as a group and also then go back to management with particular issues, that we were able to get back that extra week. We negotiated to four weeks, you know. And I think the employees understand that there are financial problems and we're not going to ask for five weeks, you know.*
> *Sophie*

The proposal from the management was to reduce the vacation time with as much as two weeks, but Sophie says that because of the employees' negotiations it became four weeks instead of three. According to Strauss (1978) negotiations can occur if

[17] The term *social capital* is probably most known through the sociologists Pierre Bourdeu and James S. Coleman. And also through Robert Putnams definition: *"social capital refers to the collective value of all social networks and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other"* (Hernes 2008).

an agreement begins to break down. At Snøhetta New York the agreement had been five weeks. Five weeks that had been brought over to New York from Norway. But because of financial problems the management found it difficult to sustain it, and they wanted a new agreement. But the employees saw it differently, and because of structures already placed within the office (with an employee representative and employees being able to give their opinion) they were able to "rescue" one week. Even though they did not agree with the management's proposal, they had an understanding of the company's financial situation and settled for four weeks instead of keeping pushing for five. And as James at the New York office puts it: "*But it is good. Four is still… I have to say, any less than that would really feel like nothing".*

The discussion of five versus three (initially four) weeks seems to be the opposite of the more general discussion of vacation versus salary, and the two discussions also appear to represent a change at the New York office. The employees have gone from being negative towards five weeks of vacation, wanting to reduce the amount of vacation in return of increased salaries, to defending vacation as a social policy they feel entitled to have.

6.2.3 The Xfactor

With four weeks of vacation Snøhetta offers their employees something different than what is common in the States. Stephen has worked for Snøhetta New York for approximately a year, and he did not see the amount of vacation as an opportunity to negotiate salary. To him the vacation time that is provided by Snøhetta New York justified the salary level.

> *When you take in account the amount of vacation that is provided by Snøhetta, I think if you were to actually put a number to that it would make a significant difference. To actually understand that difference [between wage level and vacation]... I mean it's pretty unheard of, the amount of vacation we get here.*
> *Stephen*

This indicates that there has been different discourses at the office: When some saw the amount of vacation time as a hindrance for increased salary, several other of the employees believe the vacation time at Snøhetta to be a *competitive edge* that makes them stand out from other American offices. Offices that follow American policies, and that Chloé for one is not impressed with. She calls the United States a third world country when it comes to policies concerning vacation:

> *Vacation and all these things factor in I find when you think about productivity and quality of life. To me it is… like the U.S. have policies that are worthy of a third world country. I mean, you know… It just doesn't make sense. And I would like to see how the American economy will be doing if they actually would apply some of those things… Like they have in mid-European countries, or in Europe, or in Scandinavia, and see how productive the whole economy would be. It's really just, I mean that to me is really just the hunger of certain people to get somewhere that carries that whole system.*
> *Chloé*

Chloé makes an interesting point saying that it is the hunger of the American employees that "carries the system". As I talked about in chapter 5, the American long hour culture is deeply engrained in their mindset through for example the way they compare office presence with dedication. What we see here is how different expectations leads to different time practices, and Snøhetta finds itself between two different time regimes: the American and the Norwegian.

Chloé says that for her vacation is important when it comes to quality of life. In OECD's work-life balance index that I have presented earlier (see figure 3), one of the indicators of a good work-life balance was *"time devoted to leisure and personal care"* (OECDa) and we saw that the U.S. came worse out than all the Scandinavian countries and the countries presented in the index which can be said to be what Chloé calls "mid-European". James shares the same opinion as Chloé when it comes to vacation being a part of the work-life balance, he explains it as a respect for the employee's life:

> *Well, we have four weeks of paid leave each year, which is better than most places. And actually we used to have five. That was another, you know, fantastic bonus of coming here. It's part of the work-life balance, and that annually your life is sort of like respected a little bit more. In order, you know, and in order to do that more vacation is given. And it always made a lot of sense to me, you know, the fresher you can keep your employees and happier you can keep them, the better the work is. You know you might have fewer days out of them because of vacation, but it just makes perfect sense. And it's absolutely true.*
> *James*

As I pointed out in the introduction, the Norwegian model has undergone a lot of criticism for not being competitive and for being less productive. This stands in contrast to what Barth & Moene (2008) writes in their article "Likhet og åpenhet", where they answer to the criticism that has been given to the Norwegian model, and

argue that an expensive welfare state actually is able to be productive because of certain traits such as small wage differences, long lasting collaboration between the workers unions and the employer associations and so on. It is also opposite of the experience of the employees at Snøhetta both in New York and in Oslo. James explains enhanced productivity as a side effect of having happy employees. The happier you can keep them, he says, the better the work is. This is again in line with social capital as Hernes (2008) explains it. And even though the employees at Snøhetta New York will spend fewer days at the office, it will be equalized because they are more rested when they actually are present. Chloé says that in her home country employees feel that they get something back for the hours they invest in terms of benefits and salaries, and that this is, as she calls it, in *"a healthy relation"*, opposed to what she has experienced working in the U.S.

> *There's always these productivity ratings where they say in France people work much more productive with, I guess, six weeks of vacation versus the U.S. with only two weeks. It's just not productive. (…) [In my home country] we had like much less crazy hours, and [the architects there] are pretty successful you know. (…)Also then you have vacation coming up, again that's another big deadline for yourself to get everything in order. (…) To me it creates much more productivity.*
> *Chloé*

Chloé actually feels that having less vacation is non-productive. As we have seen from both Chloé and James a healthy work-life balance, for example by providing more time to vacation, enhances productivity in their opinion. Chloé compares it with France and her European home country, and says that architects there are successful even though they have both longer vacation according to the better life index (OECDa, figure 4) and *"less crazy hours"*. Chloé finishes by saying that vacation also works like a deadline, similar to the cut off time at the end of the day, and that having such a deadline enhances productivity. For Chloé vacation is not only all about productivity, it is also a question of Snøhetta's social policies as a competitive edge. She was recommended to apply at Snøhetta by friends exactly because of these social policies:

> *I mean they all knew that they have very good social politics, like meaning very flat hierarchy, fair pay, better vacation, things like that, just basically that it seems to be a healthier work environment. We actually have enough time to go out and getting inspired and think about other things.*
> *Chloé*

This indicates that the rumor of the office providing a good work-life balance to some degree has spread out to the architect community in New York. Chloé was recommended to apply for work at Snøhetta New York because of these social policies. She is not from the U.S., and from her European home country she was used to workers having long vacations, but since she came to the States the amount of vacation time has been greatly reduced, that was until she came to Snøhetta New York:

> *It's day and night. Well it's… I have twice the amount of vacation, and again to me that is an extremely high priority. You know, I mean… It's a really high priority.*
> *Chloé*

For her the transition was like day and night, and as she says that vacation is very important to her. Similar to Chloé, James regards the amount of vacation offered at Snøhetta New York as a competitive edge. And as Jenny told us when we visited the Oslo office James also sees this as a part of what makes Snøhetta Snøhetta. This shows that as both Jenny and Ethel wanted and wished for when setting up the New York office, the social policies provided by Snøhetta New York seem to have worked as a competitive edge, at least for some of the employees. It is part of their *values*, as James explains it, and that was also the argument when it was proposed to reduce the vacation time from five to three weeks:

> *It was reduced to four because as a small company we couldn't maintain everyone having five weeks. All the project teams were always low on staff and we couldn't afford to hire more people, so… Actually it was an original proposal to go down to three, and then the employees negotiated it back to four. And you know the argument is that there are plenty of other places that have three, in a scary way the U.S. average is actually two, you know. And by seniority you can work up to three or four, but that takes a while to get there. And if we were just three as a company, we wouldn't really be unusual and we wouldn't really be… putting forth our values I think. So I think… you know… Four has become the kind of, you know, this is the balance between being a Scandinavian company and an international one that is also located in the U.S. and competing in this market.*
> *James*

James sees the four weeks of vacation as a balance between being a Scandinavian and an international company located in New York. This might indicate that with a reduction of the vacation time Snøhetta New York moves more towards American standards and further away from Norwegian, and removing the competitive edge that makes them different in a society that seems pressed for time. When James talks

about “putting forth our values”, he is talking about the Snøhetta time culture that has been exported from Norway, and to him this time culture is important in order to stand out and in order to preserve “the Norwegian trait” that makes Snøhetta an interesting company: The Snøhetta Xfactor.

6.3 What makes Snøhetta Snøhetta?

In this chapter I have examined the time practices related to vacation at the New York office. My aim was to see if the institutional practices, the time regime, in the United States influenced how vacation was being practiced at the office, and what kind of potential tensions we might see when the Norwegian model meets American working life.

What we have seen is that vacation created a lot of discussions leading to negotiations at the office between the management and the employees, but also between the employees. The key points of the negotiations have been the amount of vacation time and salary versus vacation. The main reasons for why the negotiations evolved are in short different institutional practices and economic challenges. What we have seen is a tension between the American society and the Norwegian model: The norm systems come in conflict with each other. In short it is a culture of individual negotiations meeting a culture of collective negotiations.

From the interviews it become clear that the Snøhetta organizational culture has been changing over time. In the beginning of the New York office the employees saw the amount of vacation as something negative because it reduced the chances of an increased salary, they would rather have fewer vacation days and higher salaries. And they saw the vacation time as an opportunity to individually negotiate their salaries. But with time this have seemed to change, and when the management proposed to reduce the vacation time from five to three weeks, many of the employees protested. They started defending the vacation time because it had become a part of their rights, a part of what made Snøhetta special, and with that a part of the Snøhetta culture: The time norms and the time practices.

When Snøhetta first settled in New York the office was quite small, and offering social benefits similar to what Norwegian employees have was affordable. But as the

office grew this became more difficult, and will keep on being a challenge as long as the New York office keeps on expanding. It will be difficult for Snøhetta to maintain these kinds of benefits for their workers as the office grows because of how the American welfare state and the working life are organized, and the tensions between being a multinational company and being a Norwegian company located in the United States will increase. In Norway the companies are required to offer a certain amount of vacation, and because of this the big difference between the New York and the Oslo office when it comes to paid vacation is government regulations. In Norway workers have a statutory right to five weeks of vacation, and the employers are bound to give this to their workers. As we have seen, the United States does not have government standards for vacation and there is no statutory right for employees to receive paid vacation at all. It is up to the employees to negotiate this right with their employers. This is in deep contrast to how negotiations happen in Norway.

First of all the negotiations are collective and they are to a large degree between the worker unions and the employer organizations, which create a different dynamic than what we see in the U.S. In addition these negotiations are regulated and only take place every other year. And maybe this is the recipe to how Norway can keep a high productivity level and at the same time offer long vacations: The collective negotiations that happens only every other year reduces the level of conflict and this reduces loss in production (Hernes et al. 2006). But for Snøhetta this cannot be the only ingredient in the recipe; more ingredients are required to make Snøhetta culture. And I will argue that another central ingredient is trust that enhances Snøhetta's social capital.

7 Parental leave: It takes a village to raise a child

As I am locking the bike, Børre comes over to me again.
Kindergarten is over for the day. Now he's playing by himself. He is building a castle in the sand pit, and he wants me to help him.
Erlend Loe, Naïve. Super

7.1 Introduction: The family and the welfare state

This saying is probably familiar to many of us, though its origin might be less known. It is a proverb from the Igbo people of Nigeria, and the basic meaning is that it is a communal effort to raise children (Healey 1998). Igbo children are also called *"Nwa Ora"*, which means *"child of the community"* (Molen 2011). But how does this proverb translate to the western cultures of the 21st century? From Esping-Andersen's (1990) welfare state regimes we have seen that the emphasis on state, market and family differs between the three regimes. This also comes to show in how the family policies look in different countries.

When one talks about welfare state regimes and family policies the words familialized and de-familialized often appears (Esping-Andersen 1990, 1999). In the social democratic welfare state the production of welfare and care services has become a public responsibility, and the individual's dependence on family decreases (Brøgger 2007, Esping-Andersen 1990, 1999)In a familialized welfare state, on the other hand, the family is to a great extent responsible for its own welfare, like we see in the conservative and the liberal welfare state regime. The United States is traditionally an example of a familialized welfare state, but it is moving towards being more de-familialized, like we see in Norway. But the two countries have solved this differently. While the Norwegian welfare state has taken responsibility for the care tasks, in the U.S. this is to a lesser degree a public responsibility and has left welfare services to commercial actors and the market. In short, a country's family policies are shaped by the relationship between state, market and family (Esping-Andersen 1990. 1999).

Snøhetta is a company with relatively few employees, and as a result very few of the employees have children. Because of this I have chosen to make a second anonymisation of the informants with children. Some of the informants I use in this

chapter have also been used in the previous chapters, but here they are now given different names. In chapter 7 we will meet:

Emma, a mother at the Oslo office.
Christian, a father at the Oslo office.
Richard, a father at the New York office.
and **Elizabeth, Clara** and **Rachel,** who are all mothers at the New York office.

In this chapter I will look at how the parental leave discourse is at Snøhetta. I will examine how parental leave and parenting is being practiced, especially at the New York office due to the U.S. state legislations differing a lot from the Norwegian practice that Snøhetta want to implement in the office in New York. And I will see if there are any differences in time practices when it comes to parental leave between the two offices.

7.2 It takes a state to raise a child: parental leave in Norway

In Norway, the state's responsibility for family policies is strong, and parental leave has become a political question concerning equality (NOU 1996: 13, 1999: 13). The wish is to strengthen the relationship between child and father and increase equality between men and women when it comes to childcare and in working life.

Parents' rights when it comes to leave in Norway are regulated through the Working Environment Act (Arbeidsmiljøloven 1977) and the National Insurance Act (Folketrygdloven 1997). This gives employees in Norway right to a total of 47 weeks of parental leave with 100 percent pay, or 57 weeks with 80 percent pay. Twelve of these weeks are reserved for the father (the father's quota) and cannot be transferred to the mother. Norway was the first country in the world to give this right to fathers (Brandth & Kvande 2003). If the father chooses not to use the father's quota the parents will lose these weeks. The principle of universalism is strong in the social-democratic welfare state regime, and as a result, all parents in Norway will receive financial support, and everyone has the right to a minimum of economic benefits (basic support) (Esping-Andersen 1990). If a parent is unemployed due to illness or the like, he or she still has the right to receive financial benefits through the National Insurance Act (Folketrygdloven 1997). Also, parents

with a child aged 12-36 months can receive a cash benefit or a cash-for-care scheme, on the condition that they do not use publicly funded early childhood education and care (ECEC) (Bungum 2005).

7.3 It takes a market to raise a child: parental leave in the United States

In the liberal welfare state regime the traditional family holds a strong position, which comes to show in the U.S. family policies (Ellingsæter & Leira 2004, Esping-Andersen 1990). Support from the government, like leave or funding to single mothers, is regarded as a treat against the individual's privacy, and it is seen as unfortunate for the family solidarity when the government "intrudes" (Ellingsæter & Leira 2004).

As I have mentioned earlier, the federal laws in the United States are of a more general nature, and it is up to the different states, as well as the companies, to make their own laws and regulations. When it comes to parental leave, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) basically provide unpaid, job-protected leave (Kamerman & Waldfogel 2011, Ray et al. 2009, FMLA). The FMLA has some restrictions, for example it only guarantees up to twelve weeks of unpaid parental leave if the parents work in an establishment with at least 50 employees. The restrictions leads to many American workers not being legally protected by the FMLA. According to a survey conducted in 2000 by the U.S. Department of Labor almost 40 percent of American employees were not eligible due to establishment size, or tenure and/or hour requirements (Ray et al. 2009)

In addition to the FMLA, New York State has a Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) program, also referred to as cash sick leave benefits. To replace loss of earnings caused by short-term non-job-related disability, the TDI program provide workers with partial compensation that is approximately the same level as unemployment insurance benefits[18]. TDI programs cover about a quarter of the labor force (Kamerman & Waldfogel 2011).

[18] New York: 50 percent of average weekly wages up to $652 a week (Kamerman & Waldfogel 2011).

This indicates that it is largely up to the companies what benefits they will give their employees when it comes to parental leave. Snøhetta has said that they wanted to give the employees at the New York office benefits similar to those offered by the Norwegian state. This means that while the employees at the Oslo office are covered by services where the state will pay the bill, the New York office is financially responsible for the arrangements offered to their employees. According to the Guidelines for Employees in Snøhetta New York, the female employees are offered full pay while on leave for two months and the possibility of leave without pay for a further four months. The male employees are entitled to two weeks leave with full pay and a further of two weeks without pay.

With two different views and approaches to the organizing of family policies in Norway and the United States, it will be interesting to see how the welfare state's care services is understood and negotiated in the working life, and how Snøhetta's employees practice and regard parental leave in the two offices.

7.4 Maximizing parental leave

In Norway the public debate concerning parental leave is largely concerning paternity leave. Especially the last year paternity leave and the extent of it have been greatly discussed in Norwegian media (see for example Moen 2011, Sparre 2011). One of the headlines in a Norwegian newspaper this fall was "Heller pappa enn pupp" (Moen 2011) where the Minister of Children, Equality and Social inclusion, Audun Lysbakken, argues that a child is not dependent on being breast fed after it has become a certain amount of months old, and that spending time with dad is just as important. The background for the article is that some mothers are using breast-feeding as an argument for why they should take out the majority of the parental leave (for more about the debate see for example Ellingsæter 2011, Skjeseth 2011). In Norway, the debate is not about whether or not we should have parental leave, nor is it really about the length of the parental leave; it is to a great extent about the distribution of the leave between mom and dad[19].

[19] At least this can be said about the last year. Earlier discussions have among others been about paternity leave in male dominated firms (see for example Brandth, Bungum & Kvande 2003 and 2005)

Christian is one of the dads at Snøhetta Oslo that used his rights and took six weeks of paternity leave, in addition to taking out some of the extra time off he had earned, so that he all together had three months at home with his child.

> *We divided it so that my wife had twelve months of maternity leave with 80 percent pay. So we had the maximum time with the minimum pay. And I took mine… I had six weeks back then, it had just increased to six weeks. So I took as much as I was entitled to. And it was in a period where I had earned a lot of time off. So in total I had three months. And we divided it so she had her year with the baby and then I had three months.*
> *Christian*

Christian says that where he is from these kinds of opportunities does not exist, but even though he has spent most of his life in Western countries he really appreciates paternity leave. To him it is "worth everything", and that is also the reason why he chose to add the extra leave he had earned on top of the original paternity leave, extending it to three months. Christian used the rights he was entitled to through the laws regulating parental leave to his benefit, and took as much leave as he could. With government regulations reserving a certain amount of time for fathers, as well as encouraging them to share some of the leave with the mothers, it seems to be easier for the fathers to actually take paternity leave. Having this right might also seem to make it easier to get a larger part of the shared leave. On the question if Christian would like to have more children, there is no hesitation, "We would love too", but he adds:

> *Next time. It will be much longer. Absolutely.*

Christian felt that he had too little time with his child even though he was home for a full three months:

> *If I could have done things differently, I would have used more time alone with my child than I actually did. Maybe used more of my time off, or used my vacation differently, and stayed home alone longer. I think so… I had a few months, but I felt that they went by so fast. I tried to learn and become familiar with everything. I wish I had used more time on that. I think it is important, very important, actually.*
> *Christian*

In 2009, 96 percent of Norwegian men who were eligible used all of the father's quota[20], and we have seen a significant increase since the introduction in 1993

[20] Almost 20 percent of the fathers took additional leave (Grambo & Myklebø 2009)

(Grambo & Myklebø 2009, Lappegård 2003). This indicates that when fathers are given a certain amount of paternal leave, they will start asking for more, and we might see, as we have seen in Norway, an extended and increased use of parental leave (Brandth & Kvande 2003). What happens is that the institutional constraints become normative. This also seems to be the case when it comes to Emma and her husband. He works for a telecommunications company in Norway that Emma refers to as a "male bastion", and where it is less common that fathers take more leave than the father's quota. That was not the case when it came to Emma's husband. Several people questioned why Emma took "only" six months of leave and not twelve. The answer to that question was a father who was well read up on his rights:

> *No, it's because the dad is… he had read what his rights were. So… Not easily fooled. He's home now. There's nothing that stands in the way for the father doing that at all, it's just that we withhold, the women culture that is, withholds that possibility as long as we can.*
> *Emma*

Even though Emma's husband got some reactions from his co-workers, asking him if he had "*gone all soft"*, fathers taking a bigger portion of the parental leave becomes more and more common (as the increase in usage has shown). The fathers are using the system, they have a *right* to take parental leave and they start using their right[21], and gradually it becomes a norm. In their book "Fleksible fedre" Brandth & Kvande (2003) talks about a difference between the United States and Norway when it comes to negotiations about time. They say that in the American context the negotiations are between *mom* and *dad*, and *mom*, *dad* and the *company*. But in Norway we see a fourth actor. The welfare state. That means that the negotiations are between *mom*, *dad, the company* and *the state*.

As stated above the statutory right to paternal leave seems to increase the usage among fathers, which indicates the importance of the state as a fourth part in the negotiations. Not having the state as an actor in this can make it more difficult for fathers to become equal caregivers with mothers. This seems to be the situation for Richard. Christian's three months of paternity leave stand in contrast with the amount of leave Richard at the New York office had when he was home with his

[21] Though it should be noted that there still are fathers in Norway who regards parental leave as something reserved for women (see for example: "Hvilken kvinne ønsker seg en mann som tar pappaperm? (Bristøl 2011) and "Spetalen støtter investorkollega" (Skarsgård 2011 B).

child. As pointed out earlier dads at the New York office are entitled to two weeks of paid paternity leave, and an addition of two weeks unpaid leave. When figuring out how much leave to take Richard was uncertain on what was considered acceptable, and tried to get a clear answer from the senior people at the office:

> *It was one of those things were I was wanting a clear answer and kind of support from the administration that I could take that time and not feel guilty. But I would ask "How much time can I take?" and they would say "Whatever you feel comfortable with". That kind of answer. It's like: I'm not gonna feel comfortable until you tell me that I can take a certain amount of time. So I never got a clear answer. So I had to just take a chance, and take what I thought I could get away with. Which I thought was three weeks.*
> *Richard*

Richard wanted support from the administration in deciding the length of his parental leave. But he felt that this support was lacking, which made it difficult for him to decide. Having the administration's approval was important to him in order to be comfortable with his decision and not feel guilty for taking a certain amount of leave. The few fathers that had taken paternity leave before Richard, had taken three weeks, and he figured that three weeks was an amount he could "get away with". But he did feel that it was a pressure to take less:

> *There was… I remember there was… I was trying to figure out how much I should take and I remember it being a little bit of pressure to take less.*
> *Richard*

As I argued above, Snøhetta New York is in a different situation than the Oslo office because of how leave is financed. Because the company itself is responsible for the funding of parental leave in New York, this is likely to lead to severe expenses for the office. This might be one of the reasons why Richard felt the pressure to take less leave. Another difference between the New York and the Oslo office is how paternal leave is practiced and viewed in the society in general. While paternal leave has gained foothold in Norway, it still seems to be a relatively new and uncommon phenomenon in the United States. It has not become normative and this makes it difficult for the men to negotiate parental leave in the U.S. The third point is that the social democratic and the liberal welfare state regimes have, as I have argued earlier, different views on family policies.

Depending on the caregiver model the welfare state builds on in its policy making, it will have different consequences for the gender policies (Brandt & Kvande 2003). The main distinction is between a caregiver model that builds on the man as the breadwinner, and the models that build on individual rights. Salisbury (in Brandt & Kvande 2003) refers to these two different principles as the male *breadwinner model* and the *individual model*. When the welfare policies build on the first principle, it is supporting the traditional family model with dad as the main provider and a stay-at-home mom. Drawing on the liberal welfare state regime, the United States can be said to belong to the male breadwinner model, and as a result lacking the incentive to increase the fathers' caregiver responsibility. All this affects the view on fathers' rights, as well as responsibilities, when it comes to caring for children, and Richard ends up feeling pressured to take less leave than what he originally wanted.

While the United State policies build on the breadwinner model, it can be argued that the Norwegian leave policies belong to the individual model that states that both the mothers and the fathers can be breadwinners. This is reflected in the father's quota that has lead to a focus on the father's responsibility and rights when it comes to caring for children. Emma says that there is a "maximization" of paternal leave at the Oslo office:

> *(…) Here it is a maximization of parental leave. It's the dads as well. Over the last few years it's gone from maybe only a few weeks to maybe four months. But it is a bit strange in a way as well, because now it's more like "Aren't you gonna take more than that?".*
> *Emma*

Emma's story seems to be the complete opposite of Richard's, and the way I see it much of the reason is due to the institutional differences between the U.S. and Norway, and also to a large extent the public and political discourse in these countries. As I have said, parental leave in Norway is to a large extent a political tool to, among other things, increase female participation in the labor market, but it is also a measure to enhance equality among men and women (NOU 1996: 13, NOU 1999: 13). While Richard felt that he had to take less leave, Emma says that the fathers at the Oslo office are being questioned if they choose to have a "shorter" paternity leave. She says that just over the last few years the leave period for fathers at the Oslo office has increased from only a few weeks to four months. This is in

accordance with what Christian told us: Wanting to take more leave when the next baby comes. What we see is how paternal leave becomes normative and that as a result fathers are taking an increasingly larger part of the parental leave.

7.5 Parenting meets the long hour culture

In the previous chapters we have seen how the long hour culture is present in and in many ways defining American working life. This raises an interesting question: How do you combine parenting with the long hour culture?

In Richard's case this has been an exercise in adapting, both for him and his wife. They both work long hours and since their child is in daycare and not with a nanny they have to pick him up at 6 pm. For Richard this means either coming late for work or leaving early:

> *We get ready for work, one of us will drop him off at daycare and be a little late for work and then we'll go to work. And then the opposite person will pick him up from daycare, and so leave work a little bit [early]…*
> *Richard*

Richard and his wife alternate on who drops the child off before work and who picks him up when the workday is over. That is to say: In most cases before the workday is over. Brandth et al. (2005) argue that work is one of the most important contexts that affect how mom and dads organize their time. Listening to Richard it becomes apparent that this is also the case for him and his wife. They both work in knowledge companies and usually work long hours, but after their child was born they have had to make changes to their workdays in order to make work life and family life go together. Often the nature of the work in knowledge companies does not allow for short days (Bungum 2005). In Richard's wife's case, for example, the demands at her office make it difficult for her to leave early, so it is often Richard who is the one who comes home first. He says he tries to get home at eight, so that he can see his son before he goes to bed:

> *The kid goes to bed at eight thirty. So [my wife] called him last night. Usually one of us is there and the other one works later. I tend to try to get home at eight; I like to at least catch him before he goes to bed. But she's … her commute is a little bit longer and her office is a little different… So she tends to stay at work a little bit longer.*
> *Richard*

It is a bit of a paradox that a country where working late is as common as it is in the United States and where family is of such a great value, the welfare and care services do not meet the needs of the working mom and dad. The long hour culture is not particularly family-friendly, and it seems like the demands from the working life has a bigger influence than what family needs have. In Norway, the normal working day is meant to regulate the employee's workday and giving incentives to leave work at "a reasonable hour", but this is not fool proof. Other ways of compensating for overtime, like overtime pay or time off, is in many ways competitors to the normal working day and challenges the balance between work and family life. In the situations where Norwegian parents find it difficult to combine working life and childcare, one possibility is working part-time. This might be one explanation to why such a large amount of Norwegian women are participating in the working life, many of them work part-time (as many as 40 percent according to numbers from SSB (SSB)). But there is another measure that is of great importance when it comes to Norwegian parents' possibilities to combine work and family: *barnehage*[22]. The Norwegian government has an aim to reach full kindergarten coverage (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2007). High quality kindergartens, like they have in Norway, is likely to influence the usage and affect the time practices in working life: Because parents have to pick up their children at a certain hour, they have no choice but to leave work. But for Richard, who works in a different institutional context, the solution to the work-life challenges is *a nanny*:

> *What would make my daily life simpler? A nanny. People with nannies are just like if you're a little bit late that's fine or… If the kid's sick, that's fine. 'Cause right now if he's sick, one of us needs to take a day off from work.*
> *Richard*

He argues that having a nanny would make his daily life simpler, because he would not have to worry about time as much. This is an example on how Americans turn to the market to get the arrangement they need. Since Snøhetta New York tries to facilitate for family life through the implementation of the normal working day, at least Richard is able to get home before his child goes to bed, but they still have to make a lot of adaptions to their daily routines to make everything add up.

[22] Kindergarten

Above I argued that as parental leave in Norway has become institutionalized and a part of the norm, it is easier for the dads to take more leave than just the fader's quota: It has become accepted by society. The same tendencies appear at the New York office when it comes to combining parenthood with a career. Both because Snøhetta New York offers relatively generous parental leave, which is regulated through the employee guidelines, and because they promote early going home and focuses on a healthy work-life balance, being a parent as well as an architect is accepted and respected by the employees at the office. Clara appreciate this fact:

> *But I do appreciate Snøhetta and the fact that I can, I can leave at six and not feel that anybody is judging me. And… In a lot of other companies I probably would have felt that. We now have about… we have about five children in the office that are under the age of two. So that's a lot. When I started there was only one other person… She has two children who are older. And there's one who's fairly new whose got older children. So now we have about eight kids in the office, but when I started there were only two. So… That's been actually nice, a nice change.*
> *Clara*

She says that it has been a nice change to have more parents in the office, or as she says it: More children. When Clara first started there was only one person who had children, and they were older kids. In a small company in a country where parental leave is only a minimum this can be challenging for the first employees who have children. Even though Snøhetta New York employees has a written right to two months of paid vacation and the possibility of leave without pay for a further four months for mothers and two weeks of paid leave and a further of two weeks without pay for fathers, actually taking the full leave can be difficult when you are among the first to use it, and also knowing when it is acceptable to go home when you come back to work. They lack the institutional policies that the employees have at the Oslo office. Thus they have no one to compare themselves with and to ask for advice, and how they decide to organize their workday can be said to be defining for the time practices of others at the office. What sort of time practices concerning parental leave that becomes the norm at the office might be very important when it comes to acceptance and respect from co-workers. On the question of whether Snøhetta New York is supportive towards the parents, Rachel is clear:

> *Oh, absolutely. 'Cause they're new parents, and Vanessa is a managing director, so there's a huge impetus to do that, but for quite a while I was the only one with any children and it was kind of like "Oh!". But one nice thing was when my little one, when I was first here, and there were days where he just did not really want to go*

to school, he wasn't sick, but he just didn't wanna go. So I would bring him here, and everyone was happy to see him. And that was very nice. You could never do that at another firm.
Rachel

Rachel found it a bit challenging being the only one with children, but she still experienced the office as supportive when she had to bring her youngest to work. Being able to bring her child to the office was something Rachel appreciated, and she believes that she could never have done that at another firm. This indicates that Snøhetta is family friendly not only for the office's leave policies, but also for the view on the importance of family life. Rachel also points out that Vanessa being the managing director and a mother makes it easier to be a mother at Snøhetta, and she almost becomes a point of reference for the others as well. This becomes apparent when talking to Elizabeth about how she will organize her day:

We've been talking a lot about what to do when I come back to work. But I know that I'm gonna be much stricter about my hours, depending on what childcare situation we work out. We will probably do a daycare, not a nanny, so we will drop the baby off in the morning and pick him up in the afternoon, or late afternoon. So it depends on sort of where we find and what we like for the daycares when it comes to time. We don't wanna leave him there, obviously, too long, so I'm hoping we can find something you know, we drop off at eight thirty, pick up at five, five thirty. And my husband and I can alternate on picking him up. If I need to stay a little bit later. But leaving the office no later than six pm, five thirty if I can do it. I know Vanessa leaves at six, but they have a nanny. And I think daycares want you to pick up your child earlier, so… Probably it would be more like five thirty leaving.
Elizabeth

Even though there are more children at the office now, there is no set way in how the parents organize their workweek, and it seems like they to a large extent try figure this out individually, and make arrangements that work for them personally. At the time of the interviews Elizabeth and her husband was still trying to figure out what she would do once she came back from maternity leave. Being able to leave early is important to her, and she says that she will be much stricter about her hours. But she also points out that that will to some extent depend on what kind of childcare situation they work out, but her wish is that she will leave no later than 6 pm. In addition to shorter days, Elizabeth is also looking into the possibilities of working four days a week for a while, before returning to work for full.

And then I've been thinking about maybe trying to go back four days a week, for a couple of, you know four to five months, and then transition back to full time. It's

sort of just still an idea; we haven't figured that out yet. So it will depend on how much the daycares cost, and how we feel when we get to that point when it's three or four months and whether we want to leave him at a daycare that long.
Elizabeth

When Elizabeth talks about her idea of returning to work for four days a week for some four to five months she is making arrangements to help regulate her workday. This can contribute to affect the time culture and the time practices at the office. For Snøhetta Elizabeth's thoughts about reducing her workweek do not seem to be a problem or a hindrance. The possible difficulties that she outlines is due to daycare services and how long she and her husband will leave the baby at a daycare. This indicates that she feels that the New York office will support her decision and facilitate so that Elizabeth can have an optimal arrangement for combining parenting and a career.

7.6 Nwa Ora

So does it take a whole village to raise a child, and are the western children of today children of the community? Or should the question rather be: Who is the community?

In Norway we have seen that parental leave is organized by the state through the Work Environment Act and the National Insurance Act (Arbeidsmiljøloven 1977, Folketrygdloven 1997), and in that way the state can be regarded as the community in a social democratic welfare state regime. But could not the same be said about the market and the family in the liberal welfare state regime? The raising of children is in focus in both welfare state regimes, just with different solutions for how it best can be carried out. The interesting question is how the two different regimes facilitate parenting and working life, and how this comes to show in the practices at Snøhetta New York and Snøhetta Oslo. That is why I in this chapter have examined how parental leave and parenting is practiced at the New York office, how they compare to Norwegian practices, and how the discourse concerning parental leave is at both the New York and the Oslo office.

The clearest difference between the New York and the Oslo office is the institutional contexts, which to a large degree affect the practices at the two offices. When the employees at the Oslo office are to practice parenting, they can turn to extensive

laws and regulations and lean on these for support. The institutionalized policies in Norway set the standard for parental leave for everyone, which eliminates the uncertainties around length and usage, and in many ways leads to what Emma calls a *maximization of parental leave*. This is not the case at the New York office. In the liberal welfare state regime, the traditional family holds a strong point and care tasks are to a great degree the family's responsibility (Esping-Andersen 1990). As a result what other employees choose to do becomes of great importance at the New York office: They are the ones that contributes to creating the norms. It is a bit of a paradox that a country that puts a high value on family has few family friendly policies to help the working men and women combine family life with working life. One of the reasons is probably the emphasis on male a breadwinner model and the stay-at-home mom (Brandth & Kvande 2003). Organizing family policies around this makes it challenging for those families where both parents want to (or have to?) work.

In knowledge companies the pressure on the normal working day is significant, which indicates the importance of regulations and incentives to help sustain it (Alvesson 2004, Børve & Kvande 2006). The kindergartens can be regarded as one such incentive. The opening hours at the kindergartens create a limit to the workday for parents, because they are coordinated with the normal working day: They operate the same hours. This implies that parents are "forced" to leave work at a certain time in order to pick up their children. This means that if kindergartens become *"open all hours"* it will be a great threat to the normal working day. This can also be said to be the case when it comes to nannies. Since nannies have no opening hours, the parents lose that as an incentive to leave work earlier.

The challenges in combining work and family life in knowledge companies can be one of the reasons why there are relatively few parents at Snøhetta (both in Oslo and in New York) even though the age of the workforce should imply differently. But as Clara said: It has been an increase in employees with children since the beginning of the New York office. Maybe is a result of the family friendly policies Snøhetta have opposed to other New York companies.

For Richard and his wife we saw that it was easier for him to leave work early than it was for here because of the focus Snøhetta has on family policies and work-life balance. If they had both worked in a company that to a lesser degree valued the balance between being an employee and being a parent, they would probably have experienced great difficulties in organizing their daily life. This supports the policies of the liberal welfare state regime where there is less focus on parental leave and more focus on work and private, market oriented solutions (Esping-Andersen 1990). This implies that the liberal regime's family focus is not necessarily family friendly, at least not for a dual-earner dual career-model. The work life needs to develop a practice so that both parents can prioritize family life and private life.

8 Conclusion: The Norwegian model in New York

There is no time.
I can hardly see the conclusion being any other.
There is at least not any one, single time.
My time. Your time. Paul's time. The sun's time.
Lots of times.
Many times equals no time.
Erlend Loe, Naïve. Super

When starting on this project I remember thinking "There is no way Snøhetta is going to make this work". I found it highly unlikely that the company would be able to implement Norwegian working traditions like collective bargaining, the normal working day and, a relatively flat salary ladder to the United States. Why would people who are raised in a long hour culture; that embraces individuality; and is used to negotiate their way to the top accept these weird, obstructive regulations from some tiny, simpleton country in Scandinavia? After examining this closer it seems like I was wrong, and that one of the answers is the want for a better work-life balance.

Doing a comparative study like this is interesting for many reasons. One is that in comparing countries and examining the differences, the constructed and the institutional practices in each country becomes evident. Another is that when you study the same company but two different offices situated on each side of the world. You discover how the institutionalized practices and cultures in the respective countries affects company practices, values and norms. Qualitative comparative case studies help detect and reveal the mechanism and the institutional practices in the company, which is defining for the employees' daily life, both when it comes to work life and private life. The aim of this study has not been to prove a hypothesis, but to get a deeper understanding of challenges concerning time practice in a global working life. Using this research method has enabled just that.

Snøhetta had an ambitious project: They wanted to bring the Norwegian Snøhetta culture to the company's office in New York. Studies within new institutional theory has shown that companies often implement the practices that have been successful in the parent company to the subsidiary company, but at the same time organizations are regarded as open systems that are influenced and shaped by their surroundings (Bøvre 2008b). This implies that they are socially constructed. The

processes at Snøhetta New York support this to a large extent. They have taken elements of the Norwegian model and transferred them to the New York office.

As we have seen from the interviews of the employees there has been negotiations and discussions around the implementation, and as a result some of the elements have been more or less changed. And some elements, as e.g. flexi-time, have even been rejected. Normative institutionalism explains that when companies have offices in more than one country collisions between the different norm-systems can occur (Osmundsen 2005). The discussions and negotiations at the Snøhetta office in New York can be seen as an outcome of such collisions, but since the office to a large extent has been built up by the same people with the same values as the office in Oslo has, the reform ideas (the elements of the Norwegian model that was brought over) have in large been accepted. According to Scandinavian new institutional theory, the reform idea must be consistent with pre-existing conditions in the company, like for example values, in order to be accepted (Røvik 2007). The values, or culture, of Snøhetta was not going to be transferred to an already existing company, but contribute in the establishing of a new office. In this way there were no pre-existing conditions to consider, but on the other hand: The ideas were to be implemented in a different institutional context. But since the people who participated in establishing the New York office shared the same values, the possibilities for success were present. So did they succeed?

One of the challenges for Snøhetta New York when adapting the Norwegian model has been the normalization process. In trying to establish their own culture based on Norwegian traditions, the company creates certain expectations of constructing similar practices as in Norway and also of what is possible. The expectation of getting more than what is possible and economic sustainable leads to tensions between the employees and the management. Even though the company's wish was to more or less "clone" the Norwegian office, the institutional practices in the United States make a direct cloning difficult. In Oslo, the institutional practices are already there, with the laws and regulations of the state of Norway, but in New York everything has to be negotiated, organized, and created almost from scratch, by people with a completely different institutional "background" than the Norwegian.

We have seen that incorporating the Norwegian model in general, and the normal working day in particular, has been difficult in New York. Both architecture as a knowledge occupation and the American institutional context, the time regime, and the time norms endorse the long hour culture. In the Oslo office, the threats to the normal working day was not the institutional context, but rather the idea of the architect as an artist and architecture as a knowledge occupation. Thus the conflicts that occurred were to a large extent between the time norms at the office and the time regime in the society in general, and architecture as a knowledge occupation and Snøhetta as a knowledge company. This implies that it is not only the institutional context, but also the type of work, in this case the knowledge work, that threatens the normal working day, and having regulations to support it becomes even more important. That is if a healthy work-life balance is a goal in itself. *Planned overtime*, *optimizing* and *focusing time* are all part of Snøhetta's efforts to help regulate the employees working hours.

Vacation time at the New York office went from a story of the employees being critical to the amount of vacation time, to ending up defending it as a part of their social policies and organizational culture. Five weeks of vacation was foreign and unknown, and not part of the American time regime. Many of the employees did not see the value of having a long vacation, and would rather increase their salaries. This changed, however, and the long vacation started being viewed as both a competitive edge for the company and a social right for the employees. They had experienced having longer vacations, and they saw that it was both possible and that it had a positive effect on work-life balance. The vacation time was accepted and became a part of the New York office's time practice and time norms. And because Snøhetta had brought with it an important part of the Norwegian model, giving the employees a voice both as individuals and through an employee representative, the New York office managed to negotiate so that they have four weeks of vacation, opposed to the management proposal of reducing it to three.

Though only a few of the employees at Snøhetta have children, the use of parental leave at the two offices clearly showed how the institutional differences influenced the time practices. When there is a *maximization* of parental leave in the Oslo office, the New York office is to some degree fumbling in the dark when it comes to

practicing parental leave. Even though the Employee Guidelines give clear answers to the length of the (paid) parental leave, the choices of the employees that take leave to a large degree becomes normative.

Because of the modest social policies in the liberal welfare state regime and the American time regime, combining parenthood and a career is a challenge at the New York office. Turning to the market for care services, such as hiring a nanny, becomes a solution for some, though this is too expensive for many. This stands in contrast to Norway where kindergartens (that to a large degree are public) hold a strong position. Among the employees at the Oslo office there is a wide acceptance for parents to leave work to pick up their children from kindergarten. In this way the kindergartens are a time disciplining factor and contribute to uphold the normal working day. This is also evident among the New York office employees that have their children in daycare; they leave work earlier to be able to pick up the kids. The large acceptance for this at the office shows that it has become a part of the time practices, making it possible for parents to work at Snøhetta New York and still obtain a healthy work-life balance.

All this shows that the Norwegian model *can* be exported. But what happens is an *adaption* to the institutionalized practices, the norms and the culture that dominates the host country. And what we experience is a normalization and adaptation to a *hybrid* model, and a company that have succeeded in implementing the Norwegian model in New York.

Further research

Regulations concerning time, and time practices are just a fraction of what can be examined in light of the Norwegian model. There are other aspects with this model that would have been just as interesting to look into. Salary is one of them. There are huge differences between the United States and Norway when it comes to both negotiating salaries (collective versus individual bargaining), and the steepness of the salary ladder. In Norway salaries are negotiated once every other year, opposed to the U.S. where the individual employee negotiates her own salary. This is probably much of the reason why the salary ladder in the U.S. is so steep compared to Norway.

Another interesting research focus would have been employee participation and unionisation. Unionized workers are viewed as "trouble" in the U.S., thus they are few. This stands in contrast with the high degree of unionized workers we see in Norway (Barth & Moene 2008, Claussen 2009, Hernes 2008). Despite this being seen as a hindrance when it comes to productivity, Norway proves otherwise when coming out on top of different international rankings (Hernes 2008).

Some of the informants at the Oslo saw it as too unfamiliar to have an employee representative in an American context, and wrongly believed that the New York office had stopped having one. While this is regulated through law in Norway, it is, as with unionized workers, uncommon in the States. Examining participation on the company level would also make for an interesting topic to look into.

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Apendix 1: Interview guide, Snøhetta Oslo (Norwegian)

Bakgrunn
- Kjønn
- Alder
- Sivilstatus – hva gjør partner?
- Barn
- Utdannelse - hvor?
- Jobber med
- Yrkesbakgrunn: *hvor, land, med hva, lengde*
- Hvorfor søkte du jobb i Snøhetta?
- Tanker om hvorfor du fikk jobben?

Arbeidet
- En typisk arkitekt?
- Din stilling i konsernet
- Arbeidets art – *Hva går arbeidet ditt ut på?*
- Hvordan er arbeidet organisert?
- Hvordan arbeider du? Team-arbeid, *mange, mye tett?*
- Det mest interessante (artige) i jobben din?
- Det ideelle prosjektet? Tenk framover: lyst til å jobbe med?

Arbeidsforhold
- Hvordan er bedriften organisert?
  - Innad: ansvarsområder, fordeling av arbeidsoppgaver
  - Konsernet: eierstruktur, avdelinger, oppgavefordeling mellom avdelingene
- Opplever du at jobben du gjør blir verdsatt?
- Verdsatt som arbeidstaker? Innsats/arbeidet
- Interessante arbeidsoppgaver?
- Faglige utfordringer?
- Innflytelse på egen arbeidssituasjon?
  - Delegering av oppgaver?
- Noe spesielt som motiverer ved arbeidet/arbeidsplassen?
- Hva tror du de ansatte opplever som mest positivt/verdifullt ved arbeidsplassen?
- Gjort en god jobb?
- Hva er en god jobb?
- Forførende jobb?
- Døgning – tidskultur ved utdanningsinstitusjonen

Stress:
- arbeidsbelastningen?
- Vanskelig å fullføre arbeidet innafor rammene normalarbeidsdagen gir?
- Hvordan opplever du dette?
- Hatt mindre å gjøre?
- Deadline?
- Hvem setter deadline? Bedriften/ledelsen? Kunden?
- Arbeidstid/belastning rundt ferdigstillelse av prosjekter?
- Slitne/utbrente arbeidstakere? Tanker om hvorfor?

Lønn:
- Ansatt på norsk kontrakt?
- Det samme i New York?

- Lønnsforhandling – individuelt?
- Likt i New York?
- Hva synes du om lønnssystemet?
- Sammenpressa lønnsnivå

Arbeidstid, overtid

- Timer i uka?
- Normal arbeidstid inkludert overtid
- Mye overtid?
- Hvem jobber overtid?
- Jobber du mye hjemme? –overtid hjemme eller på jobben?
- Overtidskultur – hvordan oppleves den?
- Forventninger i forhold til arbeidsmengde
- Press for å være lenge på jobb?
  - Indre justis?
- Jobbe mye: sett på som verdifullt og viktig? (Hvorfor)
- Gjør bedriften noe med de som jobber for mye?
- Hender det at ledere må sette grenser for hva som er akseptabel arbeidsmengde for ansatte? Når? Hvordan?
- Ferie
  - Praksis?
  - Reforhandles?
- Bedriftspolitikk som demmer opp for at det utvikles en for krevende arbeidskultur?
- Jobbkontrakt
  - underlagt arbeidsmiljøloven?
- Arbeidsmiljøloven:
  - regulerende/grensesettende for arbeidstiden?
- Fagorganisert?
- Forskjell mellom Oslo og New York?
- Ansatterepresentasjon i styret?
- Arbeidsmiljøloven
- Normalarbeidstaker?
- Hvem er normalarbeidstakeren?
- Kjønnsfordelinga?
- Hvem passer Snøhetta best for?

Globalisering (Arbeidsplassen/kontoret)

- antall ansatte?
  - Oslo
  - New York
- Samarbeid på tvers av kontorene?
- Hvordan fungerer det?
- Betydning av internasjonal tilhørighet?
- Engelsk som kontorspråk
- Hvilke nasjonaliteter er representert?
- Betydning
- Jobbe i en organisasjon med internasjonal tilknytning?
- Kulturelle forskjeller?
- Ledelse?

New York

- Arbeidet i New York?

- Hvor lenge?
- Forskjellig fra Oslo?
- Ting som ble gjort annerledes?
- Forskjell på egen innflytelse?
- Beslutningsprosesser i New York
- Flat struktur, hierarkisk?
- Likt hele tida, endrer seg i perioder?
- Arbeidet andre steder?
- Forskjeller sammenlignet med å jobbe for Snøhetta?
- Betydning for deg når det gjelder
  - arbeidsoppgaver
  - samarbeidspartnere
  - arbeidstid og arbeidssted
  - ledelse
- Markedsforhold og framtidsutsikter i bedriften?

Ledelse
- Arbeider med prosjekter
  - Hvordan fungerer det?
  - Hvem tar (de endelige) avgjørelsene?
- Strukturen i konsernet (Oslo)?
- Beslutningsprosessene: alltid lik, eller endrer de seg i forhold til arbeidsbelastning eller lignende?
- Kommunikasjon innad i konsernet?
  - langt opp til ledelsen?
- Hva tør du å ta opp/hva tør du ikke å ta opp (med ledelsen)?
- Hvilket forhold har du til lederne/ledelsen?

Arbeidskultur
- Samhold – Årlig tur på Snøhetta
- Noe lignende i New York
- Den "typiske" Snøhettaansatte
- De som jobber på kontoret: like?
- Hvem som helst passa inn?

Familie, hverdagsliv
- Hjemmelivet på en vanlig hverdag
- Hvem gjør hva?
- Mest slitsomt hjemme?
- Hva kunne gjort hverdagen enklere?
- Snøhettas familiepolitikk
- Helt fri fra jobben?
- Hva med fra familien?

Permisjonsordninger/bruk
- Mange ansatte med barn?
- Tanker om hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?
- Barn et tema på kontoret?
- Vanlig bruk av permisjon i forbindelse med fødsel?
- Hvordan finansierer bedriften permisjonsbruken (gjelder for NY-kontoret)
- Forskjell ved permisjonsbruken i Oslo kontra NY?
- Blir menn oppmuntret?

  - Forskjell mellom Oslo New York?
- Hva med kvinnene (i USA)?
- Bruker ansatte hele permisjonstida?
- forskjell mellom kvinner og menn?
- Tilgjengelighet i permisjonstida
- "Fylle plassen" til den som er ute i permisjon?
- Permisjon oppfattet blant ansatte?
- Oppfattet i USA?
- Ulik holdning til de med og uten barn?
- Hva er en familievennlig bedrift?
- Opplever du at Snøhetta er det?

For de som har barn/benyttet permisjon

- Har du benyttet deg av permisjon?
- Reaksjoner fra kollegaer/arbeidsgiver da du fikk barn
- Hvor lang permisjon har/hadde du?
- Hvor lang tid er det vanlig å få i det landet du bodde i?
- Forhandle med arbeidsgiver om lengde på permisjonen?
- Hvordan opplevdes dette?
- Gunstig for bedriften at:
  - ansatte går raskt tilbake til å jobbe deltid
  - permisjon på heltid, tilbake på heltid etter endt permisjon?
- Jobbet du noe i permisjonstida?
- Reaksjoner i forhold til avbrudd knyttet til barnet (sykdom, henting..)

Appendix 2: Interview guide, New York

Background

- Sex
- Age
- Marital status – partner's work/education?
- Children
- Education – where?
- Where are you from?
- Work with
- Work history: where, country, with what, duration
- How long have you been with Snøhetta New York?
- Why did you apply for a position at Snøhetta?
- Any thoughts as to why you got the job?

The work

- Describe your work
- How is your work organized?
- How do you work? – Teamwork? Many? Often? Closely?
- The most interesting about your work?
- The ideal project? In the future: what do you want to work with?

Working conditions

- How is the company organized?
  - Within: responsibility, assignments
  - Company: ownership, department, distribution of work
- Can you draw an organization chart and place yourself in the chart?
- Do you feel appreciated as an employee?
- What is the most interesting work assignments? Challenging?
- Do you feel that you have any influence?
- Assignments/office: motivates you?
- Other employees: positive/valuable regarding the office – Differs from other N.Y firms?
- Able to do a good job in these working conditions
- What does this mean to you?
- Do you experience your job as seductive?
- All-nighters: time culture

Stress:

- How would you describe your workload?
- Hard to finish your work within normal working hours?
- How do you experience this?
- Wish you had less to do?
- Who decides the deadline? Company/management? Client?
- Work strain close to deadline?
- Can you describe a typical process: stages, project, competitions?

Work hours, overtime

- Hours a week?
- Normal working hours including overtime in a week
- Who works overtime?
- Work a lot at home? – Overtime at home or at the office

- Do you register all your overtime?
- (Over)time culture
- Expectations concerning work amount
- Pressure to stay long at the office – face time
- Long hours: viewed as valuable/important?
- Do the company do anything about employees who work a lot?
- Does anyone put any boundaries concerning amount of work
- Vacation
  - Custom?
  - Re-negotiate?
- Measures taken to avoid development of a too demanding work culture?
- Organized? Trade union?
- Differ between Oslo and New York?
- Employee representation in the board?
- Do you see your job as seductive
- Is Snøhetta a Norwegian company, American company or an international company? – Why?

Pay:
- How is the wage system organized? Individual/collective? – Different from other U.S. firms?
- What is your feelings about payment system/wage plan
- How is your salary compared to others/managers

Globalization
- Cooperation between the two offices?
- How does it work?
- Meaning of working for an international company?
- Cultural differences?
- Leadership?

New York
- For how long have you worked at the New York office?
- Your possibility to influence?
- The decision-making process in the New York office
- Structure? Top down? Egalitarian?
- Does it differ?
- Worked for other companies?
- How is work at Snøhetta compared to your earlier experiences?
  - Assignments/tasks
  - Collaborator/partner
  - Working hours and workplace
  - Leadership

Leadership
- Working on projects
  - How does it work?
  - Who makes the final decisions?
- Decision-making process: always the same, or do they differ according to amount of work etc?
- Communication within the company?
  - Management: long way up?

- What can you talk to the managers about?
- What kind of relationship do you have with the management?

Work culture
- Hiking – Snøhetta
- Similar activity in New York?
- The typical Snøhetta employee
- The employees: homogenous group?
- Would anyone fit/be suitable?

Family life, daily life
- Describe a normal day at home
- Who does what? (if you live with a partner)
- What is the most tiresome at home?
- What could have done your daily life simpler
- Completely off work?
- What about from the family?

Leave of absence/usage
- Many employees with children?
- Any thoughts as to why, why not?
- Children: a topic at the office?
- Normal use of maternity/paternity leave?
- How does the company finance it?
- Differences concerning practice/usage between New York and Oslo?
- Are men encouraged?
  - Different between New York and Oslo?
- What about the women (in New York?)
- Do employees take out all the leave
- Differences between men and women?
- Available during their leave?
- "Compensate" for those who are on leave
- How is maternity/paternity leave perceived among the employees?
- In the States?
- Different attitude towards those with and without children?
- Describe a family friendly company
- Is Snøhetta such a company?

For those who have used maternity/paternity leave
- Have you made use of maternity/paternity leave?
- Reactions from colleagues/employer?
- For how long was your leave of absence?
- How long leave of absence is considered normal in the country you lived in?
- Negotiate with employer?
- How do you experience this?
- Does the company prefer:
  - That employees make a "quick return" and work part time
  - That employees take leave full time, and comes back working full time after the leave time is over?
- Did you work during your leave?
- Reactions concerning interruptions due to children (sick, pick up)