

Securing a Contingent Future.

How threats, risks and identity matter in the debate over
petroleum development in Lofoten, Norway.



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Prologue

This is a thesis based on PhD research work in a project financed by the IPY (International Polar Year), called GAPS (The Impacts of Oil and Gas Development on Peoples Using a Multiple Securities Perspective). Through extensive fieldwork in the Lofoten Region of North-Norway, document and media analysis and participation in scientific conferences, local dialogue and information meetings, I have focussed on the relation between local and national understandings of risks and threats connected to the potential petroleum development of these areas, and how it can be understood in light of social science debates on risk, security, knowledge production and – ultimately – questions of power and rule. My main focus is to show how both local proponents and opponents to future petroleum production in the sea area outside Lofoten experienced a divide between their concerns and discussions, and those conducted by media, politicians and scientists on the national level, a divide which ultimately influenced their sense of (in)security. The work is based on data from fieldwork conducted from two geographical settings; the small fishing village of Ramberg in Western Lofoten, and the more urbanized regional center of Svolvær and Kabelvåg, in the eastern part, two settlements only five kilometres apart with an intimately connected historical past and a planned common future as ‘the Town of Lofoten’, as one interviewee labelled it. Both Ramberg and Svolvær/ Kabelvåg can be regarded as examples of local communities where actors actively respond to state governance and global developments although, as we shall see, with different perceptions of what is at stake, how to deal with it and where to take their communities in the future.

The structure of this thesis

This thesis is divided into two main parts, followed by a summary chapter. In the first part, I present the stage upon which the LoVeSe Case is portrayed as an unfinished *dramatic tale*, in part two. The summary chapter finalizes and sums up the analysis before concluding the theoretical arguments that have been presented. Part one includes the traditional introductory chapters, where the theoretical and methodological considerations upon which this study is based are presented. Part two will include the main bulk of the empirical presentation, where *scenes from the*

research field together with analysis of the material in light of the preceding theoretical arguments are presented. In each of these scenes, themes of importance for the acquisition, adapting, analysing and eventual representation of the knowledge I present in this thesis will be described. Some of the scenes are easily identifiable, either due to their connection with a particular place, event or that it occurred within a specific time frame. Others are more ‘constructed’, as I chose to emphasize how some of the empirical material gathered during my research could be interpreted as laying the foundation for particular ‘scenes’ in which specific actors plays their ‘parts’ in the drama unfolding. And finally, some scenes are constructed on the basis of my need to order my material, as ‘cognitive scenes’ where information scattered in time and space is ordered based on a desire to draw out some trends in the debates as they unfolded during the period from the fall of 2008 to the spring of 2011. I end the thesis with a return to the methodological and theoretical discussions introduced in part one, and will seek to contextualize my empirical and analytical work within the broader debates on peripheral living in general and North-Norwegian societal development in particular, as well as discuss its potential contribution to the on-going debate concerning a broadened and deepened understanding of the security concept.

Thanks

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For the cover of this thesis, Espen Mortensen generously allowed me to use his picture of an old fishing boat turned into a combined play apparatus/ tourist attraction, placed on the town square in Kabelvåg, Lofoten. Thanks also to Carsten Aniksdal for permitting the use of one of his photos.

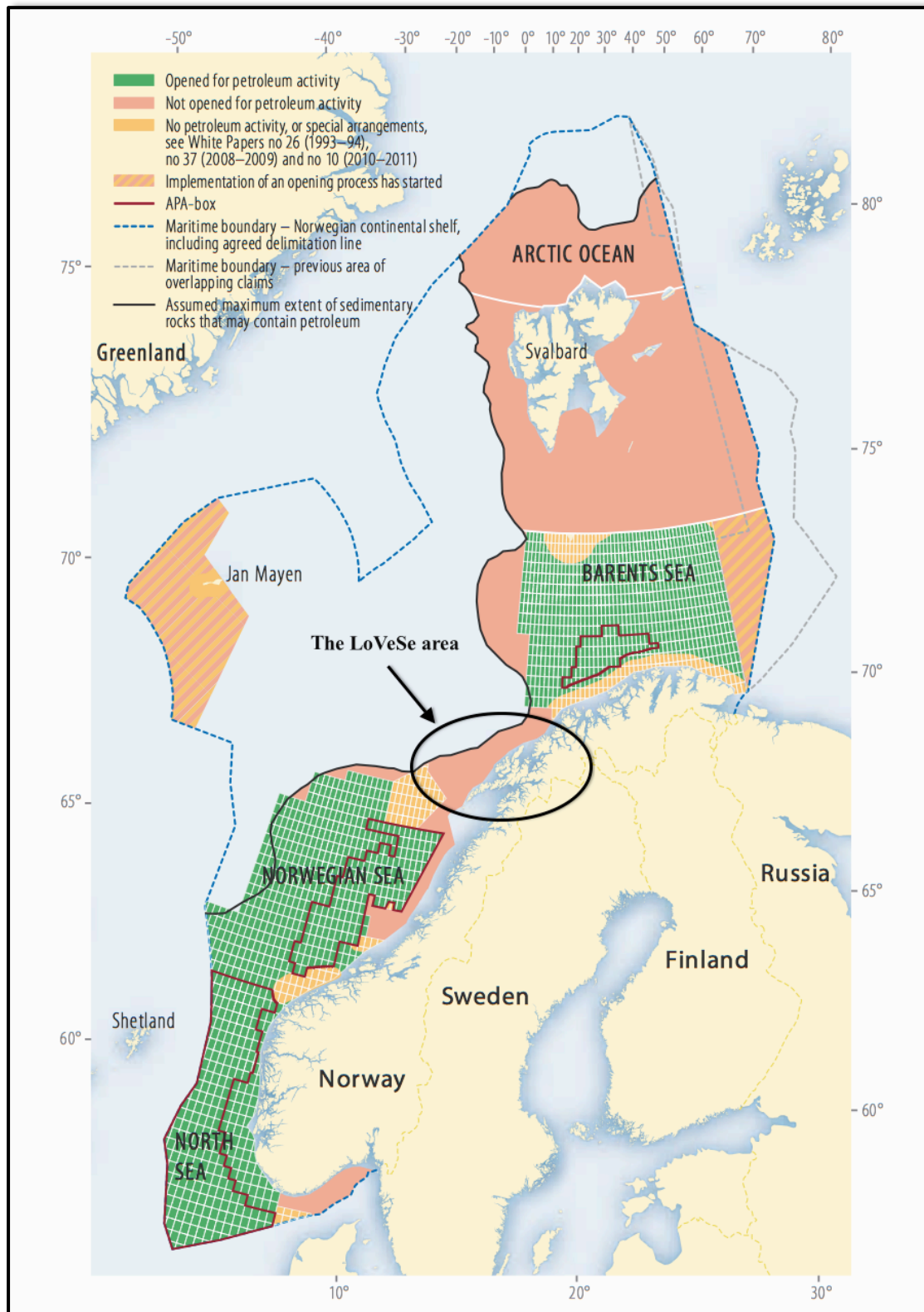
My supervisor Gunhild Hoogensen Gjorv and I have for over three years discussed, debated, argued and finally come to terms with our similarities and differences. I thank you sincerely for your honest comments to my work, for generously sharing your theoretical insight in security theory and for being enthusiastic about my work, in particular in my most indecisive periods.

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Map

Petroleum areas of the Norwegian shelf, April 2011. Source: The Norwegian Petroleum Directorate.



A note on abbreviations, denominations, quotations and translation

I have chosen to use certain Norwegian – and in particular, local – concepts, either because they function as denotations of identity or because they disclose how specific practices, tools or social situations are filled with (symbolic) meaning. In other words, they are concepts that are understood to have symbolic, conceptual significance *beyond* its strictly linguistic meaning (i.e. where the word itself *when used* reflects a specific positioning, a categorization or an ontological position). When these words – or phrases – first appear in the text, they are of course translated and explained, then used – *in italics* – true to its native origin. Thus, for example, the concept *nordlending* will be translated and explained (as meaning ‘*being from the north*’ or simply ‘*northerner*’) before again used in Norwegian. In this way I wish to adhere to the notion of its importance – to the extent it is possible within the framework of a thesis written in English – as an identity marker, filled with meaning which lies beyond translation between languages.

Concerning abbreviations, I have chosen to translate the full names of firms, agencies, organisations and so on, before introducing the *Norwegian abbreviation* (ex. Statistisk sentralbyrå, translated to Statistics Norway, abbreviation: SSB), before continuing to use the Norwegian abbreviation. The reason for this choice, is that in daily speech, the abbreviations are what is in use most of the time, and not the full name. Again, the choice has been made based on a desire to remain as ‘close’ to the empirical material as possible.

As this is a thesis based on empirical material from a Norwegian setting, naturally a lot of material – including my own written notes from field, reports, novels, newspaper articles, radio and TV debates and scientific material – is originally in Norwegian. Whenever I have myself translated any material, it will be indicated in the text, usually in brackets (‘... my translation’). In addition, it should be noted that I have – in accordance with the wishes of some of my informants – anonymized some specific statements and/ or situations where the informant in question has requested it, or where I have considered it to be of neither interest nor particularly important to connect the information to a particular person. In other situations – for instance when persons have made statements as public figures, they have not been anonymized, neither have I chosen to conceal the identity of informants who have obviously spent

both time and patience on me and my work, and who's contribution therefore should be acknowledged publicly. The decisions concerning anonymizations are of course mine alone, and I thus solely bear responsibility for these choices (see also chapter 2.7).

And finally, an explanatory comment is needed concerning the somewhat confusing use and abuse of denomination of the sea areas in question, - that is, where petroleum production might be initiated. In the debate this thesis will go into, the area is alternately denominated as *the Lofoten seas*, *the area outside Lofoten and Vesterålen* (abbr. *LoVe*), *the area outside Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja* (abbr. *LoVeSe*), and - to make things worse - the concepts identifying these areas as potential petroleum fields, *Nordland VI*, *Nordland VII* and *Troms II*. The reason for this confusion is that actors involved use these concepts somewhat uncritically; another is that the use of concepts often indicates a positioning - be it intentionally or unintentionally - in the debate. If one is talking about petroleum development, the denominations from petroleum are often preferred; when discussing fisheries, 'Lofoten seas', *LoVe* or *LoVeSe* is more common. A complicating matter is that the debate on petroleum development in this area has gradually widened its focus; from seeing the Lofoten and Vesterålen regions as the areas which were to be most affected, a decision by the regional folk movement against petroleum development to include the region of Senja more explicitly in effect changed the abbreviation *LoVe* to *LoVeSe*. Therefore, both these abbreviations show up in my empirical material. Again, I have tried to be faithful to these sources, and have therefore used the concepts in the manner I have encountered them, providing an explanatory comment where I have seen the need for it. It is, however, important for me to explicitly state that my main concern - empirically - has been aimed towards Lofoten, and my specific fieldwork sites in particular, but that an inclusion of concerns and debates involving the whole region has been necessary and enlightening, as local actors in Lofoten of course tied their arguments to the future of the whole northern province, and not restricted them to Lofoten alone.

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Part One

1 Introduction

The question whether or not to allow for petroleum development in the sea areas just outside the regions Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja (abbr. LoVeSe)¹ has been a matter of political controversy in Norway at least since 2001, when the first Stoltenberg Cabinet declared the area a non-petroleum site, pending further assessments (see chapter 4). The matter can be seen as having international, national, regional and local connotations. Internationally, the question of energy security is one of many concerns which ties directly on to this matter; likewise, the matter of global climatic changes. Nationally, the steady income from the petroleum sector as well as its importance as an employer of as much as 76000 people within the country² has created what many commentators see as a symbiotic relationship between the state and the industry (Al-Kasim 2006; Johnsen 2008; Ryggvik 2009; Sætre 2010), leading to a notion of inevitability in terms of what we do as a nation: We look for and extract petroleum, and we do it well. Regionally, in Northern Norway, the petroleum industry has for the last two decades steadily gained ground, and has with the opening of the Snehvit gas field and the LNG facility at Melkøya outside the town of Hammerfest in 2007, reached as far as 70 degrees north. Many, both in the north and on the national level, see it as a major impetus for change as it is believed to initiate a major industrialization of the northernmost regions of the country. In this respect, opening the sea areas outside LoVeSe is nothing more than a ‘natural’ inclusion into the

¹ I will present more thoroughly the regions in question later. Here, it suffices to note briefly that the regions Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja together make up a significant part of the Northern Norwegian seashore, outside which some of the most abundant coastal fisheries of the world takes place (see chapter 6). The abbreviation LoVeSe will be used throughout this thesis, when matters discussed can be appropriated to all three regions, as they often appear as one singular entity of concern in the political debate

² The figure is contested, and subject to manipulation by actors both critical and positive to petroleum. See chapter 4.



Summer in Svolvær harbour, Lofoten. Photo: The author.

‘petroleum era’ of a region where the potential for profitable findings of hydrocarbons are high. The matter, of course, has the potential to influence local lives, both in terms of work opportunities and livelihood, development strategies, municipal finances – and perceptions of what is threatening and risky, and therefore what is needed for people to feel secure. As we shall see, this matter is not at all unproblematic, and a focus on *community and individual notions of security* provides an opportunity to question many of the pre-conceived ideas about which policies best secures a population *and* enables it to secure itself, both economically, socially, culturally and geopolitically.³

This work is theoretically influenced by work on how power and the act of governing influences the security of individuals and communities, but also on how individuals and communities are (en)able(d) to secure themselves. Using theoretical concepts developed within governmentality studies (Foucault 2007; 2008; Dean 2010) coupled

³ Reaching a universal security definition has been shown to be controversial (see chapter 3). Therefore, *what security is, how it is obtained and who and what creates security for whom* will be essential questions in the following pages. The concept will therefore have to be understood here in its *emic* (that is, as culturally and implicitly meaningful) capacity, and is therefore not ‘objectively’ defined, pending the theoretical discussions in chapter 3.

with theories on risk, cultural studies and identity construction (see chapter 3), I aim at analyzing how a particular regime of practices (that of management of resources) is seen *from the periphery*, using data from fieldwork in Lofoten. With this material, which stems from a combination of ethnographic fieldwork, in-depth interviews, media coverage and document analysis, I aim not only at presenting the local ideas and understandings concerning risks, threats and security concerns, but also at analyzing how the particular governmentality to which the Norwegian High North Strategy, the management of petroleum and fishery resources, and development plans for the Northernmost regions of the country can be ascribed influences local security concerns. This ambition requires that a theoretical foundation for an understanding of security based on how different actors identify threats and manage risks is established. It demands an understanding of what is needed in order to identify threats, define risks and ultimately describe how people deal with them as a security concern.

I will argue that the matter of *who secures who and how* should be left open for empirical investigation and subsequent analysis and not be subjected to *a priori* notions of who relevant security actors are, or which issues should be deemed 'real' security issues. In this thesis I therefore argue for a *multiple actor approach* in studying local responses to the petroleum debate, that is, the local perceptions of potential risks, threats and positive effects connected to petroleum production. My main reason for wanting to apply a multiple actor framework is that I found that I during fieldwork met a number of individual actors and institutions who were active in the identification and management of threats and risks, and were thus also potential producers of both security and insecurity (Stern 2006; Stuvøy 2011; Hoogensen Gjørsv Forthcoming). In other words, the perceptions concerning who the relevant security actors are and how their acts are understood in terms of security is important, as is the matter of how a particular political decision concerning petroleum development can spur both a sense of security and insecurity. A *widening* of the security concept that includes themes, concerns, threats and risks that matter for people locally also requires a *deepening*, as we move closer to communities and everyday lives of individuals. A broader security concept also requires a methodology sensitive to how power, and in particular *the power to define* what knowledge is and what is not relevant in any particular matter, manifests itself in society and how to study it. I will in chapters 2 and 3 in more detail show how arguments from both governmentality

studies, cultural studies and ethnography are relevant for why I want to investigate these processes with a local point of view, using ethnographic methods.

In the following, therefore, the aim will be both to argue for *a broadened and deepened understanding of the security concept* and for *a multiple actor perspective* when empirically investigating how security is understood locally. Both of these themes will be further described in chapter 3. Here, however, I will on the basis of this preliminary introduction formulate the following question, aiming at clarifying my overall analytical ambition: How can a broadened and deepened security concept enable an analysis of how multiple actors and perspectives influence local debates over petroleum in Lofoten?

The question will be sought answered through an analysis of how these local debates concerning petroleum also spurred other discussions and reflections about people's lives; how their stories about the past and ideas about the future all circled around matters in which *how they see themselves as being secured* and *how to secure themselves* were important. In this sense, petroleum was merely one many topics (although important!) via which people in field discussed and identified both explicit and implicit variables that were believed to influence their security. In general, the topic opens for more discussions on who are securing who, through which action(s), and how people in fact secure themselves.

This work evolves around three overarching political themes: the development of the fisheries in Norway, the Norwegian petroleum state, and how scientific knowledge production informs politics. All of these themes influence – and are influenced by – broader discussions concerning issues like sustainable development, climate change and resource management, to name but a few. They also tie specifically on to debates and discussions about local identity, local knowledge and the relation between knowledge and (political) power. And finally, as I will show, these concerns are ultimately tied to understandings of threats and risks, and thus here sought analyzed and explained through an understanding of risk and security as primary concerns in peoples lives (see chapter 3). All of these themes and debates have been found to influence perceptions of threats, risks and security in field, but will not all be of equal importance for my analysis, as my main focus even when analyzing state politics and governmental processes has been on the local level, on lives lived in Lofoten.

I have relied on methods which all fall under the umbrella of a qualitative ethnographic methodology. These methods include participatory observation, in-depth qualitative interviews, document analysis and literature studies (which have included both fiction and non-fiction literature). Thomas Hylland Eriksen is but one of many ethnographers who has emphasized the importance of utilizing a multitude of sources when doing ethnographic fieldwork (Eriksen 1991), and I have in field gained much insight into the societies in question from both popular culture, self-experiences and the reflections on the society of others – be they scientists, novelists, journalists or ‘the man (or women) on the street’. Like Sara Delamont, I too had the ambition she imputes to doing ethnography that it requires one to “write the most detailed fieldwork notes (and) sweep up any documents, pictures or ephemera available” (Delamont 2007: 213).

I will further argue that the people, defined as a population, are in this ‘high north’ policy scheme first and foremost seen as an object of research and ‘high politics’, to be managed (just as petroleum, fish, ecosystems and so on). The way this influences individuals’ sense of agency, ability to act, and enable (or *unable*) them to make decisions which can shape their own future is also a matter which needs to be investigated empirically (Foucault and Gordon 1980; Foucault 2007; De Larrinaga and Doucet 2008). This is similar to the processes described as *biopolitics* by Michel Foucault and developed further in the literature within *governmentality studies* (Dupont and Pearce 2001; Lemke 2002; Valverde 2007; Collier 2009; Dean 2010; Joseph 2010), where critical attention is directed to the connection between power and knowledge (that which Foucault called *a power/knowledge nexus*). Likewise, science is seen as a basic prerequisite for much policy development in Norway in general, but in particular when considering resource management and – as an extension – politics concerning regional development and settlement patterns of the northern regions. The *thick description* (Geertz 1973) in part two, of fieldwork experiences as well as descriptions of dialogue meetings, media debates and official documents in the intense political debate on whether to allow for petroleum production in this area will make up the empirical background for an analysis of both the High North Politics of the Norwegian state, the management regime within which both petroleum and fisheries policies are included, as well as of how local opponents and proponents to potential petroleum excavation reflected on matters of identity on the basis of notions

of threats, risks and security.

All through the following chapters, then, empirical descriptions will be presented along with contextualizing texts and analysis. Within the framework of governmentality, I wish to show how governmental practices aiming at *securing population* also create *insecurities*. Through the use of theories of risk policy and risk management, I aim at showing how the notion of a clear demarcation between politics and science is blurred in practice, by both politicians and scientists. And I will describe and analyze the way local identities are being (re)constituted through the debate on petroleum development in the north, and how a state-run high north politics has spurred both enthusiasm for and resentment to the new possible petroleum ‘fairytale’ in the north.

Analyzing how the practices through which the state manages its resources is important when seeking to understand its influence on local perceptions of risks and threats. It follows from this that I see state policies – aiming at securing the Norwegian population – as being based on a *rationale* different from that of many local actors and communities. This causes tensions and political controversy, and these tensions are revealed in a power relationship where the question of the production of (relevant) knowledge is highly pertinent. In other words: What is seen from the state level as measures aiming at creating security (for instance in terms of economic stability and progress) might be, from a local point of view, seen as a threat to values and assets which are important for the securing of local communities, ontologically as well as physically and economically. In other words, state protagonists – contrary to their intentions – create *insecurity* as well as security. *Being secure* is not only about controlling and decreasing the consequences of *objective threats*. It is just as much about *feeling secure*. The Norwegian social anthropologist Thomas Hylland Eriksen has called this phenomenon ‘secure sociality’:

“A relaxed intimacy engulfs secure sociality. It is related to Tönnies concept of *Wesensville*, which in his view characterized life in the *Gemeinschaft*, that traditional community where everybody knew each other and had a limited horizon of opportunities” (Eriksen 2005)

Contrasting the *Gemeinschaft*, Ferdinand Tönnies’ *Gesellschaft* in turn refers to that larger unit, that *Imagined Community* (Anderson 2006 (1983)) of constructed notions

of togetherness and common destiny, in which ‘inherited security’ is lessened, but opportunities plentiful. In it, the inevitability of village life is replaced by the possibilities of the contingent future of a more complex society. Others, like Zygmunt Bauman (2000), Anthony Giddens (1991), Ulrich Beck (1992), Mary Douglas (1982) and Niklas Luhmann (1993) have also been concerned with what provides a sense of (in)security in communities, and shown that it varies socially and culturally, and that it is a complex question beckoning a more elaborate interpretive analysis than a simplistic duality based on a hierarchal notion of development like the one presented by Tönnies. Like Eriksen, I believe that the dualism of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* is too simplistic for this matter, as traditional life by no means is (neither was) static, unchanging and without both inner processes of change and outside influences which had to be dealt with on the premise of ontological redefinitions of meaning and content. An example from Lofoten illustrates the complexity concerning *what it means to be secure*: Many fishers, both young and old, told me about the habit most fishers had in trying to get their sons to do whatever they could to avoid becoming fishers themselves; an intent to let their sons see possibilities beyond the *gemeinschaft*, the traditional fishing community, where things were *predictably unpredictable* and insecure in some sense, infinitely predictable and secure in others. The sense of security which is connected to the hands-on, culturally based embodied practices of everyday fishing cannot hide the fact that life in a fishing village in the past was chronically insecure: Fishers often died at sea, the fish could fail to appear, and hard physical labor and a harsh climate had people succumb to illness, diseases and injuries. Still, a *sense of being secure* in a well-known environment would in this setting mean that people identify threats and risks and see them as a part of the meaningful world in which one lives – and that they accept the presence of these threats and risks without being able to eliminate them. Knowing the world in which one lives is the basis for the notion of *ontological security*, a concept which will be explored in chapter 3, but which here can be defined as “...the confidence most human beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments of action” (Giddens 1990: 92). Today though, many feel the *Gemeinschaft*-like security of the community in which they grew up as a strait jacket that hampers possibilities which a life *less secured* (at least in an ontological sense) opens up for. The burden of *having to be there* is gone, - society at large and economic development has provided new opportunities. The paradox lies in

the fact that the same people who wish for their sons *not* to become fishers, they have also continued to fight for the freedom to choose in society; a choice which must also include the possibility of staying behind in *the villages*.

It is in these tensions – between *diverging security needs and interests*, and *in the inherent duality of security* (also called *the (in)security phenomena* (Stern 2006)) – that we can start investigating the matter at hand. I will in chapter 3 more thoroughly engage in theoretical discussions about threats, risks and security, but will here introduce briefly a theoretical argument that is meant to frame the following analysis: In the absence of a *gemeinshaft* reaching to every corner of the nation state, it is the task of state politics to create a sense of ontological security in the population, in the sense that

“... modern governance provides just *one* of the elements that contribute towards the extent in which, in Giddesian terms, ordinary people in their everyday lives feel ontologically secure (...) or indeed, existentially anxious (an anxiety about their place in the grand scheme of things)” (Marlow 2002: 243).

This shows that governance can sometimes create *insecurity* as well. Thus it is clear that the sense of ontological security created by *community* might be just as important as that which is embedded in the practices of the state, and that sometimes – as is the case of Lofoten and petroleum – national politics aiming at securing the whole (national) population can be seen as *opposing* locally based security created in Lofoten, - a notion beckoning empirical investigation.

A central example of how the Norwegian state aims at securing its population is its high north policy initiative, which in essence is a part of a larger political debate concerning natural resource extraction – which in turn can be regarded as a security concern for the state. Thus, I will use some space describing the Norwegian High North Policy, and why it is of importance for the state. At the same time I will show how other actors describe and relate to the High North initiative, focusing thematically on fish, petroleum and science, and with a particular concern for local voices, as these local concerns will first and foremost come from the people amongst whom I did my fieldwork, in the Lofoten region, but also from what is identified as important ‘actor clusters’ in this case; an active petroleum lobby, a similarly active

national environmental movement, a regional cluster of industrialists and representatives of the private business sector, the fishery organizations and their counterparts, the national political parties and, finally, the news media.

Methodologically, a major driving force behind the arguments that is to be presented is the need for empirical studies in connection with a broadened and deepened security stance in general (see chapter 3), and also when analyzing matters of risk, threats and security in relation to oil and gas development in Northern Norway in particular. The point is that definitions of security threats which are made relevant in any particular specific setting, is a matter of empirical examination (Owen 2004). In this case an empirical examination will be conducted using a multiple methods approach in line with what Patrick Baert, arguing for a pragmatist social science, has described as *methodological pluralism* (Baert 2005: 150), and influenced in particular by methods developed within the ethnographical tradition (see for instance Spradley and McCurdy 1972; Briggs 2007; O'Reilly 2009: 3). The rationale for this focus is the need for methodologies utilizing a range of data gathering methods when applying a 'bottom-up approach' to security studies in domestic politics in Norway (Hoogensen and Rottem 2004; Hoogensen and Stuvoy 2006). The local perspective is – as mentioned – my main focus of analysis, and I will therefore argue that the dynamics of local-global worlds (as presented for instance by Zygmunt Baumann as *liquid modernity* (2000)) is best investigated and understood within the framework of the tradition of ethnographic research. I will pursue in more detail these arguments in chapter 2.

I have chosen to use the analogy of a screenplay for the presentation of my field material. The reason for this is that I wanted to be able to present the material in a way that made sense according to an idea of the matter of petroleum development in LoVeSe as a dramatic tale still unfolding in which several themes concerning peoples lives are present. For instance, when we in chapter 5 read how the two fishers Ivar and Henrik talked about their lives at sea and onshore, we see that they communicated ideas about what is worth securing, and what is worth fighting for. They also revealed a pragmatism and adaptability towards both natural and political changes and indeed a cultural adaptability which enabled them to moderate their lives and professional skills in a way that made life on board a small boat, as fishers, manageable, even profitable. The ability to adapt to nature is embedded in their heritage, as their

definition of risk and threats originating ‘from nature’ included an acceptance of the contingency involved when living in a symbiotic relationship with one’s surroundings. As an elderly fisher told me when I asked him about how he would describe the sea and its characteristics: “The sea gives, and the sea takes”.⁴

Summarized then, I will in the following show how the matter of petroleum development outside Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja has been debated, primarily locally in Lofoten, but also in the North-Norwegian province and on the national scene. These descriptions will then be sought analyzed within a theoretical framework in which *a broadening and deepening* of the security concept and a *multiple actor perspective* is operationalized. For this, I will in chapter 3 describe theoretical debates and concepts ‘beyond’ the security debate - mainly concerning risk theory, cultural theory (and identity construction) and governmentality studies, but also refer back to chapter 2 - on methods and methodology - as the theoretical concepts are indeed closely intertwined with the methodological considerations underpinning this work. The analysis in chapters 4 and 5 will thus reveal to what extent these concepts and theoretical debates can be found to be pertinent when seeking to analyze local debates in Lofoten. Therefore, I will in the final concluding chapter describe the operationalization challenges I encountered, how this process has influenced my epistemological stance, and in what way my work here can spur new questions and alternatives to the way we seek to understand local perceptions of threats, risks and security matters - and why these perceptions should matter.

2 Background and methodology

In this chapter I will provide what I see as important background information for understanding the issue at hand. First, I will provide a short introduction of the regions Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja of Northern Norway. Then, I will give a brief account of the close relation between the petroleum sector and politics in Norway. I will then situate myself – the researcher, analyst and writer – in relation to both the field and the political case, before presenting my chosen research methods and the narrative style for the thesis.

⁴ Informant 13, 2009

2.1 Where are we?

Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja are three regions in Northern Norway, the two first a part of Nordland County, whilst Senja belongs to Troms County. Ragged coastlines and high mountains characterize all three regions. The climate is rough – with long winters and short summers. In the wintertime, northern lights flair the skies, whilst the midnight sun provides a welcoming extension of sunny periods during the summer season, provided the weather is good enough for the sun to appear at all.

On January 1st 2011, the Lofoten region, consisting of the municipalities Vågan, Vestvågøy, Flakstad, Moskenes, Værøy and Røst, had 23.636 registered inhabitants. Vesterålen, with municipalities Andøy, Bø, Hadsel, Sortland and Øksnes had a population of 25.002 and the island of Senja approx. 7600.^{5,6} In these areas (abbr. LoVeSe), people have traditionally relied on the sea, both for income and as a travel route. Today, a network of roads ties most communities together, but just a few decades ago, many were dependent on ferries or the coastal steamer that for over a century has been considered the lifeline of the Norwegian coast, bringing both people and goods to and from fishing communities, trading centres and industrial towns alike. Most settlements, be they large or small, were originally based on fisheries, and many still rely on income from the sea – as costal fishers and trawler crew, or as seamen in cargo shipping or the petroleum industry (which in Norway is an offshore activity).

LoVeSe has been dominated by what has been called fisher/ farmer households – a denomination reflecting the need for families to both fish and farm for subsistence – and the settlements are typically scattered along the coast. One will find clusters that have developed into fishing villages, but there are also large areas where settlements are dispersed. Shipping, dockyards, mining activities, public administration and small-scale industry have been the main drivers behind the development of small

⁵ See Statistics Norways web page: <http://www.ssb.no/bef tett/tab-2011-06-17-02.html> (accessed August 25th, 2011), where a list of municipalities and their population size can be found. Senja includes Berg, Torsken, Tranøy and part of Lenvik municipalities.

⁶ I have chosen to relay my sources in newspapers, radio-and TV broadcasts (including webcasts) and online publications in footnotes Excepted are feature articles and letters to editors in newspapers, where actors themselves are the writers. These are listed, together with books, reports and academic papers, in the literature section.



The typical blue light of winter. Ramberg, Lofoten, March 2009. Photo: The author.

towns and cities in the regions (Eriksen 1996; Jaklin 2006). In Lofoten, there are two small towns; Svolvær in the east and Leknes in the west. In Svolvær, public administration, a strong shipyard industry and a booming tourism sector has taken over for the fisheries as its main *raison d'être*, whilst at Leknes, trade and administration are the main sectors, in a municipality where both fisheries and farming still holds strong. In total, though, as earnings have risen per fisher due to technological innovation and managerial and policy reforms within the fisheries, the number of fishers in Lofoten has been steadily decreasing (in short, each fisher catches more fish, therefore there is no need for a large number of them), as shown in the statistics: In 1983, Vågan had 508 registered full-time fishers, Vestvågøy 705. The smaller, more fishery dependent municipalities further west - Flakstad, Moskenes, Værøy and Røst - had 285, 271, 148 and 130, respectively. In 2010, the number of active fishers was less than half of that of 1983, in all Lofoten municipalities.⁷ Over the same period, centralization trends pulled people out of the region – mostly

⁷ Figures taken from statistics prepared by the Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries, downloadable as Excel-file "Hovedyrke, aldre, kommunenivå" under the heading '*Fiskere, fordelt etter alder på kommunenivå for perioden 1983-2010*', at <http://www.fiskeridir.no/statistikk/fiskeri/fiskere-fartoy-og-tillatelser/opplysninger-om-fiskere-fra-fiskermanntallet>. Accessed August 25th, 2011.

southwards to the mayor Norwegian cities – but also towards province centers like Bodø and Tromsø. This meant that the relative importance of the main settlements in Lofoten – Leknes and Svolvær – grew as well, as administration, trade and production of goods was centralized.

2.2 Norway, petroleum – and the way north

The LoVeSe regions– and perhaps Lofoten in particular – are emblematic for the way a large number of Norwegians for centuries has depended on the sea for subsistence and development. Fish was, together with timber and minerals, cast iron, coal and natural stone, the main export commodity of the country, and the Lofoten fisheries the very treasure trove of the fisheries sector (see chapter 5). However, during the 1960's an increasing interest from international petroleum actors who had some years earlier made hydrocarbon discoveries in the southern parts of the North Sea (off the coast of The Netherlands and the British Isles) forced the Norwegian government to react. In 1963, they proclaimed Norwegian sovereignty over the continental shelf, with rights to "... exploit and explore the natural deposits, (...) without reference to the otherwise existing sea borders, but not extending beyond a centre line towards other states" (The Gerhardsen Cabinet's resolution to the Parliament, quoted in Johnsen 2008: 18, my translation). Three years later, ESSO started test drilling off the coast near Stavanger in the south-western part of the country, and in 1969, Phillips together with the Norwegian petroleum company Hydro found Ekofisk, still today one of the largest petroleum deposits of the North Sea. Since then, the industry has left a profound imprint on the Norwegian society. In a report prepared by a collaborative consortium involving actors from industry and policy and administration called KONKRAFT (2008), developments are described in economic terms as fundamental and irreversible. The report portrays a development trend where an increase of net cash flow from the industry to the Norwegian state from 1970 until 2007 has reached NOK 2800 billion in total (ibid: 20, Figure 2.10), where the Norwegian business sector is dominated by energy companies, most of them of course embedded in the petroleum sector (ibid: 23, Figure 2.13), and where the number of employees in the sector is stipulated to be 76.600 persons (ibid: 24-25, Figure 2.15), with a synergistic effect on



Old gasoline pump. Sørvågen, Lofoten. May 2009. Photo: The author.

the rest of the business sector stipulated to amount to 220.000 employees in total (see also Kristoffersen 2007: 10-12)⁸.

Most of these work places have thus far been localized in southern Norway, in Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger and surrounding areas. Areas north of the 62nd latitude (just south of the Polar Circle) were in a now infamous White Paper (Norway 1974) modelling the future ‘petroleum fairytale’ declared off-limits for the petroleum sector, even though some seismic activities did take place during the seventies (Thesen and Leknes 2010: 52-53). Another White Paper from the early 1970’s identified the lack of clear definitions of sea borders and geological endpoints for the Norwegian continental shelf north of the 62nd latitude as problems that needed to be solved in order to enable “... a substantially greater national involvement when looking for and extracting petroleum than what has been the case thus far south of the 62nd” (Norway 1971: 23, my translation), but with a third White paper released specifically on the issue of opening the areas in the north (Norway 1980), it could seem like the petroleum era had finally come to Northern Norway. For a few years, optimism reigned; petroleum bases were built in Hammerfest, Finnmark, and Harstad, Troms, and reports on findings started coming in: In Troms, the fields *Askeladd* and *Albatross*

⁸ Other sources reveal somewhat different figures, and are as mentioned on page 3 subject to manipulation and dependent on how one chooses to define the parameters of ‘the petroleum industry’. (Arbo 2008).

were found in 1982 and in Finnmark, *Snøhvit* in 1984, all predominantly gas fields. Also further south, in Nordland County, several findings suggested that petroleum development would be initiated. But during the 1980's, sinking oil and gas prices and competition from large findings of oil further south – which were closer to the main distribution web transporting oil and gas to the European market – meant that the interest in investing in infrastructure and a development of gas production in the north cooled off considerably (Arbo 2010).

Another factor that in this respect could be seen as disadvantageous for petroleum development of the north was a change in petroleum development policy on the national level. Peter Arbo shows that with the introduction in the early 1980s of a new, neoliberal political regime under conservative party leader and Prime Minister Kåre Willoch, regional policy concerns – which originally had been strongly emphasized in the managerial structure of 'the Norwegian model' (Al-Kasim 2006; Johnsen 2008) – were disregarded, favouring a politics in which development of new areas should be based on commercial terms only (Arbo 2010: 101), terms which were disadvantageous for the Northern province, due to the above mentioned circumstances. Many commercial actors in the north suffered losses, and Northern Norway remained detached from the rest of the petroleum-driven economic development that revitalized the south-western and north-western regions of the country.

In 1994, when I as a young student moved to Tromsø, a university town and in spite of its modest size and population figure the spearhead of development in the northernmost part of the Barents region, no one spoke of petroleum development. It was as if that chapter was closed. Debates soared over membership in the European Union, and regional politics were characterized by discussions about a fishery sector withering away and the need for new incentives for the northern regions. Even so, petroleum development did not reappear in public discourse in the manner one had seen in the 70 and 80's, and the renewed interest in the northernmost regions concerning petroleum again was initiated from elsewhere. In Russia, the Stockman field was being prepared, and in the Norwegian Sea – around the previous 'border' for petroleum production at 62° north - production was about to start. Also, the more mature fields in the North Sea were, if not running dry, at least showing signs of slowly approaching their end points. The Norwegian petroleum industry was in need of new areas, and a new initiative from the government called *The Barents Sea*

project, in which new concessions in the Barents sea were handed out, spurred new interest. In 2000, new test drillings were conducted in the Barents sea and in 2002, the plans for an LNG (liquid natural gas) production plant for the *Snøhvit* gas was confirmed at Hammerfest (Arbo and Hersoug 2010: 173). The petroleum industry had, it seemed, finally arrived in the north.

It's time for a small change of scenery. The background and development which eventually made the north in general and LoVeSe in particular of interest for industry and politicians will be further developed in chapter 5, where I describe the connection between high north policies and petroleum development. Instead I will direct attention to the way my interest in this case was triggered, and how my interest and background influenced both the theme and specific geographical setting of this study.

2.3 Being connected, becoming curious

I had been living in Northern Norway for over a decade, in Tromsø, Troms when I one day in early June 2008 was driving across the bridge from the mainland to the Tromsø Island, listening to the radio. The afternoon top news story was that the period for seismic shooting which was to take place in the sea areas outside of the Lofoten and Vesterålen regions called Nordland VII and Troms II would have to be prolonged due to a series of problems. The fishers in the region were outraged, and the heads of the Petroleum Directorate (*Oljedirektoratet*, *abbr. OD*) were driven on the defensive when trying to explain what was the cause for this prolongation. A fire on board a seismic vessel was mentioned, as well as problems concerning the research activities that were to follow the seismic shooting, monitoring possible scare effects and mortality in fish stocks. Lawsuits were filed, and scientists from the Institute for Marine Research in Bergen as well as the OD operational management were strongly criticized in public debates.

A few weeks later, I was visiting the small picturesque village of Reine in Western Lofoten. My wife and I had together with some friends hired a traditional fishing shack (called a '*rorbu*') for a couple of days, and intended to spend them hiking and *haute cuisine*-binging at the excellent restaurant there. On our arrival, we realized that the Minister for Environmental issues, Mr. Erik Solheim, had just finished a press conference in the village, where he had strongly promoted the idea of applying for a World Heritage Site status from UNESCO, and thus, in his view, bringing to an

effective close the debate concerning whether or not to allow petroleum extraction in the area. As I read the news coverage of the happening the following day, I remember thinking that it was a strong indication of things to come, and that a minister in office publicly rooting for a solution which would hinder the continuation of petroleum development along the Norwegian coast surely had to be on a different path than Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg, as well as a number of his colleagues in the Cabinet. I had started my PhD period only a month before, and was looking for a case through which I could combine the development of a theoretical argument within the security debate with empirical studies of local perceptions of positive and negative responses to petroleum development in the north – in line with the expectations of the international research project to which I was assigned - and here it was. A case that not only was politically potent, but also could be used as a site for investigations into how petroleum politics and security concerns in the north could be analysed. But there was another reason as well, as I had for over 15 years been particularly interested in the area.

I first went to Lofoten in the Easter of 1994, together with my girlfriend, later to become my wife. I was to visit her home town of Kabelvåg and meet her parents. We travelled by car from Tromsø, where we had met and where we both were studying at the university. This was before the construction of the road connection through the eastern part of Lofoten called ‘Lofast’ (a road connecting Lofoten with the mainland), so we travelled through the small towns of Sortland and Stokmarknes in Vesterålen before reaching the ferry at Melbu, which was to take us to Fiskebøl in Lofoten. There another 25-minute drive awaited us before arriving in Kabelvåg, where Kjersti was raised, and where my future in-laws lived. For five days we roamed the area close to the village. She took me to the nearby mountain tops so as to get a first glimpse of the magnificent view westwards, we went skiing on one of the small lakes and partying with her friends in the neighbouring town of Svolvær or at the local pub by the quay. Meeting these young people intrigued me, as they all – in spite of the fact that most of them had already been away from their hometown for some time – seemed to emit a common love for and sense of belonging to their place of upbringing which was unfamiliar to me.

My fascination had much to do with the surroundings as well. In fair weather, the sun could cast its pleasant light upon white, shimmering peaks; but when storm arrived,

the same mountains seemed threatening, as they leaned over and towards the narrow strip of land between slope and sea where the small community of people nested. As a young man raised in the Eastern part of Norway, where forests, farmed land and wide inland landscapes dominated, the combination of mountain peaks and vast oceans was new and exotic, as was the history upon which these communities ultimately rests. Growing up, little was taught to us in the southern part of the country about the history of the more distant regions, and no part of Norway was as mysterious and neglected in our education as North-Norway. As for Lofoten, its almost mythological status as the birthplace for the *Lofotskrei* (North-Atlantic Cod in spawning season) was secured through children's songs and tales of the harsh lives of fishermen and – fishers wives, but little or no details were revealed, and it was only when I started studying at the University of Tromsø that I got the first real glimpses of what life must have been like in these parts in the past.

There will be more on the history of the Lofoten region and its importance for the construction of a specific identity called *Lofoting* (simply meaning 'being from Lofoten) in chapter 5. Here it is sufficient to note that my connection to Lofoten is rooted in more than an analytical, or academic, interest. As I am married to a *Lofoting*, I have family ties to the region, and my future is tied to it as well, as we – my wife, our three children and myself moved to Kabelvåg in Eastern Lofoten, Kjerstis place of upbringing, in the summer of 2011.

I believe it is important to account for my strong ties to the region in which I have done my fieldwork for this thesis. Not unlike Danish anthropologist Kirsten Hastrup, I find that it is important to "... connect (...) personal experience with a general field of knowledge" (Hastrup 1992: 117), and as a consequence, a work like this needs descriptions of the experiences which has – both before, during and after my fieldwork periods – influenced my positioning to the field. Therefore, all through this text, my presence will be made explicit, as I am responsible for the construction of the plot around which I have chosen to present my work.

2.4 Methods of this study

As a study of an on-going controversial political process influencing and being influenced by a number of developmental trends on both the local, regional, national and global level, this work includes analysis of both an ethnographic setting (i.e. data

stemming from fieldwork I conducted over a period of three years, from 2008 to 2011) *and* an understanding of a reconstructed past, in which core values and knowledge(s) which must be said to influence the positions which actors hold in this debate is presented. Fieldwork in the Lofoten region was conducted mainly in two sites, - a small fishing village called Ramberg in West-Lofoten and the (twin)town area of Svolvær and Kabelvåg in East-Lofoten. Several field trips over a three-year period provided me with the ethnographic material used in this study. The ethnography I have produced from these field trips represents, together with 41 in-depth interviews, document- and media coverage analysis and participation in about 25 local debate meetings, governmental and scientific hearings and regional dialogue meetings, the main data material for the thesis. My approach to fieldwork is influenced by the joint development of a constructivist social scientific epistemology and the anthropological ethnographic tradition, an influence that is further described below.



Map: Parts of Northern Norway with the Lofoten mountain range stretching out to sea

Another dimension is the physical surroundings and places in which this case is being played out. On the one hand, there are the ethnographic settings in which I have conducted fieldwork, in Ramberg in West-Lofoten, and in Svolvær/ Kabelvåg in Vågan (literarily '*the bays*', an old word in dialect demarcating the settlements in a particular area on Austvågøy typically placed in bays (våg)). Another important part of the physical scenery are the places where petroleum could be found, and where

mapping research has been done – places which often, in this case, are congruent with fishing fields; typically northwest of the Lofoten mountain range. And finally, there are the important places in which national and/ or regional politics are constructed – mainly the ‘bureaucratic power centres’ of Oslo, Tromsø, Bodø, Stavanger and Bergen.

Over a period of 3 years then, from 2008 to 2011, I have been following the debate concerning petroleum development in the north in general, but in particular been focussing on the discussions that have been taken place concerning the possible petroleum future in Lofoten.⁹ The methods I have used have mainly consisted of a mix of participatory observation, in-depth interviewing, document and literature analysis (including both prose and scientific literature) and media analysis. Fieldwork has taken place in Lofoten, at the above-mentioned sites, and my interviews have also been with local actors. And as the main focus is on the local debate, the influence of regional and national actors is presented with a focus on their impetus on and reflections on the local debate.

2.5 Choice of narrative

“All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.” (Shakespeare 1810: 34)

I have chosen ‘the dramatic tale’ as a narrative structure. Usually, in ‘artistic’ or ‘theatrical’ practice, (but also in social life (Goffman 1959)), a drama is played out *on a stage*, performed by actors who – through dialogue – enacts the tale a screenplay is meant to narrate. In describing the tale presented here as a social drama divided into

⁹ In principle, the debate has been over the opening of sea areas for petroleum production outside of the regions of Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja in North-Norway. Also, these areas are often referred to as Nordland VI and VII and Troms II, which are the denominations put on the areas in the mapping of the Norwegian continental petroleum shelf. As previously mentioned, my main concern has been with the Lofoten area – on land – and on the debates that have taken place locally. These debates have, however, been over *both* ‘their’ sea area –in the Nordland VI and VII petroleum fields – and more broadly on the development in the regions of Vesterålen and Senja and of the developments in the northern regions more broadly.

scenes, I follow the lead of Victor Turner, who in an essay designate a *social drama* as an event in which “Conflicts between individuals, sections, and factions (...reveal) hidden clashes of character, interest and ambition” (1986: 39), conflicts which are “... worked out in social action” (ibid: 34). In this case, one might designate the role of the screenwriter – the narrator of the social drama – to myself, the researcher in need of a narrative construct, a literary genre in which my research can be presented. In constructing the scenes - because they *have* been constructed – my aim has been both to illustrate how some actors, their arguments and actions fit together to form a logically coherent empirical setting from which a particular frame of reference, a specific knowledge, can be extracted – *and* to make explicit the way in which I as a researcher have gathered, sorted, analysed and understood the information upon which my analytical arguments rests. Also, the construction of scenes has made it possible for me to combine writing style, analytical approach and methodological considerations to the method used and type of empirical data gathered.

In Aristotle’s description of the ideal dramaturgy, the drama – be it a tragedy, a comedy or a novel – should consist of three main parts and an ending. In the first part, called the *exposition*, time, place and conflict is presented. In the second or middle part, the *complication*, the plot thickens and the conflict is usually shown to be more complex than the exposition revealed, with both actors and the effect of time itself (forces beyond the control of the actors *in play*) influencing the narrative. These complications then should point towards a crucial point in the drama, a turning point or a tipping point called the *peripeti* (or the *climax*) after which, the inevitable end, the *catastrophe*, is reached (Banham 1988)¹⁰. If we follow the Aristotelian definition, it is clear that the drama here unfolding is unfinished, and best described as being in that second phase, the *complication*. Any climax is yet to be reached, and the outcome not at all certain to be a ‘catastrophe’, in the strict sense of the word. Be that as it may, I believe the allegory of the dramatic play and the inscription of a distinction between a *social drama* and the “*definitional ceremonies*” (typically initiation ceremonies, national holidays and so on) described in Turners essay is helpful in understanding the

¹⁰ See also <http://mml.gyldendal.no/flytweb/default.ashx?folder=419> and <http://www.snl.no/drama>, accessed May 3rd, 2011.

way in which these kind of processes, understood here as *a national* drama in which several actors on different analytical levels (local, regional, national) participates, can be regarded as

“a kind of collective ‘autobiography’, a means by which a group creates its identity by telling itself a story about itself, in the course of which it brings to life ‘its Definitive and Determinate Identity’ (to cite William Blake)”. (ibid: 40, paraphrasing Barbara Myerhoff)

Through invoking the narrative structure of a drama, then, I wish to show how the LoVeSe case can be seen both as a socially constructed dramatic tale unfolding in social life, in a process in which the stuff that ‘we’ are made of is discussed and (re)defined, as a drama in which sub-groups reaffirm *their* specific identities (the petroleum lobby, the environmental lobby, the local communities and so on) – *and* a tale in which I as a researcher seek to shed light on how the kind of knowledge I present is produced. In other words: through the metaphor of the classical screenplay I also reflect upon who I am *as a researcher*. As it is an *unfinished* drama, it is up to the narrator (me) to make sure the phase that we are in, the *complication*, is presented according to its intention; that the plot is made more complex and the narrative structure more organic and less one-dimensional than initially (and superfluously) described. In the social drama, I assert, not all actions, all decisions and processes leads organically towards what might seem as a ‘natural’ climax and an inevitable end, with no other alternatives. Neither is the narrative structure meant to be understood as a strait jacket for writer or reader. Rather, it is meant to provide a guideline as to how to read the following scenes and to understand their position in the drama unfolding – as part of the *complication*. I will in chapters 4 and 5 provide analysis of these scenes and extract what I regard as their contribution to an understanding of the case in question, with a particular focus on how they all underline a central theme of this thesis: How people locally are enabled to reflect upon their ideas about threats, risks and security through debates initiated by the question of whether to allow for petroleum production in LoVeSe.

2.6 Methodological considerations

This said, it needs to be pointed out that I position this work somewhere in the misty borderland between a constructivist methodology (that is in my interest in *social*

constructions as a field of research, not including the imagined effect that all ‘objective truths’ are thus rejected) and the postmodernist tradition of seeking to identify the situational, locally embedded and critical dimensions of how to understand reality. This means that I will be describing empirically how actors identifying with different knowledge traditions (or at least different aspects of knowledge traditions) identify and manage risks and threats differently and how, as a consequence of their different positions, possibilities and ontologies, their conceptions of what is or is not a security matter may differ. The importance of participatory fieldwork for this work as a basic methodological tool for the gathering of data and construction of knowledge, developed within the ethnographic tradition, requires a brief introduction to indicate how I interpret its basic premises.

2.6.1 Ethnographical roots

The work of early ethnographers was filled with descriptions of “the complex whole that is culture” (paraphrasing Tylor 1968 (1871)). Soon enough, their work provoked debates about the representations presented of seemingly separate, enclosed cultural ‘islands’, where stable, unchangeable cultural traits, social structure, religious beliefs and traditions ruled. These debates in fact questioned the simplistic dualism embedded in seeing the world as consisting of societies predominated by the *gemeinschaft-ghesellschaft* divide which I discussed in chapter 1. These early descriptions of cultural others (often described simply as ‘primitive cultures’) were based on at least three assumptions (on which in turn A.R. Radcliffe-Brown would base what has been called “The British School” of anthropology – structural functionalism): first, these cultures were described as solitary and isolated, with seemingly no contact to the outside world which would leave a mark on their ‘culture’; secondly, descriptions of change and the variable of social and cultural processes driven by both individual adaptation to and adaptations of culture and changing circumstances (due to changes in the natural habitat or in contact with ‘other cultures’) were almost totally absent; and thirdly, the descriptions were to a large extent based on information from particular segments of the society in question and more often than not were descriptions of *a conservative nature* in the sense that those describing the society to the researcher were the very same people – in positions of power – who had the most to gain from describing their culture as holistic, homogenic and structurally coherent. Oppositional and ‘muted’ voices were thus rarely heard and

therefore, societal complexity left unexplored. This was to change however, as a steady stream of new ethnography, together with the upsurge of feminist and postcolonial approaches to understanding society, revealed the other side of the story of modernization, post-colonialism and patriarchal power. In short, ethnography went from being the colonialists' best friend to becoming an important critic of its successor – post-colonialism and a globalized 'free-trade'-labelled world economy. And it did so through insisting on the fact that situational knowledge production is the only way of showing how 'others' organize their lives.

Today, then, we are all as social scientists involved in showing how the world "... simultaneously ... (has turned) ... into a larger and a smaller place (Eriksen 2003: 4), and how this small/large world is always embedded in local settings: "The global only exists to the extent that it is being created through on-going social life" (ibid: 5). Therefore, a broader, more intricate method for studying society is often preferred, as anthropologists and ethnographers seized to acknowledge the existence of 'cultural islands'; the preferred holism tied to a notion of 'cultural determinism' was abandoned, and the complexities of cultural meetings and change became the new hallmark of the anthropological trade (Barth 1994 (1969)). Instead of studying 'all-of-it', ethnographers started looking for the subtle, different, anomalous, subverted peculiarities of modern complex society. In this way, Steve Herbert argues, thematic ethnographic studies of particularities in complex societies have been important and relevant for critical studies of formalized institutions and power structures (Herbert 2000), a focus which is of course shared by many critical theorists also in other social science disciplines, and which has roots also in what is described as 'the critical turn' in social science (Baert 2005).

2.6.2 Where – and what – is 'the village'?

Today ethnography is established as a methodological position and a set of research tool that enables us to understand that there are in fact 'villages' everywhere, and that these villages are not even close to being the cultural islands they originally was thought to be. This study, from the modern society and nation state of Norway, is also a study of village life. One could probably argue that this is an oversimplification, as it includes analysis both of regional political debates ("how will the region survive in the future"), national policies and concerns ("what are we to do with the petroleum sector" and "what are we to do with the lack of oil spill preparedness") as well as

global matters (climate change, energy deficiency, political and economic obligations). I would however claim that we all live ‘*in villages*’, and that therefore, both regional, national and global issues have a local role to play in the everyday lives of villagers everywhere, and that ethnographic fieldwork – in combination with other data gathering and analysis methods – is an important tool for grasping and describing village life.

The argument goes like this: Even though ethnography has its roots in the study of ‘the other’, and that these ‘others’ mostly were in fact non-Westerners and more often than not subjects of a European colonial power, there were those earlier studies of cultural diversity in complex, modernized societies as well; Ethnographers discovered ‘villages’ closer to home than what was expected. In the US for example, William Foote Whyte’s fieldwork among Italian immigrants in Boston heavily influenced the professional development and practical range of participant observation and ethnographic accounts in social science (Whyte 1943); likewise, the urban anthropology movement from the 1960s onward helped open new fields and locate new ‘villages’ for ethnographers to explore (Hannertz 1980). I will thus argue that Clifford Geertz’ famous statement that “...Anthropologists (i.e. ethnographers) do not study villages, they study in villages” (Geertz 1973: 22) should not be taken literally. It does not necessarily mean that anthropology must be done *in villages per se*, but rather that the holistic ideal of aiming at understanding the totality of local life (*a village*) has to a large extent been replaced by the intention to understand phenomena (which may or may not have global dimensions) through its manifestations in local settings (*in village*). Therefore, an analysis of the relationship between centre and periphery is needed, where the worldviews of the mainstream center as implicitly understood as ‘the rational way’ (or, indeed, ‘the only way’) is scrutinized. The rationale for seeking to understand the *security implications* for local population in the villages and towns in Lofoten is not only a matter of taking seriously the concerns of people in their everyday life settings, a task important enough in itself, it is also a matter of epistemology: How and what do we understand about social life? How is this knowledge produced, and in what way does it influence the reality it is supposed to describe?



Village scenery. Ramberg, Lofoten, March 2009. Photo: The author

These questions ultimately lead to yet another important matter in regards to methodology and production of knowledge; the matter of objectivity and reflexivity. I will therefore now seek to describe how developments in *critical theory* has informed my understanding of knowledge production and the role social science has in society.

2.6.3 Relativism and reflexivity/ objectivity

“Critical theorists emphasize that social research does not simply have to aim at describing or explaining things... They disagree with the view that research is, can or should be value-free” (Baert 2005: 106)

Early critical theorists like Adorno and Horkheimer argued against the materialistic ideals of the sociology of Marx and Weber that everything could be reduced to a question of the material base of society (op.cit). In this first wave of critical theorists in the 1920s and 30s, the idea of the objective researcher who reintroduced and reinforced knowledge based on methodological stringency and was under the constraints of having to adjust to pre-defined variables, and thus the search for objective truth was challenged by a new ideal researcher; socially and politically engaged, unbiased and intellectual. The task of this new researcher should be to question what seemed to be a given premises for objectivist science, and “... to question the historical and societal contexts under which these premises had been developed” (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2008: 289-290). Social phenomena should not be seen as natural or pre-given, but as something constructed and reconstructed

through active engagement by individuals in social settings. The second wave of the Frankfurt school beginning in the 1960s - with Jürgen Habermas as the most influential theorist – combined the sharp criticism of the early critical theorist with a more processual and to an extent more optimistic version of critical theory (ibid: 294). In Habermas' view, positivist science and rationality had been given too much societal influence, in which individuals, in the words of Patrick Baert, were reduced to "... passive receivers of stimuli from systematic 'sociological laws'" (Baert 2005: 112). What this meant, according to Habermas, was that the systematic neglect from social science of the locally constructed 'lifeworld', i.e. the cognitive framework with which local actors understand the communicative actions of others, made scientists reconstruct pre-defined and taken-for-granted assumptions on structures of (cultural, economic and cognitive) power. The concept 'lifeworld' was first used by Edmund Husserl as an entity of study, locally embedded and rooted in a culturally transmitted framework, contrasting the constructed objective world of science with a 'pre-scientific' epistemology (Eriksen and Weigård 2003). The concept was then adopted by Habermas in his theory of communicative action, and symbolizes what is (for this thesis) the main contribution of critical theory to this particular discourse; that the basis for social science should be constructivist and critical, and grounded in observed life as it is played out locally. The concept of 'lifeworld' directs our attention to the local level, while the insistence on being critical to pre-defined notions of structure and social order resists objectivity and – I would argue – ethnographic holism, simply because holism rests on pre-determined notions about neatly packaged entities ('cultures') with an internal logic and structure simply waiting to be discovered. Habermas thus claims that one can obtain scientific cognition through a rational reconstruction of the pre-theoretical knowledge expressed in everyday practice, upon which that practice is intuitively founded (Habermas and Høibraaten 2005).

It is in the crossroads between construction, reflexivity and objectivity most methodological battles in social science today are fought. In fact, ethnography's legacy - an ideology inherited from natural science where the object of a fieldwork was to go out there and observe *the real world* – mirrors the ambiguity of the social scientific constructions: On the one hand, it is inherently constructivist; on the other in need of legitimacy which is seen as obtainable only through a certain level of objectivity and falsifiability. No wonder many anthropologists – who for a long time had a specific ownership to ethnography as both method and methodology – feel

somewhat awkward when having to turn their attention to more complex societies and overarching themes which break through the traditional boundaries for ethnographic research; the ideas of separate cultures and social entities, easily defined for the purpose of intercultural comparative research. But I believe that ethnography as a method have a lot more to offer than simply mapping cultural and social difference; it has potential as a 'tool box' resting on the heritage from critical theory, where a focus on power structures and locally constructed 'lifeworlds' – in Habermasian terms - is what is to be scrutinized. For studies with a broadened security perspective in particular, the implementation of 'bottom-up' – methods of study will enable researchers to breach yet another set of definitional markers; that security issues can be pre-defined at the (inter)national level, and that the identification of individuals in 'us' and 'them' – categories which fit the national security scheme is the only perceivable way of promoting security for individuals.

Finally, a word on reflexivity: A certain reflexive sloppiness of ethnography, often resulting in a Geertzian authoritarian voice from the field – impenetrable and intrinsically objectivist – can be found for instance in the understanding of cultural relativism described by Marshal Sahlin:

“Cultural relativism is first and last an interpretive anthropological – that is to say methodological – procedure. It is not the moral argument that any culture or custom is as good as any other, if not better. Relativism is the simple prescription that, in order to be intelligible, other people's practices and ideals must be placed in their own historical context, understood as positional values in the field of their own cultural relationships rather than appreciated by categorical and moral judgments of our making.” (Sahlins 2002: 47)

Here, the researched (i.e. informant or protagonist) is described as an individual who is both reflexive and dependent on his/her surroundings when producing knowledge, while the researcher is turned into an objective receiver of subjectively produced knowledge. The categorical statement about informants' rootedness does not, apparently, apply to the social scientist. I find this notion of (cultural) relativism problematic, as it presupposes an objective recorder/ social scientist there to witness it, without prejudice or preconceived categories with which (s)he understands. Instead, an approach is needed which takes into account the construction of a (somewhat limited, but still relevant) momentary social scene, where the researcher involved is

an active part in the social production of action and meaning (Barth 2002). These meetings are a part of the processes which we call social life, and are often incomprehensible unless one walks up real close to them, and are therefore difficult to interpret from an 'objective' distance. Like it or not, the social scientist is part of social life, wherever (s)he might be. It should not be forgotten when assessing the knowledge constructed on these pages.

2.7 Some ethical considerations

“Nearness to informants demands special skills in the management of role relationships. The handling of data from qualitative research does not easily lend itself to rules and principles governing the larger sets of data typically dealt with in quantitative and statistical studies” (Alver and Øyen 2007: 48)

Constructing knowledge where the actions and opinions of others play an important part is demanding, and requires that ethical considerations are discussed. In my research in Lofoten, I have experienced that a strict adherence to ethical guidelines for research - particularly concerning anonymization and the right to withdraw – might construct new ethical dilemmas. Therefore, I wish to point to some of the ethical challenges for a qualitative social science project intending not only to protect the integrity and privacy of informants and protagonists, but also to ensure that the individual choices which lies behind their participation in a particular research project are respected, and that these voices therefore are given a place which mirrors their expectations.

I will argue that the focus on anonymity in ethical guidelines in some instances can make critical research – particularly ‘upwards’, on elites, decision makers and so on – less accurate and less targeted. Also, I will argue that the anonymization of individuals can in some instances deprive them of a channel for communication that they actively have sought to use, in order to have their position heard. Also, the focus on free, informed consent might also create uncertainties as to responsibility and ownership to the methodological and analytical outcome of the research in question. I do not with these remarks try to downplay the importance of ethical considerations to the dealings and doings of social research, but rather to emphasize that the implementation of concrete rules of ethical conduct can assist in coping with specific ethical issues, but may also just as well cause new ones to appear. An important

argument here would be that adhering to formalized rules in no way ensures that ethical considerations have been an important part of the planning, implication and analysis of a qualitative research project, neither that the ethical complexities that the rules themselves might contribute to have been adequately considered.

As mentioned in the Norwegian Research Ethical Library,¹¹ development within research ethics has to a large extent been pushed forward by challenges within medicine, natural science and technology. The reason for this is without a doubt the way assessments of risks has been developed within these scientific fields, as well as a general understanding of the gravity of harm and unwanted side effects research within these disciplines could inflict on (human) study objects. During the trials in Nuremberg that followed the 2nd World War, it became apparent that there was a need for a code of ethics for research¹² that sought to limit the violations of human rights, health and dignity that had been inflicted upon thousands in the name of science during the war, and in particular in the German work camps. The atrocities of the camps in Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen (among others) left a mark on post-war European politics and was part of the foundation of political processes as varied as the development of a common European market (later to evolve into the European Union), the European Convention of Human Rights and the explicit support for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine (to name but a few). Europe was never to be the same, and the implications of these crimes on the understanding of the modern world, the possible implications and consequences of modernity for groups and individuals were among the important inspirations for the second critical turn in social science (see also previous section) (Foucault 1977; Agamben 1995; Bauman and Nilsen 2006; Diken and Laustsen 2006; Foucault 2008). In fact, one could argue that the very notion of science as detached from society, with its own rules and regulations – and ethical concerns – was scrutinized by an academic tradition hell-bent on understanding how seemingly rational members of the scientific community could embark on such experiments as those that were performed on prisoners during WW2.

¹¹ <http://etikkom.no/no/FBIB/Introduksjon/Innforing-i-forskningsetikk/Humaniora-samfunnsfag-juss-og-teologi/>, accessed September 8th, 2011

¹² Reprinted at <http://ohsr.od.nih.gov/guidelines/nuremberg.html>, accessed September 8th, 2011

With this background in mind, it is not surprising to find that the Nuremberg code is to a large extent directed towards the regulation of experimental research. Out of ten points, nine refer directly to the research subject as *being experimented on* - a premise that hardly is relevant for most social science research projects. The idea that all science is based on conducting an experiment clearly is indicative of a notion of science as something that is performed under controlled conditions, in an environment where the variables are manageable and selected for the purpose of retrieving objectified knowledge that can be tested by re-establishing the set conditions and perform the experiment again. For qualitative social science, matters are a bit different. A qualitative research project on human social life is not an experiment.¹³ It is not performed under controlled circumstances, and the amount of variables is indefinite and therefore, the data is impossible to reproduce under precisely identical circumstances. As The Nuremberg Code speaks to us against a background where unspeakable atrocities had been performed on the imprisoned and the persecuted during WW2 in the name of science, the need for a common code of ethics to which all science should obey is of course pertinent. Also, its focus on the power inherent in performing research is a useful reminder of the obligations one has in making sure ones analysis and interpretations are as true to the informants' message as possible.

However, in many cases, the Nuremberg Code focus upon science as experimental and potentially harmful can affect qualitative research that were not intended when they were written. In fact, as Bente Gullveig Alver and Ørjar Øyen has pointed out, the strong focus on free, informed consent and anonymity might lead to new (unintended) ethical issues (Alver and Øyen 2007: 25-29). In short, unwanted anonymity imposed on informants/ protagonists might in some instances be felt as a breach of confidence, as individuals could experience it as an unreasonable hindrance of autonomous decision; where as free, informed consent can create unnecessary uncertainties concerning the responsibility for analytical conclusions stemming from

¹³ Some would of course argue the contrary, stating that there are a number of ways in which researchers engage in society and thus initiate processes which could be seen as experimental, for instance if the researcher clearly acts on behalf of a particular community/ group/ culture etc without knowing the full ramifications of the processes which (s)he have been part in initiating. I am not going to discuss this matter further, but simply point out that the way in which I understand 'experimental' in this context is connected to the possibility to re-establish the environment in which the experiment was performed, and that there are a selected number of variables which can - to a certain extent - be controlled.

the research in question. Alver and Øyens reference to the work of Klaus Høyer seems pertinent in this regard, as he questions the “simplified, one-sided focus on informed consent” (ibid: 25) and its implications with regards to ownership and responsibility for the analytical work.

My research is based on a number of sources: Written reports, media coverage, interviews, and data stemming from ethnographic fieldwork. Time spent in field has implications for the relationships upon which information is based; informants become *actors with many statuses*. For instance, if one in an interview first and foremost meets the mayor *as mayor* of the town or the municipality, one has the chance to meet the mayor as father, son, friend, former fisherman and so on when conducting an ethnographic fieldwork. As relationships evolve, formalities are put aside, and lives are lived. The border between the researcher *as researcher* and the researcher as a (temporary) member of the community is blurred as well. To inform at an early stage about the fieldwork and its aims and goals is of course possible – and indeed desirable, but to create a formal separation between the daily lives in the village and the information about the society which is gathered through informal discussions, learning processes and small talk would be to severely hamper the possibility to gain access to this sort of information. The formality of the situation(s) would quite possibly change the preconditions upon which informants tell their stories. Simultaneously though, the blurred status of researcher/ fieldworker/ community member makes it even more important that one as a social scientist is skilled in ethical, methodological and theoretical concerns which sensitizes the researcher to issues which might not at first hand be viewed as problematic or sensitive. For instance, as an ethnographic fieldwork evolves and social bonds are tied, people tend to put aside their more formal statuses and reveal other sides to their stories – and thus give out information that they possibly do not intend to be ‘research data’. This leaves it up to the researcher to evaluate – also in light of ethical considerations – what information can be included, in what form, to what extent and in which (‘dramaturgic’) setting.

The way in which one labels ones ‘data sources’ and ‘informants’ might give clues to in what way the researcher/ author of a scientific text approaches the ethics of including the multi-faceted data stemming from ethnographic work, and in particular the matter of the autonomy-anonymity duality. In anthropology, for instance, it has become more common to refer to those one meets in the field as ‘protagonists’, thus

focussing on the enabled, autonomous co-producer of knowledge – a relationship between two (or more) actors in field acting with intentionality and mutual trust. Making the ‘informant’ an anonymous voice available only to the researcher is therefore not ‘only’ a matter of ethics (even though ethical considerations of course can suffice as rationale for a decision on how to treat one’s sources) but also a matter of methodology and epistemology (and in fact how knowledge is created). A contrary concern would be, of course, that a protagonist too ‘close’ to the analytical part of the research project might serve to diffuse the responsibility for the analysis – with the effect that people in field might be seen to bear more responsibility than what they initially signed up for.

These concerns (and others) are not merely solved through implementation of standard, formalized papers or adherence to strict ethical standards, such as The Nuremberg Code. Not to say that they are not of importance. Rather, my point is to exemplify that sincere, project-near ethical considerations have to be made regardless of whether or not formalized ethical rules are followed, and that a word of caution might be issued concerning the idea that all is well if (ethical) permission is given by some academic body of authority.

In qualitative research – and in ethnography in particular - the researcher is the only one who has the in-depth knowledge of the data needed in order to address the ethical issues of the particular project (although discussions with colleagues and others will of course be useful). Therefore, the responsibility for the texts should rest solely on the (academic) writer. Also, it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that the trust (s)he has been given by the informants/ protagonists is not breached, and that the autonomous voices from field are respectfully treated.¹⁴

¹⁴ For the record: The research conducted for this thesis has been approved by the Norwegian Ombudsman for Research Ethics.

3 A broadened security perspective. Theoretical Considerations

I will in this chapter introduce the most important theoretical concepts for the analysis of the empirical material upon which this thesis rests. A certain level of detail is necessary here, in order to adequately describe the depth of the debates these concepts are derived from, as well as to show the interconnections between them that have informed my take on the broadened security concept. This because I believe it is of importance to present the epistemological ‘map’ I have used to navigate through the landscape from which I have drawn the empirical basis for my analysis. I will first describe the debate concerning the security concept, as it has developed mainly after the cold war, then discuss in what way a *broadened* security debate (which simply means to include *more topics* into the realm of security studies) also necessitates a *deepening* of the concept (i.e. a multi-actor, multi-leveled focus, requiring also a *methodological reorientation*, as described in chapter 2). In short, a deepening here relates to the need for a reorientation of *what security might mean to people* in their everyday lives, a perspective in need of empirical investigation through methods that seek to unravel the *ontological* frameworks within which different notions of security are defined (see section 3.2.3). Finally, I will show how these concepts that I describe are operationalized for use as analytical tools on the fieldwork material presented in chapters 4 and 5. I do not, however, assume that all of these analytical concepts here described will be the tools I need for the analysis to follow. Rather, I will assert that they form a part of the theoretical background for a deliberate challenging of the frames within which ‘traditional’ security has been understood. In other words: in seeking to operationalize theoretical concepts through which a deepened and broadened security understanding can be implemented, I have sought inspiration and tools in the theoretical debates described below. To what extent they were found applicable and useful for the analysis will be discussed in the conclusion of this thesis (in chapter 6).

3.1 Security revisited

“The experience of security usually rests upon a balance of trust and acceptable risk. In both its factual and experiential sense, security may refer to large

aggregates or collectives of people – up to and including global security – or to individuals” (Giddens 1990: 36)

The aim here will be to discuss the traits of security theory that have influenced the development of a debate aiming at *broadening and deepening* the security concept, in the direction implied in the above quote from Anthony Giddens. In order to focus in on the issue at hand and to what extent a security concept might be useful for an analysis of the matter of petroleum in Lofoten, it is necessary to introduce different conceptions of security and ask how a broadened security perspective can help us better understand the relation between international affairs, state legislation and exercise of power, local community life and an overall sense of security for the individual. A literature review shows that an important foundation for a broadened security perspective is found in the developments within the theoretical field of security itself. I will therefore focus on reviewing and discussing what can be described as a traditionalist state-focused notion of security; then describe the contribution from the Copenhagen school to the debate concerning a broadened security concept, before summarizing the human security debate, the way in which it has informed my take on the security concept and how it has spurred the initialization of a multiple actor perspective in relation to security matters.¹⁵

3.1.1 (Traditional) Security and the state

From the peace of Westphalia in 1648 up to the era of nationalism, the concept of security has been paramount in the legitimization and exercising of state power and the exercising of this power. The protection of land, riches and population was what, in effect, state formation was all about, and with the rise of the nation states, the connection between power, people and land was idealized as the ‘natural’ state of things. The modern citizen became a member not only of the state, but also of a nation; (s)he became a member of an *imagined community* (Anderson 2006 (1983)) based on patrilinear heritage and a (believed) common ancestry. Anderson as well as other writers on nationalism (like for instance Ernest Gellner (2006) and John Breuilly (1993)) also place importance on seeing the nation state in light of the

¹⁵ It needs to be pointed out that the literature review that follows is by no means thought to be exhaustive, nor representative regarding the full width of the security debate writ large. Rather, it is a selected review of the influential writings for the security concept here developed.

industrial revolution and the need for a homogenized, cultural setting in which one could educate the modern work force meeting the needs of industrialization, and ensure a common goal for all within its borders. In many respects, nationalism thus replaced religion as the main ideological and ethical social force in the European population, and the security of state and population believed to be one and the same.

The aftermath of the two World Wars brought changes to the international political scene. With the establishment of a (relatively) firm international body for inter-state affairs in the late 1940s (the UN), international diplomacy had easier access to a stage on which disputes and discrepancies could be discussed. The annihilating horror of genocide, trench war, famine and blitzkrieg was something the world never wanted to have happen again. International politics thus concentrated on maintaining stability, peace and state security. In fact, the morbid logics of the international arms race and the nuclear armament were based on an idea of a relative power balance between clearly defined entities of 'us' vs. 'them'. Security was predominantly ensured by making sure 'the other' was not provoked or enabled to attack, - a balance that was put to the test on several occasions during the Cold War; the Korean War in the 1950s; the Cuba crisis in the 1960s and the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1970s and 80s to name but a few.

During the 20th Century then, security studies developed from a focus on how states provided individual security – an *intra-state* affair - tied to a notion of the freedom of the individual and liberal government (Hoogensen 2005; Foucault 2007; Dillon 2010), into being primarily concerned with state affairs (i.e. the security of the state itself) and to matters of inter-state relations. With the end of the cold war, the situation again changed, and security studies were left in a vacuum. As J. Peter Burgess points out, "... a sea change passed over security theory in general, provoked by the exhaustion and decline of the Cold War bi-polar security complex" (Burgess 2010: 2). This crisis in theory resulted in a flourished debate on the concept of security itself, where critics of the realist and neo-realist perspectives would emphasize the necessity for constructivist approaches to be heard in the security debate (Burgess 2010: 2-3), approaches which would focus on other actors, other threats and other perceptions of what is to be regarded as security issues than realist perspectives emphasizing state affairs and international relations (Burgess 2010; Cavelty and Mauer 2010).

Still, these calls for a renewed security concept have not reached all corners of the academic and political security debate. On the international and national stage, the concept of security still refers first and foremost to the diplomatic and military-based policies that regulate the relationship between states. These policies can be initiated primarily by states and international organizations such as NATO, the EU and the UN, but also by more 'ad hoc'-based alliances like the one supporting the US-led War on Terror of the early 21st Century. Thus, one can still argue that the security concept is to a large extent used in relation to state affairs and international relations. Even so, an understanding of the complexities of security of individuals and communities, and that it requires a more holistic view on security has gradually emerged, - and with it, a need for renewed security definitions.

3.1.2 The Copenhagen school

Emanating from what has become known as 'The Copenhagen School' in security studies, the concept of *securitization* gained strength during the 1990s. The writers of the book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Buzan, de Wilde et al. 1998) focused on five sectors which they saw as paramount for an analysis of security; the military sector, the environmental sector, the economic sector, the societal sector and the political sector. Their aim was to 'broaden' the conceptualization of the security concept, as the removal of the Cold-war cloak had exposed "... the urgency of new, often unmilitary sources of threat" (Buzan, de Wilde et al. 1998: 2). The elements from this theoretical school which have been most fruitful for the way I employ the security concept in this chapter is taken from the two last mentioned sectors, and particularly from their focus on the societal sector. However, while the Copenhagen School brought notions of identity and community stronger into the debate, many critics argued that it still emphasized "...the state-centric, militaristic and elitist dimensions of security" (Hoogensen and Rottem 2004: 160), and in particular that it referred to specific criteria concerning who is to be considered a relevant security actor which were still heavily based on a notion of the state as the primary actor and force of security politics. Its focus was "to understand security through its core", and to identify (predetermined) "relevant security actors" (Buzan, de Wilde et al. 1998). Implicit in such an understanding of security is that it '*is*' something which can be found '*out there*', and which is already defined and identifiable through the use of certain objective standards, standards that – to a large extent – is defined by elites, and

confines the ontology of security to that of the narrow definitions suitable for a state focus. In other words, remnants of the ‘traditionalist’ notion of security as first and foremost a state matter can be found in the theoretical foundation of the Copenhagen School. However, its contributions to a broadened security debate should be recognized, in particular their actor-oriented, analytical approach to the processes of *securitization*.

3.1.2.1 *Securitization*

According to Buzan, de Wilde and Wæver then, a *securitizing move* is a speech act, by a relevant actor, who – in facing an existential threat – ‘speaks up’ the issue, beyond ‘mere’ politics, to a level of urgency that implies that certain measures are to be taken. The issue is securitized though, if - and only if - “...an audience accepts it as such” (Buzan, de Wilde et al. 1998: 25). However, the authors emphasize that securitization as such does not make any clearer what is or is not a security issue:

“Still, we have a problem of size or significance. (...) Our concept of international security has a clear definition of what we are interested in, but it does not tell us how we sort the important cases from the less important ones.”
(Buzan, de Wilde et al. 1998: 25)

In order not to get entangled into the debate on what is and what is not a security issue, based on more or less ‘objective’ criteria (a matter about which I disagree with the above mentioned writers), I refrain from venturing further into the realm of international security and its ‘core issues’, to again paraphrase Ole Wæver. Instead, I wish to emphasize the point they make about the ambivalent relation to reality that the idea of securitization implies:

“... it (a security matter, my insertion) can upset the entire process of weighing as such: ‘If we do not tackle this problem, everything else will be irrelevant (because we will not be here or will not be free to deal with it in our own way)’. Thereby, the actor has claimed a right to handle the issue through extraordinary means, to break the political rules of the game. (...) ‘Security’ is thus a self-referential practice, because it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue – not necessarily because a real existential threat exists but because the issue is presented as such a threat.” (Buzan, de Wilde et al. 1998: 24)

There are two things worth noting here, the first focusing on the concept's potential, the other on a limitation. The first is that a speech act, in front of an audience, is analytically interesting in that it invites us to reveal the legitimacy behind a specific understanding of an event, an occurrence, or a political decision which is not only self-referential in referring to existing definitions of who and what is to be secured and by whom, but also that security is constantly socially (re)constructed. Leaning on preconceived notions of what is 'a relevant threat', actors involved in 'securitizing moves' are a part of the processes in which *pre*-established rules, categories and 'truths' about security are *re*-established. Looking for the securitizing moves – that is, who performs them, who are they aimed at (i.e. the audience), and how are they received by this audience – can be an analytical tool for a better understanding of power relations in the matter of petroleum production in LoVe and its connections to hegemonic knowledge. As we shall see, there are actors involved who to a large extent base their strategy on their ability to 'speak the issue of petroleum development into a matter of security'; be it for the state, for the national population, or for local communities.

The second point is tied to the limitations of the concept. The way the Copenhagen school argues, based on a notion of 'relevant actors' who are able to *extract from normal politics what is to be securitized* is, in my view, a simplification of how a sense of security is created in individuals and communities and a limitation of its overall potential as a concept with a broad relevance, sociologically speaking. My main argument concerning securitization is that the concept can be useful in identifying actors who use security as a tool in their political argumentation. It follows though, that it should not be understood as that only element which separates a security concern from 'mere politics'. I assert instead that security is a part of all social acts (Foucault 2007), and that what is of concern is to what extent people feel secure(d), and not whether or not some 'relevant actor' is given the privilege of identifying possible security concerns on behalf of a general population, be it on a national, regional or local scale. In other words: Securitization does take into consideration social processes when determining what is and what is not a security issue, but neglects to question of the inherent power involved in being enabled to define in these matters. Most importantly, there is, as we will see, an important

difference between the notion of security as being ‘beyond politics’ and the one that sees security as embedded in all social acts.

With this clarification in mind, I move to the debate on human security, its content, relevance and analytical clarity.

3.1.3 The Human Security debate

In what way security concerns influence (individual) life is, I believe, a matter of empirical study – what makes people feel secure(d) or unsecure(d) is related to an unknown number of factors influencing lives lived. The Human Security approach to security matters has sensitized both policy makers and researchers on the relatively marginal importance of predetermined, state-centred approaches to security to the everyday lives of individuals and communities.¹⁶ In order to understand the complexity of the concept of Human Security, it is important to recognize it’s roots as a political tool used on the international arena to help identifying a post-cold war security scenario. The UN Human Development Report on Human Security (UNDP 1994) established the concept as an alternative to a more traditional security concept, thus diverting the attention from the security of states to the security of people. It defined a number of threats to human security in a post cold war climate where international acceptance of increased funding for combating communicable diseases, natural disasters, poverty and environmental issues was the main goal. In a review of the human security debate in *Security Dialogue* from 2004, Owen writes:

“the traditional state-based paradigm is (...) failing to protect its citizens. Millions are killed by communicable disease, civil war and environmental disasters (locally and globally incited) (Owen 2004: 374).

However, in a world filled with the rhetoric of the global war on terror, we are reminded that much work is left before a security definition going beyond seeing it as only pertaining to an absence of physical threat is broadly accepted (Hoogensen Gjørsv Forthcoming). One of the main reasons for the opposition to the concept – also from

¹⁶ A statement which of course also is situationally determined, and which presupposes a state-of-things in which state or inter-state affairs do not directly threaten everyday lives, i.e. when those traditionally understood *security affairs of the state* leads to warlike situations, a lack of protection from definite threats or to destructive and oppressive state-population relations.

academic circles – is its apparent lack of analytical clarity and definition. But, as Burgess et.al (2007) points out, the concept emerged

“...not as a new empirical object, but as a new epistemology. In other words, human security is not so much a new discovery in itself as a *new kind of knowledge construction*, a new way of organizing the constellation of facts, values, priorities, views and ideologies” (ibid: 12).

This approach to the human security issue opens up for a multi-dimensional and multidisciplinary approach to the study of everyday lives of people whose lives or well-being is threatened (or their potential restricted), which may be included in the realm of human security issues. The question remains, however, how to define the human security concept, or rather, how to fill it with an essence which serves the purpose of obtaining a deeper understanding of lives lived. As an example, Caroline Thomas (2007) describes the concept of human security as “... freedom from want and freedom from fear” (a notion derived from the UN Human Development report on human security mentioned above) where the first describes “... a condition of existence in which basic material needs are met...” (ibid: 108-109), a condition of existence in which human dignity is realized, embracing not only physical safety but going beyond that to include meaningful participation in the life of the community, control over one’s life and so on. Thus, the concept spans “... the whole gamut of rights, civil and political, economic and social, and cultural” (op.cit).

In the years following the 1994-introduction of the term in UN circles, the Human Security debate has gone in two different directions; in politics, the term has been regarded as a means to divert international attention away from an exclusive view on security as regulating the relationship between (nation) states *per se* and thus have had a focus on territorial, military and judicial matters towards matters of great concern for *the populations of states*, and not only the states *per se*. As a policy device, a Human Security focus on this *whole gamut of rights* described by Thomas above is to a large extent still defined by states, international bodies, NGOs or researchers. Within security studies, however, the debates have circled around the validity and the perceived lack of analytical level of precision of Human Security. Critics have claimed that the term in effect includes ‘everything, and therefore nothing’, and that the realm of security should be reserved for a definition which limits the number of

potential threats to those where an elevated state of urgency best meets these threats. Thus, in the words of Barry Buzan;

“While a moral case for making individuals the ultimate referent object (*for security, my add.*) can be constructed, the cost to be paid is the loss of analytical purchase on collective actors both as the main agents of security provision and as possessors of a claim to survival in their own right (Buzan 2004).

What Buzan here implies, is that the best way to study security is to create purely objectivist analytical categories of threat variables, so that analytical rigor is kept. This, however, implies a notion of research and research production that disregards decades of critical evaluation of the objectivist-scientific project. What instead is needed is an analysis based on perceived threats in peoples everyday lives, where preconceived notion of variables, which predefines specific threats as worthy of inclusion into the realm of security and excludes others, are seen as reaffirming the ideology of security as a top-to-bottom analytical tool, as part of a positivist notion of society.

This view has of course epistemological implications. Patrick Baert remarks that “...positivism conceive of social research as a tool for technical mastery of the social, for restoring social order and avoiding malfunctions in the system” (Baert 2005: 109-110), indicating that not only does an objectivist approach miss the opportunity to identify threats as they are perceived in peoples everyday lives, but also that objectivist social research serve to reaffirm structures of social power (Foucault and Gordon 1980). A purely traditionalist view of security fits this description well, and I will argue that such a view fails to grasp the importance of a bottom-up approach to security studies in order to understand how security is perceived locally, where people live.

3.1.3.1 A threshold definition and its limits

“The astonishing number of preventable deaths from internal conflict, famine disease, and environmental disasters cannot be addressed by the state alone and to entrust such an analytic and political framework with this task is negligent. In addition, the militaristic focus of ‘national security’ is used to

divert massive funds to an industrial complex that is not capable of addressing nonviolent harms” (Owen 2004: 379).

In the article from which the above citation is collected, Taylor Owen discusses how a dichotomy of a broad vs. a narrow understanding of the concept of Human Security dominates the debates defining its content and analytical clarity. A narrow understanding of the concept, Owen remarks, would enable researchers and policy makers alike to use the concept as means of foreseeing and identifying immediate, violent threats: “...conceptual clarity (and) analytic rigor are reasons for limiting the concept to violent threats” (Owen 2004: 375), which implicates that a militarized response or at least the threat of a military response is needed. In this way, human security is kept sharp, definable and ‘objective’ as an analytical concept. On the other hand, a broad definition will have to entail more than threats of physical violence:

”(A) ... broader definition of what actual underlying human security threats are, will help us understand also the upsurge of violence, - either as rebellions, repressions, civil war, state repression or international conflict.“ (ibid: 376)

This framing of Human Security becomes so much more than absence of immediate life-threatening situations, but also encompasses the individual and group-based rights to self-determination and a self-defined meaningful existence. In Gunhild Hoogensen and Kirsti Stuvoy’s view, this approach defies a notion of security as having to be rooted in some sort of “...large-scale, violent conflict (... and that...) health, food, economic or environmental issues is *not* security, at least not by the standards of those who matter, those being realist-oriented researchers”(Hoogensen and Stuvoy 2006: 210). In their view, resistance as a way of achieving self-determination and control over one’s own life is but one of many ways in which individuals and communities seek to *secure themselves* through active engagement, often countering state securitizing efforts and structural inequality and powerlessness (Hoogensen and Stuvoy 2006: 214).

As a basis for his discussion of a broad vs. narrow understanding of human security, Taylor Owen calls for a *processual* focus, where continuous usage of the concept on different contexts and insecurity scenarios will strengthen its analytical value. As such, it is similar to the concept of ‘culture’, Winslow and Eriksen reminds us (Winslow and Eriksen 2004: 362); a concept more vague and deprived of a clear definition is

hard to find, but still the very debate and its subsequent triggering of a constant search for new content (in the form of ethnographical mapping of cultural diversity, for instance) has provided us with a steady stream of new insight into the possible varieties of human cultural existence. It is not a matter of what culture ‘is’, but rather what ‘culture’ *can make us think of*, search for and in the end analyze. Again, this lack of definitional clarity is by some understood as a devaluation of the analytical value of the concept, and thus, Owen suggests a *threshold definition* that makes it possible both to encompass different variables in different settings, while being able to limit it some sort of ‘objective’, comparative content:

“Instead of being pre-chosen, threats would be included on the basis of their actual severity. All would be considered, but only those who surpass a threshold of severity would be labeled threats to human security.(...) Threats should be included not because they fall into a particular category, such as violence, but because of their actual severity” (ibid: 382)

Again, examination and description of the specific context is called for. In each site of study, new security threats might pop up, or may be found to be of more or less significance than in other sites. For instance, the internal threat of terrorism in Russia is felt in the everyday lives of inhabitants of the cosmopolitan cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg, but of less importance for those living on the Nenets tundra where the immediate threat to traditional livelihood posed by the rapid expansion of excavation of petroleum in the area is more immediate. The idea of a threshold definition is also present in the UNDP report on Human Security from 1994, as it suggests that the point of Human Security is to bring resources of security infrastructure (which- and this goes without saying – should include much more than merely military tools for security prevention) to a specific set of issues, based on an analysis of which issues are the most threatening in each particular case. This approach will also assist policy makers in identifying a broader and more complex set of variables which all influence the human security of populations. Owen points out that thresholds defined by states will as a rule be quite high, often mainly encompassing violent (militarized) threats. Therefore, it is important to discuss who has the power to define the threshold. In other words, who will be asked to evaluate the different (possible) human security threats? What will happen if we turn the power of decision on the threshold for what is to be labeled (human) security risks inward and downward, from the aggregated

levels of state or international institutions and/ or NGOs to individuals potentially affected? What if people themselves were left to define the threshold? Will it indeed – like critics have argued – render the concept superfluous because of a lack of both analytical clarity and distance – or will it, in fact, assist us in revealing the severity, extent and threshold of actual human security threats which influence peoples everyday lives the most?

In their colloquium remark to the thematic issue of Security Dialogue in September 2004 dedicated to the debate on the definition of Human Security, Winslow & Eriksen describes how they regard the anthropological legacy of “holism and methodological cultural relativism” (2004: 361) as a potentially fruitful contribution to the multidisciplinary subject of Human Security. As anthropological studies of the local often deals with issues of identity construction, a human security approach can help clarifying ideas of social cohesion and the ordering of difference, as well as identification of threats and understandings of risks. It has, as we shall see, to do with *identity* and the processes through which identity is ascribed both individuals and groups. Identity as an analytical concept will be described in section 3.2.3, but I will here briefly show in what way the concept has influenced the human security debate. The process of ‘*othering*’, i.e. the important aspect of identity construction where an individual ascribes him/herself to a specific identity by articulation who he/ she is *not*, may very well be inscribed into a discourse on threats and risks, and as a consequence, on human security. Indeed, as Roe (Roe 2004; Roe 2006) and Jutila (2006) have showed, research on the construction of a *collective identity* is an important part of the identification of security threats and processes. State, societal and human security debates all will have to, at one point or another, deal with these issues; who are “we” (i.e. those to be protected) and from what (or in some cases – from “who”) are ‘we’ to be protected? In a similar vein, Winslow and Eriksen point to the fact that human security is not a static entity but rather picks up on hybridity, discontinuity and re-constitution and re-establishment of collectives:

“From this perspective, human security is not a fixed state that can be ‘measured’. The contribution of qualitative anthropological research can show how people combat insecurity through the use of multiple resources and identities” (ibid: 362)

In this way, I believe, Winslow and Eriksen appropriately oppose to the threshold argument. Their point is to seek to establish how people utilize their *ontological frame of reference* (see section 3.2.3), their ‘culture’, ‘identity’ and so on, to identify, assess and handle perceived threats to their security. In this way, the ability to define *what is and what is not a security issue* is questioned, and ideally subjected to empirical studies. Further, it opens for the kind of critique of the human security debate – with its continued concern about objective measurability in order to be analytically relevant – that Michael Dillon (2007; 2008; 2008; 2010), Didier Bigo (2008) and Kyle Grayson (2004; 2008; 2010) among others have been promoting, where a Foucauldian approach lies the foundation for a different focus on both research interests (who has the power to define, how do they do it, and how does it create both security and insecurity for populations?) and research methods concerning threats, risks and security. I will pay closer attention to these themes in section 3.2, when describing a broadened security approach.

The suggestion then, by Winslow and Eriksen, is to move beyond the broad vs. narrow categorizations of Human Security, and instead focus on social and cultural processes of identity construction through (re)construction of (more or less secure) collectives in order to grasp experiences of insecurity and how these are dealt with in the social realm. Similarly, and from the vantage point of a critical feminist perspective, Hoogensen and Stuvøy has argued that “the dominance of traditional, state-based security thinking is a manifestation of masculinized, patriarchal structures, demanding security only be defined from (this) a position of privilege” (Hoogensen and Stuvoy 2006: 210). Hoogensen and Stuvøy goes on to suggest that “...gender analyses attempt to rework the definition of security such that it reflects the empirical world and becomes open to the voices of those who in fact experience insecurity in all its variations and manifestations” (ibid: 211), an analytical starting point which undermines Owens notion of a given hierarchical structure through which notions of severity can be objectified, using a given set of parameters on what is to be seen as a security matter or not.

Simply put, we need a more sophisticated theoretical platform for the development of a set of analytical tools within a broadened understanding of security. Hoogensen and Stuvøys acknowledgement of that fact – and their suggestion to look to feminist theory and gender research for the derivation of analytical perspectives from ‘the

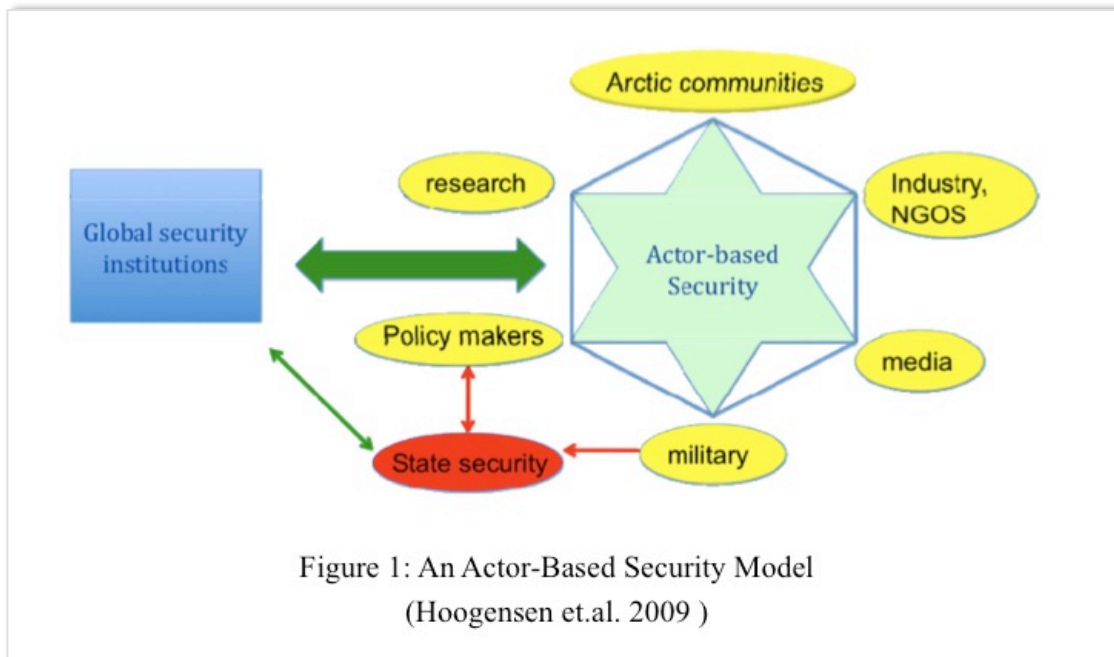
bottom’, or ‘off-centre’ - is inspiring. The importance of contributions from feminist perspectives in the development of a reflexive, relativist, and critical social science should not be underestimated, and even though this study does not take as a vantage point a study of gender as such – neither as *identity marker* nor as a starting point for discussions of power or inherited ontologies – the focus on power relations, privileged interpretive framework and research ethics often found in feminist research (and gender studies in general) is here acknowledged.¹⁷

3.1.4 A multiple actors perspective

Development in security theory has, as we have seen, questioned the fruitfulness of a ‘uni-actor approach’ to security (Hoogensen Gjørnv Forthcoming), in which the state is the dominant reference, both in terms of what is to be secured, and who is to be the relevant actor to analyze. In an article on the relevance of the Human security concept in the Arctic, Hoogensen, Bazely et.al (2009) presented an actor-based security model which

“... aims to illustrate an inclusive security (concept) that neither rejects the security of individuals, nor state and global security interests, but (wants to) create a more multidimensional, multi-scale ‘picture’ of security that is more accurate and complete than that which we obtain if we only look to one actor of security (i.e. the state)” (Hoogensen, Bazely et al. 2009: 7).

¹⁷ I have previously (Dale 2004) critically examined the taken-for-granted notions of patriarchal power and masculine identities in the Caribbean, using my perceptions of both my own gendered identity and that of those men I met for a comparative, confrontational analysis of how masculinity was (re)created in a creative process in which preconceived notions of what is and what is not *a man* (be they the preconceived notions of the researcher or the protagonists) were challenged. In this thesis, though, I have chosen not to focus on gendered identities, although I recognize that a gendered perspective could be used when analysing the relationship between a masculine petroleum industry mastering and conquering ‘nature’ and a ‘feminized’ environmentalist movement seeking to protect, carefully harvest and minimize imprint on what is seen as a ‘pristine, unspoiled nature’. In short, I recognize the potential for more concrete studies on gender and petroleum development, but will here limit myself to adhere to Alvesson and Sköldberg’s advice; to seek to avoid ‘gender blindness’, particularly in generalizing from a set of interviews which is made up predominantly by conversations with men (out of 40 interviews, four were with women. However, in my ethnographic work, I had of course many discussions with women about the issue at hand, which balanced my data).



The model has been published in different versions in several papers and presentations (Hoogensen, Bazely et al. 2009; Hoogensen, Dale et al. 2009; Stuvøy 2011; Hoogensen Gjørnv Forthcoming), and makes explicit the concern that a uni-actor approach to security *does not* equip researchers with the necessary epistemological framework to be able to fully grasp the multiplex security situation in any given social setting. The model should not be read as a description of how security *should* be practiced, but that it should be understood *as practice*, out there, in social life, performed by multiple actors. To put it bluntly, a narrow security definition focusing on the state misses a lot of opportunities for insight into how security is operationalized by *active actors* (and not as passive recipients of ‘securitizing moves from relevant actors’, to paraphrase Buzan, de Wilde et al. (1998)) ‘on the ground’.

In identifying the (potential) multitude of actors who (potentially) influence security, in a broad sense of course, one also acknowledges practices of security as heavily interrelated with *other* aspects of social action, like those aspects affirming cultural affiliation and re-establishing identity. This focus on practices embedded in a multiple actor perspective is a part of an adjusted focus of the epistemological gaze of the researcher, Hoogensen Gjørnv argues:

“(A multiple actors perspective demands an) ...examination of how security is produced, by whom, and upon which epistemological foundation. (...) The whom (actors) must be supplemented by three variables – the nature of the

practice of security (how), the context of the security practice (where), as well as the *values* lying behind these practices (why).” (Hoogensen Gjørsv Forthcoming: 2)

What is important to recognize is that models like this one will – if used indiscriminately – often serve to reify notions of what is to be included or excluded from being scrutinized as a possible security issue, and that it therefore always needs to be adjusted to the empirical setting of any particular study (Hoogensen, Bazely et al. 2009). In other words, the effort of making visible that there in any given setting is a potential multitude of actors and communicative ‘scenes’ should be acknowledged, and I will seek to strengthen the operative qualities of the model through an introduction of specific analytical tools. This, however, requires a look elsewhere, beyond the human security debate itself, for tools with which to analyze an actual empirical setting replacing the one schematically portrayed in the model.

I will pursue this task in the next section. Here, however, I will seek to exemplify how a multiple actors perspective has been used in an Arctic context. In an article analyzing the locally perceived impacts of an oil spill in the Komi Republic of Russia, Kirsti Stuvøy used survey data from two separate communities to analyze how the petroleum production in the region influenced individual security concerns, and how petroleum-related activities created both security and insecurity among individuals (Stuvøy 2011). She showed how a multi-actor approach to security in effect both *broadened and deepened* the analytical focus on *what security meant in this particular setting*, away from a one-dimensional, uni-actor (state-centered) approach to an empirically based, ‘bottom-up’ perspective, in which the concerns of individual about health and well-being (indeed matters of security for individuals as much as any other) were presented. In short, the results showed that the inclusion of ‘subjective’ security perceptions revealed how the petroleum development in the area was regarded as a source of *both* security and insecurity, as it was seen both as a provider of jobs and opportunities and a general raise in living conditions (thus providing *security*) and a source of pollution, thus threatening people’s health (creating *insecurity*). In addition, the survey revealed a gendered difference in responses concerning self-perception of health, spurring new interesting questions for further investigation, such as who is enabled to act upon specific threats to their security, and

in what way does *trust in expert systems* (cf Giddens 1991) influence the sense of being secure(d) locally, be it as individuals or communities.

In enabling local actors to express their security concerns, the survey thus exemplifies one (but not by any means the only possible) way that a broadened and deepened security concept in practice ‘opens security up’ for those other actors, with in turn strengthens the explanatory value of the concept over that of the narrower, ‘uni-actor-focused’ version of security. This example of an inclusion of what Stuvøy has called “the real new aspect in this (i.e. human security, my insertion) to security” (2011: 6), namely the “... inclusion of a subjectivist perspective addressing people’s experiences with security and insecurity” (op.cit), is in my view a good example of how to operationalize and make explicit the intentions of the multiple actors perspective: to broaden and deepen the security concept to assess both multiple actors, actions and ontologies in their given surroundings (see also (Masco 1999; Stern 2001; Stuvøy 2010) for empirical research on ‘marginalized’, or ‘muted’, security actors).

3.2 A broadened and deepened security concept

Influenced by a multiple actors approach, then, I continue describing in what way I have sought to broaden and deepen the concept of security. In addition to the mentioned human security debate, there are three themes in particular that have influenced my understanding of a broadened and deepened security concept. Firstly, I have been inspired by the way Foucauldian notions of security, biopolitics and governmentality has revitalized the human security debate, in how it has refocused concerns towards matters of power, knowledge and governmental practice. Secondly, the way the risk concept has developed a somewhat different, although parallel debate on the relationship between individuals, the state and knowledge production has been important (Douglas and Wildavsky 1982; Jasanoff 1986; Beck 1992). And finally, the development of the concept ontological security has enabled me to more clearly specify the relation between identity construction, community building and security (Giddens 1990; Marlow 2002; Hawkins and Maurer 2011). I will therefore give an account of these debates before summarizing how they have influenced my take on the meaning and content of the security concept, as it will be used through the rest of this thesis.

3.2.1 Security, governmentality, biopolitics

As argued thus far, a security focus beyond the conventional state-centred security paradigm is needed in order to identify multiple actors and their security concerns and practices, as they are concerned with the identification of threats and risks. Even so, the state is of course not without importance for people's lives. Therefore, my focus here will be on the relationship between the state and individuals and communities. A view of the state as a set of practices rather than an 'objective', inevitable state-that-is, helps refocus our attention towards the how a sense of inevitability concerning the role of the state is produced.

This theoretical focus is based on the publications of manuscripts from three series of lectures given by Michel Foucault at the Collège de France from 1976-1978. The first of these series, called *Society Must Be Defended* (Foucault 2003) focuses on war, state security and biopolitics, and introduces his now infamous rephrasing of Clausewitz' 'War is politics by other means' into '(bio)politics is (nasty) war by other means' – with a particular reference to race and the biopolitical *raison d'être* of securing life through the management (and manipulation) of populations. The next two lecture series, named *Security, Territory, Population* (2007) and *The Birth of Biopolitics* (2008)¹⁸ presents a notion of security in which the presumed inevitable connection between security and the politics of war is abandoned. This is not to say that Foucault lost interest in the complex relationship between (political) power and violence, be it induced on individuals or populations, by state or non-state actors alike, but rather that

“ ... the real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize the workings of institutions that appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticize and attack them in such a manner that the political violence that has always

¹⁸ As has been pointed out by both contemporaries and those preceding him – and by followers and critics alike – the now published manuscripts from these lectures should be regarded as emerging strains of thought, and as initial attempts at connecting novel and more well-known ideas about themes which were always at the core of the Foucauldian project: Power/knowledge systems, practices of governance and control, the state-citizen relationship, population control and, ultimately, security; matters of particular concern for this thesis.

exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight against them”¹⁹

Foucault sought through experimental reasoning and thought to understand the complex relationship between governance - or *rule based on a nexus of power/knowledge* - and its ultimate goal; security, - as well as asking the question; *what (or who) is to be secured, and by whom?* Even though Foucault's main focus is on the state and state practices, we see that there are concrete overlaps between the concerns raised in the human security debate concerning who are relevant actors and how to understand security as a concept meant to enable us to better understand social life and a Foucauldian approach to security. What I have drawn from my readings of Foucault in particular, is his focus on the relationship between power and knowledge as quintessential to the question of how one is to understand security, where notions of ‘truth’ is at center stage. “What is involved in this analysis of mechanisms of power is the politics of truth”, Foucault said (2007: 3), and thus opened for a discussion of the relationship between power, knowledge and security. Whoever is in the position to define what is ‘true’ will also be enabled to define what is to be secured and who does the job best. And whoever has definitional power pertaining to security – that very essential variable in people’s lives – is also in the position to dominate society in a way which beckons a critical approach to their preconceived postulates of truth.

Producing a general theory of power would indicate that one sees it as fixed and measurable; a theme to be ontologically defined. Instead, Foucault stated, power needs to be seen in relation to how knowledge is produced, under what circumstances, and who defines what is relevant knowledge (Foucault and Gordon 1980). He made it clear that what is needed is not a general theory on power but is rather an analysis of the processes and mechanisms *through which power is exercised* (ibid: 2). This analysis is important, I believe, in order to reveal the possibilities and limitations on local actors in terms of how they are enabled to partake in the political debate concerning an opening of petroleum development in LoVeSe, and will be followed up in chapters 4 and 5. I will therefore present the concepts tied to Foucault's notions of

¹⁹ Michel Foucault in a debate with Noam Chomsky, accessed on YouTube, May 18th, 2011.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kawGakdNoT0>

biopower and *biopolitics*, and how they have influenced the security debate and thus have informed my position.

3.2.1.1 *Biopower and biopolitics*

In his lectures then, Michel Foucault elaborated on how the concept of ‘*biopower*’, previously introduced in his *History of Sexuality* (Foucault 1990), can be understood as a *technology of security*. In Foucault’s definition of biopower, a core concern is how the development of particular scientific disciplines (statistics and biology in particular) informs politics. Likewise, an understanding of the particular *governmental reasoning* upon which government rests is necessary:

“... the analysis of biopolitics can only get under way when we have understood the general regime of this governmental reason I have talked about (liberalism, *my insertion*), this general regime we can call the question of truth, of economic truth in the first place, within governmental reason (...) only when we know what this governmental regime called liberalism was, will we be able to grasp what biopolitics is” (Foucault 2008: 21-22)

As these words were spoken during a lecture given in 1979, Foucault could hardly have anticipated the potent rise of neoliberalism in the 1980’s, and how its continued influence on the financial global market and thus on the politics of the present has made his focus on liberalism and its subsequent effects on biopolitics as *the* governmental *raison d’être* as relevant today as in the 1970’s. This is not to be a general discussion of the emergence of liberalism per se. Therefore it suffices to recognize liberalism as foundational for the system of ‘management of flow’, of an understanding of the ‘naturalness’ of the market, and of an evaluation of a governmental rationale which appears to be in line with this ‘truth’. With this refocusing then, it is possible to analyze the connection between the ideas of management of resources as part of a regime of ‘truth’ within which the parameters for a biopolitical governance of population(s) are constructed. In the words of Stuart Elden,

“Biopolitics is the means by which the group of living beings understood as a population is measured in order to be governed, tied to the political rationality of liberalism.” (Elden 2007: 32)

This notion of the natural laws of a liberal economy in particular is based on processes that transformed it from being solely a matter of “positive actions of the sovereign” (Dean 2010) to being descriptions of distinct processes based on the very nature of the market, and that even though these processes may very well be known to the governor(s), they are not necessarily initiated nor controlled by the governor(s). Rather, the role of governance shifts from *initiating* economic activity (as in mercantilist approaches to market and privileges provided by the sovereign) to *facilitating* processes in which free actors may strive for economic survival, prosperity and development. Thus, Dean states,

“Much of the liberal art of government is involved in the restructuring of the institutions of state and society in a manner consistent with, but not directly derived from, the protocols of political economy” (Dean 2010: 135)

What needs to be emphasized here, is that economics as a type of knowledge is to be regarded analytically as a tool of governance, and not the science that defines the very rationale of governance. For the sake of post-Wesphalian European states – and eventually the globalized system of states – this power/knowledge nexus is to be sought understood through an analysis of processes of knowledge production, both within the accepted realm of ‘science’ and beyond. As a consequence, the inclusion/exclusion criteria at work and the power to invest in them are also important objects of analysis. And finally, the manner in which the main object of governance (in relation to the state) – the security of population – is pursued should be investigated, both in terms of the tools employed and the effects they have on actors, communities and population(s). Therefore, state-based Norwegian offshore resource management can be analyzed through understanding how it influences the security situation for multiple actors, communities and population(s). Concretely, the way governance is connected to a naturalized understanding of the laws of market, global economy and objective science should be scrutinized, uncovering its implicit and explicit exclusion of alternative understandings of what it means to be secured, by which actors and through what means. As we shall see in later chapters, the use of biopolitical tools of governmentality, where a certain logic of realism based on simplified notions of what is reasonable and thus manageable (based on natural science) rules, power is exercised in a manner which might pacify local communities. This happens because decisions are based on the perceived needs of the nation state

and thus, contrary to the state goal of securing *the* whole population, local concerns are thus sometimes neglected, sacrificed on the altar of measurement of an overall statistical improvement.

One aim of this thesis is to discuss how biopolitics can support analytical reflections on how security politics is defined and how it affects local communities in Norway. An important element of this analytical ambition is to refer to security debates *as sites of biopolitics*. As an example, Kyle Grayson (2008) uses the concept of biopolitics to argue that the human security debate reproduces objectively oriented research practices and ideas of policy relevance grounded in a narrow discursive space for comprehending security. Still, Grayson says, a notion of immediacy, of ‘real’ threat posed by a clearly defined enemy or power beyond that which is to be secured still influences human security debates. Grayson explains how a biopolitical governmentality dominates security politics, - a politics which is made up to manage a set of concerns considered essential to people’s life, and is associated with processes of identifying, classifying and managing populations in terms of identifiable variables that can be seen as defining them collectively *as population* (population size, public health, ideological currents, religious affiliations, cultural heritage, and so on). Human security research in this perspective aims at establishing knowledge that is characterized as a “quest for precision, measurement, causality and policy relevance” (ibid: 383). Grayson associated this form of human security analysis as knowledge production for the purpose of stringent policy advice with a *narrowing* of the discursive space for reflection on security (ibid: 391).

I believe that Grayson accurately points to the fact that a fundamental, bottom-up-inspired notion of security should be about so much more than immediate life-threatening situations, but also encompass the individual and group-based rights to self-determination and a self-defined meaningful existence, and that exposing ideas currently dominating human security debates is needed in order to understand the complexities of security situations for individuals and communities. As we can see, this critique resembles that of Hoogensen et.al cited earlier (2009), in that it both question the power inherent in ‘traditional’ definitions of what should and what should not be a security issue and that the field of interest should be broadened to include so much more of peoples *ontological world views* than previously acknowledged (see also section 3.2.3, on *ontological security*, below). Grayson’s

paper is a literary review where an analysis of the debate(s) on human security is at the core. The line of reasoning has implications though, I believe, for empirical studies as well, and has inspired my effort in combining theories of biopolitics with an ethnographic methodology. In framing biopolitics, however, there is a need for a presentation of the analytical concept of *governmentality*.

3.2.1.2 Governmentality

After Foucault's death, a number of authors have elaborated on the usage and definitional status of the concept governmentality, to such an extent that there today exist a tradition within post-Foucauldian studies that can be labeled *Governmentality studies* (Dupont and Pearce 2001; Walters and Lerner 2004; Elden 2007; Dean 2010; Joseph 2010). As a concept with a broad appeal and range of application, there understandably exist an infinite number of interpretations and definitions. Indeed, Foucault himself constructed a number of them. Initially, though, his intention was to come up with a concept that could operationalize the specific relations between power, government and population that he saw emerging from the Middle Ages onwards. The following quote serves as an indication of this ambition:

“By this word ‘governmentality’ I mean three things. First, by ‘governmentality’ I understand the ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit very complex, power that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument. Second, by ‘governmentality’ I understand the tendency, the line of force, that for a long time, and throughout the West, has constantly led towards the pre-eminence over all other types of power – sovereignty, discipline and so on – of the type of power that we can call ‘government’ and which has led to the development of a series of specific governmental apparatuses (*appareils*) on the one hand, and on the other to the development of a series of knowledges (*savoirs*). Finally, by ‘governmentality’ I think we should understand the process, or rather, the result of the process by which the state of justice of the Middle Ages became the administrative state of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and was gradually ‘governmentalized’. (Foucault 2007: 108-109)

The quote reveals an ambitious project, one in which Foucault wished to construct an analytics of government where its roots, processes of change and the rationale behind this particular type of government was to be understood. It has a strong genealogical foundation, in that Foucault wished to emphasize the importance of thinking about today's notions of the past as constructs heavily embedded in relations of power, based on the rationale of scientific disciplines aiming at 'objectifying' knowledge about, among other things, population. But how are we to operationalize the concept in a manner that makes it useful for an on-going political process, and not just as a way to understand a genealogical past? In the words of Michell Dean, governmentality should be understood as a *critical analytical approach* which "... engages in the restive interrogation of what is taken as given" (Dean 2010: 3) and thus as an analytics of (political) practice which seeks to unravel the ideas, the ideologies, the *rationale* behind it. Thus, what is analyzed is how the "... programmatic claims of liberalism" (ibid: 9) of freedom and individual right to self-governance is part of a regime of government which has as its ultimate aim the securing of population(s). Therefore, an analytics of government (which includes government of self, a necessary aspect of freedom) will ultimately be involved in the quest for how particular notions of 'truth' are constructed.

Consequently, rooted in Foucault's work on governmentality lies a certain perception of what is to be studied, and how. Kendall and Wickham state that "Foucault's formulation of a governmentality problem space allowed him to look at a novel series of problems – or at least, to examine some familiar problems from a new vantage point" (2007: 130). In identifying a correlation between the emergence of a (liberal) economy and a new mentality of governing, he in fact opened up for a broader view on governing and power;

"... governmentality is a kind of meta-analysis. It is not so much a way of doing political science, as a kind of philosophical intervention into the objects of political science. For example, much of the governmentality literature has concerned itself with liberalism: not the liberalism of the political scientists, but the everyday practices of government that liberalism as a mentality/rationality permits and suggests (...) governing thus comes to be seen not so much as the imposition of one's will over another, as the insertion of a certain way of thinking and doing within the fabric of everyday life" (ibid: 130-131)

The important thing to notice about this perspective is the notion of a particular *analytics of government*, “... concerned with an analysis of the specific conditions under which particular entities emerge, exist and change” (ibid: 130). He identifies what he calls *regimes of practices* which “...give rise to and are informed and reshaped by various forms of knowledge and expertise” (ibid: 132).

3.2.1.3 *Managing the contingent: Risk management and governmentality*

Human biological existence has no plan. There is no plan within the biological entity ‘human’ that can make one foresee the continuous re-establishment of its existence. So too with populations. As they are the total sum of individual actions, made socially relevant as transactional encounters, their shape, form, content, behavior and so on is inevitably contingent. A biopolitics of security – which seeks to secure life as population - cannot secure life *against* contingency but needs governmental technologies to be able to manage life *through* contingency.²⁰ One of these technologies of management, which also has a prominent position in the debates concerning petroleum development in the LoVeSe waters, is a politics resting on the construction and assessment of risk.

It follows from this that biopolitical security differs from traditional accounts of security, as described in a previous section. In biopolitics, the contingent, the possibly threatening, the basis for risk assessments and a possible source of insecurity is also a potential through which life itself must be lived, and not something that can be identified with the intention of annihilating the risk altogether. This duality of the contingent is important for an understanding of the relation – in Foucauldian terms - between power, population and the individual. Foucault does not try to remove individual choice or the implicit exclusivity of all human beings, but seeks to highlight the specific relation between power and population; a relation predominated by what he calls apparatuses of security (*dispositif de sécurité*). These apparatuses, or technologies, are not applied in order to eliminate or disseminate a specific danger, which is seen to be ‘out there’, but rather to regulate circulation of action, bodies,

²⁰ It is important to remember that contingency is not all about risks and threats; rather, it reflects the dualism inherent in all choices made which influence the future: They represent both possibilities and possible threats. *The contingent* therefore can here be defined as *a possible future occurrence, or a possible future effect – something that might happen*, be it ‘good’ or ‘bad; desirable or undesirable.

arguments and goods – to which a certain level of *insecurity* is attached. Foucault calls this the management of *contingencies*, a process which runs parallel to what he calls “rationalization of chance and probabilities” (Foucault 2007: 59) through scientific assessments. Both these processes are an important part of the power/knowledge nexus, which forms the basis for politics in modern society. Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero explain:

“Biopower in particular, Foucault was to elaborate in his lectures, ‘deals with the population, with the population as a political problem which is at once scientific and political, as a biological problem and as a power’s problem.’” (Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero 2008: 272)

In his lecture on bio-power dated 11. January 1978, Foucault shows how security must be investigated as a regulatory power, set to regulate, govern and (to certain degree) control movement and flow (Foucault 2007). In contrast to many post 9/11 political debates on ‘security’ and the strong calls for limitation of movement (both of physical bodies, goods and ideas), Foucault’s writings reminds us that what is perceived as security is not produced by regarding a specific level of *insecurity* as the absolute opposite of a specific level of (acceptable) security. He instead claims that security should be seen as a set of “technologies (...) within mechanisms that are either specifically mechanisms of social control, as in the case of the penal system, or mechanisms with the function of modifying something in the biological destiny of the species” (ibid: 10), where ‘species’ is to be understood in the shape of *population*. Security is therefore not a specific state-of-being, a fixed reality, but an intrinsic part of all actions within a web of circulation “... of ideas, of wills, and of orders, and also commercial circulation” (ibid: 15). Again, this notion of circulation is linked to the notion of a (liberal) market, where the role of the state is to be a facilitator for flow and circulation, and therefore must seek to manage (in)security not through creating boundaries but in seeking to maximize what is seen as positive (security) effects of flow and the management of contingency.

So far, I have described some of the most central Foucauldian concepts that have been introduced into the security debate in general, and the human security debate in particular. I have also aimed at showing how practices of government, with the aim of securing population, potentially creates both security and insecurity, as it is tied to a

power/knowledge nexus for which specific inclusion and exclusion of knowledge practices is fundamental. Mapping, monitoring, assessing and evaluating the world through specific scientific practices ensures a certain level of knowledge about that which the government governs. But the only way in which these processes can be considered relevant to individuals and communities themselves is if they *trust* this system of knowledge production (see section 3.2.2). On the surface, it may seem as successfully securing population necessitates treating it like a passive, receptive object, manipulate the variables that influence its well being (be it by easing up on alcohol restrictions, taxation of sugar, or through waging a war on illegal substances), and monitor the results. But, for individuals and communities (which the population consists of) this is not necessarily enough – and can indeed create both security and insecurity. For instance, heavy taxation on sugar in one country can be a source of new threats and insecurities for farmers cultivating sugar plants in another. Likewise, a war on drugs can spur a campaign of control and monitoring which in effect makes people insecure about the methods and aims of the state, through which their individual and community rights should be secured (including free speech, free movement, the right not to be harassed and indiscriminately monitored, and so on) (Grayson 2008). Objectively, those who govern might claim that a population is ‘better secured’, or that specific threats are less threatening through the implementation of policies aiming at securing population *as an object*. For individuals and communities, though, this basic assumption beckons a need for *trust* in these systems of monitoring, assessing and controlling as well as in the intentions of the monitoring state, and that they identify that what’s best for the ‘population’ writ large (that is, the national population) is also good for them, locally, in terms of security.

Identifying governmentality as an approach to how to understand political practices is important for the analysis to follow, particularly in chapter 4. Likewise, an analysis of how identity is constructed and is paramount for security of individuals and communities reveals how people locally, in Lofoten, constantly reflect upon the way in which the state aims at securing them and enables them to secure themselves, as part of the population. But before we move on, some clarification concerning the way population is understood within the governmentality framework is needed, and how a reflection on actors, agency and the management of population through enabling individual and collective action will provide an understanding of how both state and

non-state actors relate to the question concerning petroleum development in Lofoten. In scrutinizing the way population is portrayed as being secured, a more dynamic entity emerges in which a focus on multiple actors and their security practices is possible.

3.2.1.4 Population

In biopolitics the referent object of governance is life; specifically, in the beginning, ‘population’. Life, especially the life of populations, is characterized by contingency. Contingency is not arbitrary chance. It represents a complex discourse – set of truth-telling practices – about the knowledge of uncertainty.” (Dillon 2007: 45)

In Foucaults writings on the emergence of governmentality and biopolitics, the population emerges as the referent object of security practices for the state. However, understanding the Foucauldian notion of population as a passive object would be erroneous. Even though the population is referred to as ‘that object which is to be governed’ (paraphrasing Dillon 2007: 42), it is important to recognize that one of the most important technologies of government aiming at securing the population is through what Foucault called ‘the conduct of conduct’ (Dillon 2007; Foucault 2007), meaning that

“from the perspective of governmentality, government refers to a continuum, which extends from political government right through to forms of self-regulation, namely ‘technologies of self’, as Foucault calls them.” (Lemke 2001: 201)

A focus on the self-regulatory aspects of population then, allows for a view on technologies of security through which the state both secures *and enables population to secure itself*, and therefore, a governmentality-based notion of population provides an opening for the analysis of individual and collective agency *within* population. The regulation of conduct thus for instance ensures the rights of citizens in terms of being allowed to influence political processes (in liberal democracies, that is), but simultaneously regulates the process through inclusion and exclusion criteria based on the rationality of the power/knowledge nexus of neoliberal governmentality (for instance through evoking scientific criteria as basis for the acceptance of knowledge informing politics). Thus, governmentality both regulates behavior and manages

resources with the security of population as its ultimate aim. As such, it *objectifies* population (Dean 2010: 127). But it regulates behavior (that is, practices) not through subjugating freedom and individual agency, but through the management of freedom aiming at the within the power/knowledge nexus defined “...’right ways’ of living”, according to Kyle Grayson (2008: 385), who continues:

“The biopolitical *problematique* of government was both aware of intervening too much, thereby unsettling the natural regulatory mechanisms of species life (*i.e. in population, my insertion*), and aware of intervening to little, thereby allowing for the proliferation of dangerous abnormalities that would lead to insecurity.” (ibid: 385-386)

Managing population, then, means acquiring some sort of understanding of how to manage the contingent future. As will be shown below, risk assessment and management is vital to Norwegian resource management policies, which are here understood as *technologies of security*, aiming at securing population. I therefore turn to a description of theoretical work on risk theory that has influenced the way I see resources governed – population included – in the case to be analysed in the following chapters.

3.2.2 Understanding and Managing the Risky Future

The future is, indeed, a risky business. And just as my take on the security concept has been informed by the connections between power, knowledge and a *politics of truth* that Foucault introduced, the comprehensive literature on the concept of risk has been important for the way in which I have connected understandings of threats and risks, and how they pertain to the notion of a broadened security concept. The following quote by CEO of the Norwegian petroleum company Statoil, Helge Lund, in many ways says it all:

“One must acknowledge that no such thing as a risk-free petroleum production exists. It’s all about *risk management* (my italics), like in any other industry.

Both we and the politicians must understand that we take risks and what the implications are, both the negative and positive side to it”²¹

The future is unpredictable; we take risks and try to manage them as best we can. They represent both possibilities and possible losses, and it is up to us to make a choice – not based on an objective ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, but on *what we want*. In other words, it has something to do with what we value in life and how we obtain it. In this sense, Lund has understood something important; that it is not risk assessments and objectified knowledge about threats that makes us take a particular decision, it is rather *who we are* and *what we want* that decides what risks we are willing to take, and which we will not accept. On the following pages, I aim to show how risk construction and risk management can be analyzed as tools of governmentality, *and* how the way they are reflected upon by multiple actors gives insight into how specific identities are constructed and managed. Managing risks means evoking a particular knowledge system, putting it to use in a way that makes sense to those who ascribe to this particular way of doing things. In her essay collection ‘Risk and Blame’, Mary Douglas (1992) describes how a theory of culture focusing on the construction of risk is important for understanding why certain threats are perceived as risks some places and disregarded in others. Likewise, Douglas argues, it helps explain seemingly irrational behavior of societies or individuals when faced with risk assessments that they do not adhere to. This is not to say that no objective threats exists, but that *the concept of risk is a construction* which has certain premises which are preconceived, and that sometimes, the specific knowledge upon which evaluation of risks connected to specific threats are being constructed is not considered relevant or meaningful by individuals or communities.

Douglas argues that we all are given - through culturally specific institutions, teaching methods and social practice – the means through which we constantly sample and analyze raw data from our everyday lives. We do this, she claims, through the understanding of three principles: randomness, statistical independence and sampling variability (ibid: 55). We are all able to use these three principles, she argues,

²¹ Helge Lund, CEO of Statoil. From an interview published at the web site of the economical news agency e24. Accessed January 17th, 2011: <http://e24.no/boers-og-finans/article3782888.ece>.

“...without formal schooling: any tribe of hunters or fishers or any profession of farmers and sailors use their grasp of probabilism to assess their materials, the predicted behaviour of fish or sheep or tides or weather. They know all about random variation in the accuracy of their instruments, they disregard inferences from too small samples, and without knowing statistics they know a lot about the practical equivalent of statistical independence. (...) In other words the culturally learned intuitions, which guide our judgement for any of our fields of competence, teach us enough probabilistic principles but they are heavily culture bound. We are all lost when we venture beyond the scope of our culturally given intuitions and presumably the technically competent probabilist would be equally lost if asked to predict outside his skilled intuitions. “ (ibid: 57)

What I take from Douglas is that the ability to assess and evaluate our surroundings in terms of risk is something to be found in all societies. Indeed, we are constantly assessing information and making judgments with regards to what might be risky. In our everyday lives too, we make judgments of the risks we face and consider whether or not to take them, based on evaluation of the subsequent positive or negative effects. However, in modern societies, risks are – to paraphrase Ulrich Beck (1992)– ‘*beyond the individual*’, which is here meant to illustrate two aspects of importance for the case I am analyzing. The first is that an infinite number of threats – like the possibility for an oil spill or the dangers connected to global climate change – are so far-reaching and complex that the level of techno-scientific knowledge needed in order to assess the risks involved are too high for most individuals. Secondly, there is ample reason to assert that a decoupling of the risk-taker(s) and those potentially affected by the consequences of the risk (that is, the ones taking the risks do not necessarily feel the consequences) in fact plays a part in how the potential threats are evaluated in the first place. What this means is that there might exist different perspectives on both *what the risks are* and *how they should be evaluated*, as the consequences are experienced differently. In the Arctic, for instance, the risks involved for states wanting to exploit the potential for new petroleum sources as climate change and the subsequent retraction of sea ice are first and foremost assessed in terms of the risk to people and equipment involved in the exploration, as well as the potential for oil spills. For fishers on the other hand, the assessment of risks might follow different parameters,

as their concerns might be connected to the consequences for fish migration routes from seismic shooting, to the loss of fishing grounds due to security zones established around petroleum production facilities, and to the competitive force of the petroleum industry in terms of recruiting what little there is of available technical expertise for maintenance work on vessels and equipment (see also chapter 5).

In other words, those taking the risks, and assessing the potential outcome of them, might not necessarily be the same people who are in danger of having to face the consequences – a factor which might potentially influence the assessment in the first place. On the other hand, accepting the identification of a particular threat does not mean that all individuals agree upon what level of risk is acceptable. Therefore, how risk is constructed and evaluated is important for the eventual acceptance or refusal of the risk management schemes to follow.

3.2.2.1 The construction and evaluation of risk

Identification and assessment of risk, *risk taking* and risk management as tools with which to govern society (understood here as that which Foucault called *technologies of security*) is here closely connected to a *broadened* and *deepened* security concept. It is broadened because themes well beyond the traditional, ‘hard-line’ security concept, where states are both the producers and receivers of security (more often than not through the (potential) use of military force), also affect people’s security. It is deepened because the effects *on people* require a methodological reconsideration of where ‘security’ should be empirically investigated. In this, I believe, there lies a potential for a critical examination of the way risk is constructed and evaluated and, more importantly, how it influences the decision-making processes which in turn inflicts risks on peoples lives. Risk, then, is not something that exists ‘out there’. While threats, on the other hand, must be said to describe factors which – objectively speaking – exists prior to human categorization and rationalization, risks are their presumed effect, and are tied to certain aspects of the relationship between the culturally ordered and the un-ordered, the controllable and uncontrollable – again, it’s a matter connected to how to *manage contingencies* – both those desirable and undesirable.

There are important differences in how the concept of ‘risk’ is understood. For risk scientists, the concept as such is without moral or value; it is simply a way of

objectively assessing "... the probability of an event combined with the magnitude of the losses and gains that it will entail" (Douglas 1992: 40). However, as Douglas explains, it is unlikely that this perception of risk assists politics in deciding in controversial issues, due to a lack of common understanding amongst the debaters concerning how to value the gains and losses. In the essay on Risk and Justice, Douglas describes what she calls 'The Innocent Model' of risks, which has as a premise that those discussing the issue to which certain risk(s) can be attributed all agree on "... the kind of accountability they want to enforce in their community" (ibid: 30), i.e. the way in which perceived indicators for 'a good life' is measured and accounted for. According to this model,

"... risk analysis can tell you to very fine degrees the probability of a particular event happening, with a one in a million chance, one in a thousand, one in a hundred, and so on. Similar analysis can tell you the costs of averting the event, the cost of ensuring against it, the costs of compensating for it, or even the scale of benefits that the event would engender. All of this information is necessary if the parties agree on community goals; none of it will reconcile to a decision that one party fundamentally disapproves. (op.cit).

Thus, if there is a fundamental disagreement about the desired goals regarding a specific event, the role of science as a basis for solving issues is weakened. Douglas explains:

" A risk is not only the probability of an event but also the probable magnitude of its outcome, and everything depends on the value that is set on the outcome. The evaluation is a political, aesthetic, and a moral matter. (ibid: 31)

Douglas points to a key dilemma in the problem of risk; that "... (it) arises because our Western tradition of thinking about judgment and choice leaves cultural influences out of account (ibid: 58). In the LoVe-case, it is seen as 'emotional stuff', as based on hearsay, tradition and immeasurable, fictitious knowledge (as opposed to 'facts') and as being less rational than a purely scientific reasoning informing politics (see chapter 4 and 5). With Foucault, we could say that there are specific exclusion/inclusion criteria at work, imposed by the realm of the western, science-based biopolitical governmentality.

Ulrich Beck developed these elaborations further concerning the use of science in identifying and assessing threats. His notion of a *Risk Society* rests on the assumption that society has moved to a state of *advanced modernity*, where "... the social production of wealth is systematically accompanied by the social production of *risks*" (1992: 19). In this society, Beck argues, modernization has become reflexive in the sense that it encounters particular limitations in the possibility for relentless growth in wealth and expenditure based on the exploitation of nature through increasingly advanced technological means. These limitations are first and foremost threats to human life which modernization itself produces, and are particularly tied to the industrialization and modernization processes that are meant to secure a better life for everyone. The need in this technocratic, highly specialized world, in risk society, for specialists who perform risk assessments, means that *trust in expert knowledge* as basis for political decisions is central, and an important variable are we to be able to identify science as a provider of knowledge relevant for the evaluation of threats, risks and security issues.

3.2.2.2 Science and risk

The way we make threats conceivable – *through risk-identifying processes* - is a part of how we manage our surroundings; it is how we understand the world we live in. And the most powerful tool in establishing a manageable future is scientific knowledge. However, turning knowledge into politics is, as we shall see, no easy task. Douglas describes the problem in this way:

"It is doubtful whether Europeans or anyone else need it (the concept of risk, my insertion) in that sense. When the public is told that there is a 10 per cent probability of something happening, or 0.01 per cent probability, the formula is a poor guide to action and still poorer when the probabilities are reduced by several orders of magnitude." (Douglas 1992: 40)

This points towards an interesting possibility; that the governmental tool of risk assessment runs the risk of leaving the public *uninformed and detached*, and politicians left with little choice but to either trustingly follow the risk assessment advice which explicitly or implicitly are included in the 'knowledge base' upon which a political decision is to be made, or simply to dismiss them as important for politics altogether. We will see in the chapters that follows that risk assessments are in fact

understood as important, but not to the same degree by all actors, indicating that the way actors approach risk assessments can be seen as strategic and guided by their political, moral or practical concerns – much like Douglas has observed:

“The very idea that there could be a technical solution to a disagreement about goals and purposes shows that political reconciliation is rejected. The predictable consequence of using science in politics is that both sides consult their own scientific experts.” (ibid: 33)

Still, the notion prevails amongst many actors, I argue, that the basis for ‘good’ government largely rests on collecting and then assembling ‘facts’, without due concern being given to the way in which these ‘facts’ are based on exclusion/inclusion premises which reifies certain power relations, and that they thus disregard alternative, locally produced knowledge. Similarly, Sheila Jasanoff (1998) states that the important question to ask is: who’s risk perceptions it is that is seen as authoritative, by whom and why? The answer lies implicit in her argument that the way inclusion and exclusion of risk perceptions are based on

“ ... how some theories, beliefs or claims come to to be accepted as true while others are rejected as false. Inquiry along these lines would be artificially restricted if nature, logic and reason were selectively employed to explain beliefs deemed *a priori* to be true, whereas social explanations, such as culture, superstition or self-deception, were reserved for those deemed to be false” (ibid: 92)

Jasanoff identifies three different approaches for relating risk perception to public policy; she calls them (1) ‘the realist’, (2) ‘the constructivist’ and (3) ‘the discursive’ approaches. A comparison of the three models helps understand their embedded tacit understandings of risk. Of concern here, is the way ‘realist’ approaches focuses on assessments of risks based on mathematics, statistics and probability assessments are prone to dismiss all notions of the importance of understanding risk perceptions as more than an assessment of the (possible and objectifiable) threat that the risk is meant to tackle. In this approach, risk is

“... a tangible bi-product of natural and social processes. It can be objectively mapped, measured and controlled, at least to the extent that science permits.

(...) Improvement in risk policy, it follows, is secured by correcting faulty public perceptions, preferably through centralized control and dissemination of risk information by competent bureaucracies.” (ibid: 94)

Jasanoffs second approach, on the other hand, recognizes the constructivist nature of knowledge production. Here, all affected interest should ideally be able to participate in the “framing, analysis and resolution of risk problems” (op.cit). As we shall see, the process of creating a knowledge base for the production of an updated Integrated Management Plan for the Barents and Lofoten Seas ideally sought to adhere to this kind of model. Therefore, I think a schematic description of the policy process concerning the LoVeSe case – with oil at the center – should pay homage to the fact that a lot of actors have been allowed to play in their views, although within certain pre-defined parameters – which will be further discussed in chapter 4.

I believe both these models have explanatory value in this case. When setting the parameters for inclusion and exclusion of scientific data, a ‘realist’ notion of risk has been implemented (that is, assessments of risk where the equation Risk=potential damage x probability is at the core). In fact, in my case, this first model resonates with statements from many actors with a stake in the matter of allowing for petroleum production in the LoVeSe area.²² Regardless of their stand on the matter of oil, they have all insisted on the importance of ‘doing science, not politics’, and even though they are asked to give advice to policy makers (at least some of them), they would insist on using purely scientific measuring and assessment methods, thus simply mapping ‘the natural state of things’. The strength then, of this model is that it includes a processual notion of how knowledge is constructed and accepts “ ... the potential for subjectivity even in expert assessments of risk” (Jasanoff 1998: 95) and that risk assessors have to make a series of assumptions about the possible event and the context within which it arises. These assumptions are often not data driven, Jasanoff claims, but are instead

“...products of the risk analyst’s professional imagination, shaped and conditioned by underlying policy objectives, values, training and experience.

²² See for instance KONKRAFT-reports issued by an assembly of actors involved in Norwegian Petroleum (KONKRAFT 2008, 2009, 2010) and the report on risk assessments by the Norwegian classification society DNV (Dalen, Dragsund et al 2007).

The risks that these experts measure therefore exist not ‘in reality’ but only in the artificial micro-worlds of the analyst’s creation.” (ibid: 95)

However – and here we reach the third approach identified by Jasanoff – the *power to define* and the power of language also has to be taken into account. An example that illustrates this would be the importance of understanding how a map portrays a terrain. One has to understand the basic principles upon which it is built; the fact that it ‘looks down’ on the terrain, not from one imagined point, but from a non-dimensional, illusory, floating state of presence strictly above any point on the map; that ‘up’ means ‘north’, that the specificities of the topography is reduced to a stringent, numerically-based system of lines and markings symbolizing hills, gorges, valleys and mountain sides – thus excluding the smaller rock formations, hollows, cracks and rises of the terrain. To make use of it, one has to be able to extract the information on it, interpret it, and make use of it standing *in the terrain* and not, as the imaginary gaze which the map represents, hovering above it. Within the ‘discursive’ model, then, knowledge is still regarded as socially constructed, but it adds an emphasis on

“ (...) the role of professional languages (such as qualitative risk assessment) and analytic practices (such as cost-benefit analysis) in shaping public perceptions of risk. Authoritative knowledge is created in this framework by people or institutions that master the relevant formal discourses, which, however, importantly constrain even experts’ perceptions of risk. Since risk discourses may systematically exclude valid, but powerless, viewpoints, policy improvement has to be sought through criticism of dominant discourse, perhaps entailing social resistance and eventual institutional change” (op.cit)

For my theoretical argument here, it is important to acknowledge that reducing a problem to *how much risk could be acceptable* implies both that a threshold for acceptable risk(s) can be objectively held *and* that the notions of *what is at stake* is non-controversial. In the LoVeSe-case concerning petroleum production, I will show that creating public and political consensus about *acceptable levels of risk* and *what it is we are risking* is, together with the more overarching matter of what it means to be securing the future, at the core of the political controversy.

Inspired by Foucault, Beck, Dougals and Jasanoff, then, I argue that the main contribution of objectivist natural science in the case here presented is to provide

evaluations of risk - carried out by specialists within a hegemonic power/knowledge nexus, with the purpose of managing contingency, aiming at securing population. Thus, it necessarily follows that trust in the knowledge produced by 'science' upon which technologies of security rests should be a focus when analyzing security concerns locally in Lofoten.

3.2.2.3 A note on trust

As we have seen, in modern society risks are to a large extent de-localized (that is, they often originate from beyond the immediate sphere of individual or community) and part of a specialized, scientific discourse. As a consequence, specialist assessments are needed. It follows from this that being put in a position in which one is understood as being able to see, to observe, and to make sense of reality on a *different level* than the rest of humanity provides a scientist with a certain power to define. But, the very reflexivity of the post-modern society means that science is constantly questioning itself and is being questioned by the lay – therefore *trust* is needed in order for this relation between scientist and society to prevail, and an important variable if we are to be able to identify scientifically based knowledge as a security provider (Lupton 1999: 77). Ultimately, then, it is a matter of how scientific knowledge, as it is created, perceived, transformed and transmitted by scientists, is trusted to influence society; how it is seen to contribute to securing us all – and how it is combined with forms of knowledge 'beyond' the scientific inclusion criteria when encountering real lives lived. In other words, it is of interest to see how individuals and communities reflect upon state governmental strategies for securing population, and in what way they find that these strategies assist in securing them, - or if they in fact also might produce *insecurity*.

Another dimension of trust is its impact on events, where assessments have shown that the possibility that 'risk' will turn into 'undesirable effect' is close to non-existing. Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky cites William C. Clarks use of the *Titanic*-disaster as an example:

“The classic example here is the *Titanic*, where the new ability to control most kinds of leaks led to the understocking of lifeboats, the abandonment of safety drills and disregard of reasonable caution in navigation” (William C. Clark in Douglas 1992: 196)

Another, more recent example is the Deepwater Horizon accident in the Mexican Gulf in April 2010, an event which influenced how actors in the debates concerning petroleum development in vulnerable areas in the Barents and Lofoten seas evaluated the political impact risk assessments and traditional risk management schemes should have; debates that will be further described in chapter 4.

3.2.3 Identity, community and ontological security

“A sense of the reliability of person and things, so central to the notion of trust, is basic to feelings of ontological security; hence the two are psychologically closely related” (Giddens 1990: 92)

And with this reflection – on how trust influences the security impact of both state and non-state actors on everyday lives – I have come to the debate concerning identity construction and, in particular, its ramifications for *ontological security*, previously defined (in chapter 1) as that sense of a continuous environment, natural and social, in which people believe that their self-identity can be re-established and reproduced, or as that which secures our sense of “...‘being’ or, in the terms of phenomenology, ‘being-in-the-world’” (Giddens 1990: 92). Giddens’ understanding of the concept has much to do with what he sees as one of the mayor overarching consequences of modernity; a heightened sense of insecurity, ontologically speaking. He identifies as an important facet of modern society the sentiment in which people “... (feel) caught up in a universe of events we do not fully understand, and which seems in large part outside of our control” (Giddens 1990: 2-3). An interesting question thus becomes in what way this insecurity – be it based on a lack of trust in experts systems (Giddens 1990; Beck 1992; Dean 2010) or in a lack of a sense community (or shared ontological world view) – is met by actors aiming at securing themselves and/ or others. I will assert that identity and ontological security is intimately intertwined, as a sense of security is a mayor factor in establishing the bonds needed for an identity to emerge. They both are a premise for the development of the other, in a symbiotic relationship that brings us analytically to a core question concerning social life: What rallies people together in groups, communities, towns and cities – and nations, if not a sense of security in togetherness, in sharing an understanding of the world with others? Additionally, could it be found that, when facing difficult issues, people might *still* refer to those identity traits somewhat simplistically characterized as a

gemeinschaft – based sense of belonging, togetherness and, as a consequence - security, in searching for reference points for enabling them to decide on the matter?

As I turn to descriptions from my fieldwork later, I will empirically show how arguments concerning petroleum development were held together as coherent, logical frames of reference (Dean 2010) based on an adherence to specific identities. Individuals and communities ascribe *ontological importance* to specific actions, symbols and frames of reference (be they ‘natural’ or ‘cultural’). In other words, the way debates over a possible petroleum production has stirred discussions and reflections about who ‘we’ are and who ‘we’ might become, oil or not, has been particularly interesting. Identity can in this way be understood as both *ontological practice* (Giddens 1990) and *symbolic ordering* (Cohen 1985) of the world. In discussions on identity in a globalized world, focus has often been on the fluid nature of multiple identities, disassociated from space and time and instead connected through inter-subjective relations based on a commonality founded on the subject’s roles as consumers, soccer fans, World of Warcraft-participants, sub-culture adherents, environmentalists, members of international pressure groups and so on. However, a focus on these often ‘faceless commitments’ symptomatic for the impersonal, modern life (Giddens 1990: 80, 115) should not, in my view, make us as social researchers underrate the importance of personal relations based on family ties, adherence to a common local community or a shared background. In Lofoten, I found that adherence to a locally based identity did influence informants take on the matter of petroleum production in their region, and spurred reflections concerning identity and its foundation upon locally based knowledge. In Lofoten, lives lived close to and at sea has been paramount for the symbolic construction of community (Cohen 1985), as reference to specific practical skills has been important for the attribution of identification with community. And as we shall see, even though few people today are directly involved in commercial fishing in Lofoten, the *symbolic importance* of the fisheries far outreaches its importance measured in economic earnings and surplus or in the amount of workplaces it provides. Therefore, the description here of how locally based knowledge production is presented in academia is based on work in fishing communities, - work which has inspired my analysis of what I learned about the connection between fisheries, knowledge production and identity in Lofoten.

An often under-communicated, aspect of local knowledge is what Anita Maurstad has called embodied knowledge of cultural seascapes (Maurstad 2010). She juxtaposes the notion of *seascapes* with that of *landscape*, and points to the curiosity that even though a large proportion of the Norwegian population has been situated close to – and in dependence of – the ocean, no word resembling *seascape* exists in Norwegian. Instead, the embodied knowledge shared by the thousands that have – now and in the past – spent their days at sea has been regarded with a sense of wonder, mysticism and ‘unrefined imaginary’ of an adaptation to nature perceived as stripped of cultural, intersubjective reality. This is what the term *seascape* is meant to rectify, and thus open up for “... experiential and conceptual constructs, whose descriptions are formed by human perceptions and experiences” (ibid: 39). The bodily experiences of the people living off the sea, which includes the bodily sense of ‘setting sea legs’, the intuitive knowledge upon which the setting of nets in a certain direction from a certain point rests, and the incorporation of bodily practices in companionship with others on the vessel (Jensen 2004: 51-52) is part of a series of repeated intersubjective actions which in turn becomes part of processes of “habitual skilled remembering” (Connerton 1989: 72) upon which societal construction of a commonality with nature is believed to be (culturally) significant:

“The community and communities at sea share experiences that rest in intuitions and sensual bodily experiences. They share memories of the smell and the taste of the sea, as well as the sense of bodily behaviour on a moving floor, be it for fishing or travelling through the seascape. It is every fisher’s lived experiences and it informs fisher identity, fishing communities and cultural seascapes.” (Maurstad 2010: 43)

Similarly, Gísli Pálsson has described how one in Icelandic discourse about identity and belonging emphasize the relationship between knowledge and practice, describing it as “...a notion of *enskilment* that emphasizes immersion on the practical world, being caught up in the incessant flow of everyday life” (Pálsson 1994: 901). He describes what he sees as an important difference between a *normative* approach to knowledge and a *theory of practice* (c.f. governmentality and the multiple actors perspective’s focus on practices). In normative theory,

“... learning is generally assumed to take place with socialization broadly defined as the acquisition of a stock of knowledge about expected ways of thinking, feeling and acting. Given the normative approach, learning entails the transmission of culture, a mental code or a script that exists prior to and independent of human activities, a recipe for action” (ibid: 903).

Pálsson rejects this notion of persons as “containers”, a description which, in effect, renders creativity and change impossible:

“If both novices and tutors (by definition, former novices) are mere recipients of models and texts, submitted to a body of knowledge given in advance, it is difficult to see how human creativity could be possible at all” (ibid).

Pálsson believes that a theory seeking to unfold the practices of knowledge (that is, *how knowledge is produced*) as well as the importance of practical experience in knowledge acquisition is pertinent:

“(Practice theory) introduce(s) purpose, agency and dialogue into the process of enskilment – a radical break with the Cartesian tradition of separating ideas and the real world, learning and doing, experts and laypersons, knowledge and practice” (ibid: 904)

This way of looking at knowledge as (re)established through activities emerged in a social setting resembles Connertons description of the processes of construction of what he calls *social memory* (Connerton 1989: 13). And, as Pálsson, Connerton also distinguishes this construction of what we might refer to as collective knowledge from the constructions of (one or another branch of) scientific knowledge:

“Far from relying on authorities other than themselves, to whose statements their thoughts must conform, historians are their own authority; their thought is autonomous vis-à-vis their evidence, in the sense that they possess criteria by reference to which that evidence is criticised. Historical reconstruction is thus not dependent on social memory” (ibid: 13-14)

This inherent scepticism to a ‘hierarchical’ ordering of knowledge systems, in which the culturally based ordering of knowledge called ‘science’ rules supreme, is recognizable also from my previous discussion on the relation between governmental

technologies of science aiming at securing population through risk assessment and risk management (see sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2).

Individuals living in societies where social bonds are more multiplex have ‘different’, ‘combined’, ‘multiple’ identities. I would argue, with Bhikhu Parekh, for an understanding of identity as that which “ ... represents the way in which individuals situate and orientate themselves in the world” (2008: 23), a focussing of our attention to the *ontological aspects* of social life; that which makes the world definable and manageable – and thus what makes the contingent future *ontologically secure*. Human beings are bearers of certain common identities, such as being mothers, fathers, daughters, sons and so on, and that we all share something based on what he calls a “... common humanity or human identity” (ibid: 2). But it is *how we create differences between us* that make the social world understandable. I therefore choose to emphasize that dimension of identity that Parekh calls the social dimension, concerned with “ ... membership in a particular group or structure of relationship” (ibid: 4), as opposed to the personal dimension dealing with individual personal uniqueness, and the human dimension which identifies every human being as “... a member of the universal community” (op.cit). Importantly, this focus must not exclude the possibility of individual and/ or group agency initiating new identities – as well as an upholder and *re-creator* of traditional ones. As we shall see, both tradition and outside influences do play a part in both constructing identity markers made relevant in the debate over petroleum production in Lofoten and in the way these identities are ‘filled’ with meaning.

What we do for a living is an important part of who we are. Therefore, a threat to ones livelihood can be seen as fundamental, as completely overshadowing other concerns and reflections. During my fieldwork I met quite a few who held this view. For others, the focus was on the declining population of the Lofoten region and the need for new industrial impulses if new high-competence jobs were to be produced, which was the only thing, it seemed, to have the potential of making young people move (back) to the region, thereby securing a future for the communities in question. *The way local and regional identity is made significant and is mobilized by local actors*, by both proponents of and opponents to petroleum, signals that identity is ascribed a political importance. But, additionally, one can claim that ontologies based on a reflexive, adaptive, practice-based and somewhat fatalistic relation to ones surroundings

invokes a different conception of *what is relevant knowledge, what are the goals of development* and, most importantly, *how do we manage the risky, contingent future*. These different ‘ontologies’ play an important part in the positioning most of my informants takes in the matter of petroleum development in ‘their’ waters.

Summarizing, I assert then, that the construction of identity – personal and psychological, cultural and social – is fundamental for ontological security. Further, It will be contested here that the construction of *a relevant other* is just as important for identity construction as is the ‘content, ‘stuff’, of which identity markers are created. Descriptions of who ‘we’ are more often than not needs comparable relevant others, and how these others relate to nature, technology, religion, sexuality, death and so on *in a different way than ‘us’*. Surely, the identification of others who are *similar to us* are also important (‘we’ are like ‘them’), but the things that makes us different from those who are otherwise similar is ultimately what separates ‘us’ from ‘them’; that is, what ensures that the two groups stays on as separate groups to which personal identities are ascribed and are not joined into one.

3.2.3.1 *Ontological security - A concern for the state?*

Arguing for governmentality as an analytical framework that enables researchers to better understand the relationship between those governing and those who are governed, Jim Marlow analyses government with a focus on how governmentality in ‘the age of anxiety’ (or ‘risk society’) focuses on affording also ontological security to the general public, or - in Foucauldian terms – *to population*:

“Looking at governance through the lens of governmentality enables us to consider the linkage between questions of government on the one hand, and matters of self, identity, and personhood (of those governed) on the other. It enables us, then, to consider the relationship between government and contemporary individualized existential anxiety” (Marlow 2002: 243)

Marlows focus on understanding the state as a provider of ontological security is interesting, and helps us understand how we can bridge the apparent gap between the active actors in a multiple securities perspective and a population being manipulated by a ‘securing’ state within a governmentality framework. As described in section 3.2.1 (on Population), an important facet of governmentality is the focus of a governing of conduct through management of freedom, - that is, the securing of

population's potential. But, the right to choose also means tackling the consequences of the risks you yourself take - or in other word: the marshalling of *free choice* means that risks are taken also individually – and that the *way the state secures, is not by catching you if you fall – it is in adjusting 'reality' in such a way that it prepares the population for free choice and risk-taking*. Again, we see that public trust in expert systems becomes a necessary premise, if governmentality is to secure population. Additionally, tension potentially emerges, as inclusion/exclusion criteria based on the ontologies of these expert systems tend to degrade the knowledge upon which (local) identity is based. I will explore these tensions in the subsequent chapters.

So what is it then, that makes the construction of identity and notions of ontological security relevant for the LoVeSe case? Most importantly, it is based on a need to be able to grasp analytically the way people in Lofoten used *identity-based arguments* when I asked about both hopes and concerns connected to the possible extraction of petroleum in 'their' area. Many informants would refer to concerns about how the predictabilities of everyday life might change – both in terms of the possible risks involved, and the way a more industrialized way of living could change peoples ability to make sense of their world. In the words of McSweeney:

“Trust and ontological security concern the acquisition of confidence in the routines of daily life – the essential predictability of interaction through which we feel confident in knowing what is going on and that we have the practical skill to go on in this context.” (McSweeney 1999: 155)

With the notion of 'security-of-being', McSweeney describe the importance of 'us' having something vital in common, separate from 'those relevant others' (Barth 1994 (1969); Anderson 2006 (1983)), for the formation of identities through the use of *stories or narratives* (McSweeney 1999: 163) which constantly reconfirm and reproduce identity through active participation by actors. Thus, we see again that a focus on *social practices* and on how people perceive of their world and makes sense of it, is important. And as with the position derived from the multiple actor perspective outline above, the relation between trust and ontological security forms the basis for how people and communities relate to the governmental technologies of security sought applied by state actors for the sake of securing population.

3.3 Security Summarized

“... truth is not just contingent but also highly subjective. And those truths that become inculcated into the realm of knowledge known as common sense are in fact political products that have the tendency to benefit those in positions of authority. Thus, one of the most highly political acts is that of establishing which discourses, institutions, techniques, and processes, will be accorded value in finding truth.” (Grayson 2010: 2)

In this chapter, I have sought to present and establish analytical tools that will be used in the analysis that follows. I have been preoccupied with showing how developments in security studies has opened for a broader and deeper understanding of the concept, and aimed to show how governmentality studies and risk theory has contributed to my understanding of the relationship between power and knowledge, - a relation which heavily influences the basis for the type of reasoning that informs politics in Norway in general and in the Northern region in particular. But most importantly, I believe the way governmentality studies and risk theory can assist in analyzing the way the formal politics of the state is produced (i.e. showing how practices of government evolves) is important for an understanding of how individuals and communities relate to matters of security, as well as to the state. The reason for this is twofold: First, an analysis of how the principal ideals of the Norwegian state-run high north policy effort are produced in practice, with reference to the ideas backing them up (the –*mentality* of governmentality, so to speak), shows how inclusion and exclusion practices leaves individuals and communities with little leeway in terms of advocating for the inclusion of alternative knowledge. Their voices thus tend to become *oppositional* and critical to the strict, scientifically based frame of reference within which knowledge is deemed as ‘relevant’.²³ In other words, they are invited in, but this invitation is based on criteria that exclude much of the inherited and practically derived knowledge they possess. Still, as we shall see, concerns about *ontological* security produced locally are being raised, and they are a part of the political debate, but are subject to matters in which the state’s concerns about (a passive) population

²³ Bear in mind, also, that the *power to decide* in these matters is also placed within the scientific community itself. It should come as no surprise then, that knowledge and input deemed ‘unscientific’ is left out of this kind of systematic knowledge production.

writ large *which needs to be secured* overrides local concerns about identity, belonging and ontological world view. This means that there is a concern that state compliance with the needs of a petroleum industry, which have helped finance the Norwegian welfare system for new areas for production of petroleum, for the sake of securing (the larger, Norwegian) population will triumph over local security concerns a potential future petroleum development in the Lofoten waters provokes. This point is not only raised by opponents to petroleum development but also by proponents, which means that it is of common concern for many in Lofoten, no matter their opinion on the matter as such.

The second reason why it is important to describe the state *as a manager of resources and provider of security for population* has to do with the reconstruction of identity as a basis for ontological security. As we shall see in chapter 5, many ascribe the position they take when reflecting upon a potential petroleum development to their specific identity, as *Lofoting* (from Lofoten) or *Norlending* ('from the north', 'Northerner'). Responses to the resource management scheme of the Norwegian state, which in this setting includes both biological resources, human resources and hydrocarbons, were by many of my informants (both opponents and proponents to petroleum) interpreted as yet another situation in which the north ran the risk of being exploited, left with way too little, and most importantly, without real influence on the decision to be made. As arguments about petroleum development are often tied to the idea of securing population (creating job security, energy security, financial stability, industrialized progress locally and so on), counter-arguments from Lofoten about it creating *insecurity* were met with calculations of potential risk and presentation of counter-measure systems in case of environmental accidents, but not with an understanding of the need for *local actors and communities to be able to secure themselves, ontologically*. In the following chapters, we will see examples of how this perceived lack of understanding of local concerns is one part of the basis for a lack of *trust* (in science, in the petroleum companies, in the national government) that permeates much of my material from the field. As the governmentality of Norwegian resource management and high north politics are presented and analyzed then, local concerns and counter-arguments will also be presented, with the aim of showing how a politics aiming at securing population (both locally and nationally) also spurs notions of *insecurity*. With this, I will show how the enabling of the state as a security

provider (through the use of what Foucault called *technologies of security*) can in fact *unable* local actors and communities to provide security for themselves and others.

In this case, much of the debate, both locally and nationally, is concerned with the establishment of ‘truth’. And as indicated in the quote by Grayson in the beginning of this section, the production of ‘truth’ is both contingent and a reflection of power relations. This means that *the power to define* what it is we should be discussing is important. The tendency by some actors (with the power to define) to *exclude from what really matters* concerns about local perceptions of how to secure oneself means that an already established notion of a *relevant difference* between northerners and southerners in Norway is confirmed. In other words, despite strong disagreement in Northern Norway, and in Lofoten, about whether or not to allow for petroleum development in the LoVeSe regions, the matter of identity construction forms an important background for the way informants position themselves in relation to the debate going on nationally. Who these actors are, and how they argue for their positions will be presented in the following chapters, as well as my arguments for why I seek to present them as *active practitioners of security*, in accordance with the multiple actors perspective presented above (Stuvøy 2011; Hoogensen Gjorv Forthcoming).

This thesis, then, contributes to *broadening* and *deepening* the security debate with an empirical study where the security concerns of individuals and communities are at the core, and in particular the way in which the identification of risks and threats by different actors discussing and debating a political issue provide for different understandings of what is needed in order to be (or feel) secure(d). Also, I believe debates on security in the north in general reifies traditional notions of what is to be considered relevant security matters, and downplays the extent to which public discourse in Norway about the north has – implicitly and explicitly – moved beyond ‘mere’ geopolitics to a broader conceptualization of what is needed to secure the population of the north. A broader understanding of security requires of us to break free from the theoretical trenches of the sub-disciplines of social science, and as examples from recent work has showed us, there’s ample potential in cross-disciplinary research for challenging and renewing the field of security studies. For instance, in her doctoral thesis on women shelters and security concerns connected to domestic violence against women in Northwest-Russia, Kirsti Stuvøy (2009)

employed a Bourdieusian approach to security which challenged the epistemological foundations of the security debate, and showed how an analysis of non-state security providers – shelters for women –requires different analytical tools. Likewise, Gunhild Hoogensen showed in her book “International Relations, Security and Jeremy Bentham” (2005) that ‘wider’ notions of security, for whom and by whom, is not new to political or social science, but rather that the security debate of the 20th Security failed to take into account the multitude of security concerns inherent in the liberalist philosophy of Jeremy Bentham, in which security is seen as both beyond and ‘below’ the state.

In summing up this theoretical chapter, then, I will again refer to my research question and general research interests, as they were presented earlier. Repeating my main arguments as they were presented in the introduction, I believe there are two specific problem areas that are of a particular concern for my focus. Firstly, I will claim that preconceived notions about what is considered relevant security issues and actors limits the scope and possibilities a broader conception of security entails, and a focus on how threats and risks are constructed and understood is important if one is to understand how – or to what extent - individuals and communities see themselves as secure(d) and/ or enabled to secure themselves. In aiming at an operationalization of a broadened and deepened security concept, I have sought to extract from these theories here presented concepts that I believe should be tested empirically, for their analytical relevance. Therefore, I will in the analysis in chapters 4 and 5 refer to those debates and concepts when I have found them to be of analytical value. In particular, I have been interested in showing how the analytical concepts *risk*, *population*, *governmentality*, *identity* and *knowledge* all have influenced how I have analysed my material, with the aim of both broadening and deepening the security concept *and* arguing for a multiple actor perspective. Under the umbrella of ethnographic research and methodology, I have been seeking to answer the question of how threats, risks and security matters are understood locally. Further, the notion of *self* and *belonging*, sociologically speaking, is of relevance when seeking to understand how *ontological security* is established and maintained. Therefore, the matter of identity construction will be dealt with in some length in the analysis, with the aim of establishing to what extent a specific identity *in addition to that promoted by the nation state* has an impact on the way people understand their own security situation.

Secondly, I also argue that the Norwegian political, petroleum-driven push to the north can be regarded as *a governmental strategy* where specific governance technologies based on a power/knowledge nexus combining natural science, petroleum economics and politics aiming at securing state control of resources are instrumental for the decisions to be taken concerning petroleum development; decisions which are found to influence *local* perceptions of risks and threats. The two arguments are closely linked, and as has been argued in chapter 3, they necessitate a *broadened* and *deepened* security understanding, as both traditional notions of *who* security actors are and *what topics* can be regarded as security issues are challenged when exposing them to empirical investigation.

The first argument will be followed up closer in chapter 5, where local voices will be in the forefront, aiming to show how matters of security are fluctuating and situational. As dispute over oil development in LoVeSe also revitalizes and changes classical discussions of centre-periphery dynamics in Norway, it is evident that the relation between locally perceived threats to identity (typically reflected by a local organization of petroleum development opponents, called ‘People’s Action for Oil-Free Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja’, see chapter 5) and a state-driven development scheme aimed at securing the Norwegian State as an energy provider is important. Of particular interest is the way local proponents for petroleum seem to uphold a similar identity distinction between ‘us’ up here in the north and ‘them’ in the south, in or close to the nation’s capital to that of the opponents. In addition, the LoVe case provide a possibility to discuss theoretical debates on the relationship between security and risk assessment as well as analysing hegemonic and oppositional debates on the role of the state and other decision makers as security providers and as evaluators of (acceptable) risk. It is my intention to show that the matter of who decides what is and is not a security issue - what Buzan and others has labelled ‘relevant securitizing actors’ (Buzan, de Wilde et al. 1998) - in this context is connected to hegemonic political and cultural ideals established (and to a large extent institutionalized) through a specific power/knowledge nexus of scientifically based management and development (Foucault and Gordon 1980) which will be identified and explained through the use of the theoretical framework of *governmentality* (Foucault 2007; De Larrinaga and Doucet 2008; Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero 2008; Grayson 2008; Dean 2010). A focus thus will be on whether the arguments of

particular groups or individuals *in the margins* (or the periphery) are marginalized in inclusion/ exclusion processes based on specific criteria for what is to be conceived of as relevant knowledge. With an explicit focus on local concerns and practices aiming at securing the contingent future, I believe that a better understanding of the complexities concerning the responses to potential future petroleum is obtained than by simply focussing for instance on arguments based on a purely objectivist strategy for securing (a seemingly passive) population.

In chapter 4 then, I will describe how a governmentality approach to studying state, power and management of resources and population (Marlow 2002; Dillon 2007; Foucault 2007; Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero 2008; Dean 2010) provides an interesting angle and an alternative point of departure for an understanding of local responses in Lofoten to the high north politics of Norway in general, and, of course, to petroleum development in the LoVeSe area in particular. The separation of my material into two chapters does not demarcate an absolute division between a ‘view from the top’ or a national arena (chapter 4) and a ‘view from below’ or the local level (chapter 5). Indeed, in both chapters, both local and national actors and their concerns will be present. The reason for dividing the material into two separate chapters is to indicate a slight difference in focus: chapter 4 is focussed on a broad conception of high north policies and strategies in Norway, chapter 5 deals with the local discourses, and in particular, descriptions of identity as fundamental for the notion of being ontologically secure(d), and how they reflect upon and are reflected in the national debate. As will be shown in the following chapters, protagonists both on the national and local scene as well as my own informants have all relayed concerns that I believe will be fruitful to analyze under the framework of a broadened security context that I have presented here.

Part two

4 High North Politics as *governmentality*: Securing through management

In this chapter, I will present how the processes linked to the intentions described in the Norwegian High North Politics were presented and understood, with a particular concern for the local perspectives. In so doing, and while arguing for a multiple actors' perspective on security, I do not, however, imply that the state should disappear from view. I will therefore emphasize the importance of also describing the rationale behind the responsabilization of the state as a security provider, and how this influences an understanding of the role of the state as a facilitator for the petroleum industry *as well as* its role as a provider of security for its citizens, here with a particular focus on people living in Lofoten. Also, a focus on the connection between the petroleum industry and the continued development of Norwegian (welfare) society in the future has tainted the debate on the possibilities for the northernmost regions of the country. Critics have argued that the development of a *petroleum state* has hampered the expansion of alternative industries in Norway (Ryggvik 2009:395). The petroleum industry, it is argued, has provided Norway with *the problem of money*; we have a lot, but no idea what to do with it other than to indulge in consumerism and an exceedingly high expenditure on a state-run welfare system (Sætre 2010). Others disagree, and refer to Norwegian petroleum politics as unique globally in that no other country has been more successful in controlling and managing its petroleum resources for the benefit of the whole population (Al-Kasim 2006; Johnsen 2008). Petroleum is a matter of security for the state in terms of being a basic commodity which it is in constant need of for the maintenance and development

of society, but also with respect to the way in which the petroleum revenues has enabled the Norwegian state to develop and strengthen its welfare system and thus its ability to secure a level of well-being for its citizens. Petroleum is, therefore, a matter of both energy security and economic security for the Norwegian state, in that it provides both income and welfare *and* a certain level of secured access to the worlds most wanted energy source. In addition, it is part of the question of global environmental security, as Norwegian petroleum is being touted as both a part of the problem and a part of the solution – depending on who one asks - to the intertwined problems of rising energy needs and a global climate change crisis.

The future of a population within a state is dependent, amongst other things, on how the state manages its human and natural resources. It is my claim that in Norway, the management of human resources, fisheries, petroleum and others, is influenced by a particular power/ knowledge nexus based on establishing a level of scientific knowledge upon which policy is built.²⁴ I will therefore assess how this knowledge is produced, and establish a connection between political choices and the discussion of possible implications and how this reflects concerns and incentives locally, aiming at securing the contingent future of communities in the Lofoten region. Of particular concern will be to what extent a multiple actors perspective and a broadened and deepened understanding of security allows for a discussion of the inclusion/ exclusion processes inherent in power/ knowledge processes. In other words: *What* knowledge is included when discussing threats, risks and security, *which actors decides* on these matters on *whose behalf?* As we shall see, the establishment of a notion of inevitability concerning (objectified) scientific knowledge concerning risks and threats is of particular importance for the understanding of these processes.

4.1 High north strategies and petroleum

In this section, I wish to present more thoroughly the connection between the renewed interest in the northernmost areas of Norway in national politics, termed *the high north strategy* (where petroleum development north of the 62nd latitude after the year 2000 is an integral part) and how local actors reflected on the specific themes that were central to the debate on petroleum development in LoVeSe during my fieldwork

²⁴ It is a reasonable assumption that this is not at all exclusive to Norway, nor to resource management, but I will here limit my comment to pertain to the Norwegian situation.

period. I will also describe the issue of knowledge production in the debate, as politicians and government official's identified *knowledge* production as critical to the governmental high north strategy launched in 2005.²⁵

In October 2005, the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jonas Gahr Støre, launched the High North Strategy of the Stoltenberg government. In the strategy, the political agenda is a focus on the north, driven by both foreign policy and domestic issues. In the words of the Minister,

“... (the strategy) is primarily about peoples possibilities and obligations; it's about the possibility for improved everyday lives, employment, new knowledge, cultural ties and new relationships – and responsibilities for a development towards peace and security ... ” (Støre 2005a, my translation)

Likewise, in the strategic document issued the following spring, the Government states that “... it considers the High North to be Norway's most important strategic priority in the years ahead”, and that “Norwegian interests in the High North will be safeguarded primarily by strengthening our presence and increasing the level of activity in a number of policy areas at both national and international level (Norway 2006: 7).

With the speech given by Gahr Støre at the University of Tromsø and the subsequent stream of reports, documents, commission work and eventually budgetary priorities, the Stoltenberg Cabinet launched a prestigious and ambitious project, and it soon became apparent that there were three matters which would be of particular importance for the debates that followed; first, the relationship with Russia; second, the importance of reaffirming and strengthening Norwegian sovereignty in the north; and third, the matter of increased petroleum activities in the sea areas outside Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja and the Barents sea. According to the strategic plan, the Government wished to “develop petroleum through active licensing policy (...) that take into account the need to follow up exploration results and the need to open up new areas for exploration” (ibid: 9). With the focus on knowledge and competence building as a basic premise for the strategy, petroleum is regarded as one of the

²⁵ These themes, petroleum development and knowledge production, will also reappear in many of the scenes from field and the connected analysis, both in this chapter and chapter 6.

primary activities for the future of the north; in fact, the Government proclaims that “it is in Norway’s interest to carry out geological surveys in the northern waters” (ibid:28) as a part of the “(...) promotion and development of expertise and technology that will enable petroleum extraction and production in the High North to be carried out in a responsible and efficient way” (ibid: 27).

Fast forward, to the spring of 2010. The debate as to whether or not allow for petroleum activities in the coastal-near waters of Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja²⁶ had been a dominant political debate since 2005, and had a major impact on the parliamentary elections in 2009. The debate now also reflected both local and regional concerns about what the impacts for people living in these areas as well as for national interests concerning state income and the future of the most dominant sector in the Norwegian economy; the petroleum sector. The quest for oil in the north had spurred both fierce resistance and positive enthusiasm – and everything in between. Many saw in it the potential for tax revenues for heavily indebted municipalities as well as new possibilities for work, reducing the centralizing tendencies, meaning that rural youth were attracted to the cities in the north and to the southern part of Norway, which provided an exit from job insecurity and the potential for better prospects.²⁷ Others viewed the threats and risks involved – especially to the traditional fisheries and to the environment – as so grave that they turned the argument around; Oil companies were seen as insensitive to nature’s vulnerability and as disrespectful of the traditionally based knowledge on side-effects of the petroleum industry affecting the fisheries, stirring local resentment and insecurity.

In April 2010, a governmental commission issued a report based on research done by over a hundred scientists and researchers from more than 20 research institutions which would serve as the main knowledge base for the political decision on whether to allow for oil and gas in these waters (von Quillfeldt 2010). Its conclusions were

²⁶ The regions here mentioned are part of the same management plan area as the Barents sea due to its ecological status as a primary spawning area for several of the major fish stock in the high north; therefore, these particular regions are described in the High North strategy as being of particular importance. For a description of the regions in question, see chapter 2.

²⁷ This is, it must be said, a willed development, as many see themselves today as freed from a sense of 'having to stay behind', or simply 'being stuck' due to a lack of opportunities to leave, which characterized much of the sentiments of former generations in the region. This phenomenon will be described and discussed in chapter 5.

immediately interpreted politically by all sides to be a reflection of their particular concerns, and all parties seemed to find something in the report which supported their case²⁸.

An important contributor to the report was the Norwegian risk analysis centre DNV (Det Norske Veritas), whose work on oil spill modelling was one of the central themes debated immediately after the launch of the report. In Svolvær, Lofoten, May 2010, DNV-researcher Ole Øystein Aspholm presented their contribution to the report to the Annual Meeting of the umbrella organization in favour of petroleum development in the region, called LoVe Petro (see section 5.4). Central concerns included the probability of an oil spill occurring, and the relative risk of fish morbidity due to contamination. The conclusions, based on risk modelling scenarios which are internationally renowned, were clear: the possibility of a major oil spill is overwhelmingly small (Bergsli, Rudberg et al. 2009). The risk scenarios presented assessed the probability of a major blowout to happen once in every 10 million test drillings, and the damage potential was in the region of 2 % probability for a 50% loss of annual class of fish larva and fry²⁹. In other words, the chances were very small for something severely damaging to happen, even based on a scenario of a release of 4500 tonnes of crude oil for 50 days, which was the scenario in the Gulf of Mexico in 1978.³⁰ As such, DNVs risk modelling strengthened the arguments of those who felt that the risks of oil spills and the consequent effect on marine life involved were so small that they should be assessed as acceptable. In short, low probability was seen by many as outweighing the potentially catastrophic consequences on the seashore and for bird populations in the risk model.

A few weeks before this meeting in Lofoten, on April 20th, the mobile drilling

²⁸ See for instance <http://www.olf.no/aktuelt/tre-skarv-felt-utenfor-lofoten-og-vesteraalen-article19558-161.html>, <http://www.dagbladet.no/2010/04/14/nyheter/miljo/oljeboring/innenriks/politikk/11281328/>, <http://www.dagbladet.no/2010/04/16/nyheter/miljo/innenriks/politikk/olje/11307964/>, http://www.aftenbladet.no/innenriks/1189295/Krever_konsekvensutredning_om_oljevirkosmh_et_i_nord.html, <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/artikkel.php?artid=10000728>, <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/artikkel.php?artid=595890>, All accessed June 29th, 2011.

²⁹ The figures and statistical assessments upon which this is based has been accounted for in the quoted report; here it is sufficient to note that there is consensus amongst Norwegian risk assessment researchers about the model, the method upon which the results are based.

³⁰ Aspholm, presentation at meeting of the regional council, 'Lofotrådet', May 2010

platform *Deepwater Horizon* had exploded and sunk in the Gulf of Mexico, killing 11 workers. Left on the sea bottom, the pipe inserted into the reservoir poured out oil at an uncontrolled rate. The severity of the spill was at first overshadowed by the tragic loss of lives on board the platform, but soon concerns were raised as to the amount of oil spilled as well as the potential for a successful blocking of the well. The lack of preparedness on the part of the main contractor, British Petroleum (BP), also became obvious and thus subject to harsh criticism.

The Oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico put the question of oil spill contamination, political regulation and risk assessment on the international agenda. US President Barack Obama expressed concerns about what he described as a too ‘cozy’ relationship between US regulators and the petroleum industry³¹ – a remark which led the BP CEO to carefully counter that BP internal regulations for offshore drilling are even more strict than US regulations, and that the track record of 20 years without a major accident proved that point.³²

As the debate continued and *who to blame* seemed to be the most important of tasks for those who govern (a matter recognized as important in research on risk and blame, see (Douglas 1992)), anywhere from 5000 to 26 000 barrels of crude oil a day³³ poured out of the well located at 1500 metres below sea level, 60 kilometres offshore. On June 7th 2010 the spill bypassed the size of the less likely scenario for a blow-out in the Lofoten area provided by the DNV-report mentioned above. Not discounting the tragic loss of 11 lives on board the TransOcean test drill rig ‘Deepwater Horizon’, the most important effect of poor response from the oil companies in limiting and eventually stopping the leak is that it actualized the question of policy relevance of risk assessments concerning oil spills based on risk modelling. This is not to say that

³¹ See for instance The Wall Street Journal’s article, accessed June 10th, 2011: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703460404575243923672173634.html>

³² The New York times reported on September 15th, 2010, the following: “Defending his company’s safety record, Mr. Hayward said a blowout preventer on the gulf rig that failed to stop oil leaking “was fully compliant with the regulatory regime and it should have functioned.”. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/16/business/global/16bp.html>, article accessed June 10th, 2011.

³³ The figure was contested and was considered a minimum per May 14th 2010, as scientists and BP continued to brawl about the amount of crude oil being spilled out into the ocean. The figures here is taken from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/13/AR2010051302563.html>, accessed May 20th, 2010.

the assessment upon which risks had been taken in the gulf had been proven wrong, as an assessment is only of course just an estimate involving *uncertainties*, and not a model predicting a future reality. What is interesting, though, is the way such risk assessments *influence preparedness* and thus the ability to contain and/ or minimize the effect of an unlikely event. In this way, a *securitizing move* (Buzan, de Wilde et al. 1998) aiming at increased knowledge about the possible event of something happening - knowledge which *downscales the risk alertness due to an assessment which evaluates the possibility of something happening as very small* - in fact adds to the uncertainty of the effects, in the (unlikely) event of something actually happening. Low probability has the undesired effect that the assessment of consequences runs the risk of being ‘de-prioritized’, which means that *in the case something unexpected happens*, the risk of environmental damage and pollution, economic losses and threats to human health potentially resulting in loss of lives is higher.

And this is what happened in the Gulf of Mexico. During the summer of 2010, BP was struggling to stop the crude oil from pumping out into the gulf, and was finally able to seal off the well on September 19th, almost five months after the accident. The future of the company now depended on its ability to minimize further damage, but also to make plausible its assessments of a close-to-zero potentiality of something like this happening again. In addition, they faced the challenge of explaining why they did not invest in the kind of security equipment needed to stop or minimize the effects of an accident like this, while at the same time ensuring that public trust in the very same scientific methods which failed to see this accident coming - or prepare for its consequences - was maintained.

The Deepwater Horizon accident influenced the political debate over whether or not to allow for petroleum development in the LoVeSe area. The June 2010 government call for applications for test drilling on new sector blocks in the Norwegian and Barents seas shows that out of 100 intended blocks made available on the Norwegian shelf, six were withdrawn, not due to environmental concerns raised by Norwegian scientists and pressure groups, but because of the accident in the Gulf.³⁴ Just a few

³⁴See <http://www.dn.no/energi/article1923215.ece>, accessed June 22, 2010. The information was also conveyed by the Minister for Petroleum and Energy, Mr Terje Riis Johansen, in a conference in Svolveær, June 2010.

weeks before the accident in the Gulf, the scientific basis report for the new Management plan for the Barents Sea and the sea areas outside Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja was presented, and the environmental organizations and the political parties wanting to renounce petroleum production in LoVeSe found themselves fighting against a rhetoric based on risk assessments of an oil spill in the area. However, the dynamics of the debate changed with the accident. Just like the petroleum companies in the Mexican Gulf had claimed a year before the accident, the Norwegian DNV wrote (as mentioned above) in their contribution to the base material that the possibility of a major oil spill was overwhelmingly small (Bergsli, Rudberg et al. 2009). These risk assessments previously met with little resistance, given their perceived importance due to their scientific quality. Now, however, after the experience in the Gulf, they had to face a changed political environment, where the unlikely had happened and where questions of preparedness also for the (scientifically) inconceivable were being raised. Had science reached its limits in terms of enabling politics on these matters? The opponents to petroleum development seemed to have gained the upper hand, and political inertia ruled.

The Norwegian petroleum industry thus had to adapt to the accident in the Gulf of Mexico, even though they initially reacted with relative silence. For instance, the CEO of Statoil, Helge Lund, was to visit potential petroleum municipalities in the Vesterålen region in mid May 2010, but chose to postpone the visit. His press officer stated that due to the accident in the Gulf, there was a high risk of a ‘wrong focus’ on the issue of petroleum in LoVeSe if the visit was carried out.³⁵ Also, the Director for High North Activities in Statoil, Hege Marie Norheim, remained silent during the spring and early summer of 2010.³⁶

What the Deepwater Horizon-example illustrates is the importance of identifying truth-telling practices based on a certain power/knowledge nexus (see chapter 3), and how real events and the subsequent political handling of the situation sometimes challenge these practices. In the following, I wish to examine the development of the

³⁵ See <http://www.hegner.no/bors/article424144.ece>, accessed May 18th, 2010

³⁶ By the time this was written, in the fall of 2011, Norheim had for some time been transferred from the position as director for High North Activities to the position as Senior Vice President, Corporate Climate at Statoil.

Norwegian Management regime on the High North throughout the 2000s, with an emphasis on the politics – both as practice and as stated strategies - of the two Stoltenberg Cabinets, from 2005 up to the end of the writing of this thesis, which is November 2011 (the parliamentary period lasts until September 2013). My main focus will be on how this politics has been received, interpreted and negotiated amongst my informants in Lofoten, but also on how it has influenced public debates in the Northern province as a whole. As my primary focus is on Lofoten though, the parts of the high north strategy which involves this particular area is prioritized, at the expense of for instance matters concerning the Northernmost area of the Barents sea or the relations with neighbouring Russia. In this way, I could be seen to pick apart a political strategy aiming at a holistic, multi-sectorial view of the *whole* Northern Norwegian province, which is true enough, but will again be argued for with reference to how the high north strategy was being understood and processed locally, in Lofoten. Even though the High North Strategy is most often regarded as a government strategy, and the management plan for the Lofoten area and the Barents sea is seen first and foremost as a management tool for government policies, it is my intention to broaden the analytical scope in terms of relevant actors, in other words to use *a multiple actors approach*, and assert that there are a number of actors *beyond the state* which are important bearers and developers of the future of the region, and who also have interests in the way political decisions are framed within a particular power/knowledge nexus. I will argue that a specific view of the relation between (scientific) knowledge and power is embedded in the management scheme of the Norwegian government, exemplified through the management of fish and oil resources as well as environmental concerns. An understanding of local perspectives is not usually included in such plans, and as we shall see, the basis upon which the debates concerning petroleum in the LoVeSe – area is performed is influenced by this notion of *what type of knowledge should matter*.

4.1.1 Petroleum going north

In the petroleum debate, a tale of prosperity and progress is re-produced in the narrative about the petroleum state and the ‘petroleum fairy tale’ – unveiled by scientific engineering and the shrewdness of politicians steeped in the rationality of *realpolitik*. In this tale, the future of the Norwegian state is tied to the production of raw materials (petroleum), made possible by the very finest of engineering, and it is to

be produced out at sea –beyond the gaze of most Norwegians. The following quote is taken from a talk given by Steinar Våge, representing the Norwegian Oil Industry Association (OLF) at a meeting organized in the small town of Stokmarknes, Vesterålen, in March 2009. It exemplifies the way a particular view on industrial, modernist development is identified as the only rational possibility for development:

“Some people argue that these sea areas (outside of LoVeSe, my insertion) should be protected for eternity. We feel this is to close the door to the future. The world does move forward. And again: What we have achieved earlier (in other parts of the Norwegian shelf, my insertion), we believe we can bring with us, and we believe we have what it takes to be able to start activities here. (...) Dialogue will be important, and in particular that we do not base it on feelings, but on concrete facts, and that we try to see what’s best for Norway as a nation, for the region, and for the petroleum industry”³⁷

The idea is that industrialization, the rationalization of labour, exploration of natural resources, technocracy and trust in science (both technological science and scientific assessments) is the only way to progress. It is also noteworthy how Våge in his statement refers to the needs of the nation, the region and the oil industry as if they are undoubtedly the same. Most importantly, that which is conceived of as *the* rational thing to do – to trust logics, science, and the inevitability of progress and modernization – is re-established as the basic premise upon which the debate is to be led. To refer to other development possibilities is to revert to ‘emotions, not facts’. The category ‘facts’ is reduced to include the products of science, of scientific reasoning – without considering the preconditions upon which science – as a *culture of knowledge* is based. Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky provides us with an important insight into the ramifications of basing politics on science alone:

“To ask which is the correct description of rational behaviour (that is, to ask what the real risks are) leads to an answer which finds irrational bias and misperceptions of real interest in the viewpoint of anyone who disagrees”
(Douglas and Wildavsky 1982: 9)

³⁷ Steinar Våge, OLF Contact Meeting, March 27th, 2009, Stokmarknes, Norway. My translation from Norwegian.

In other words, calling someone's argumentation 'un-scientific' is in fact to belittle them and deprive them of any substantial claim to influence. While the debate over whether to develop oil and gas fields outside the LoVeSe region had been heating up in the national political context over the past few years, the local resistance in this region located just north of the polar circle had been growing. Even though there were talks about investing hundreds of billions of Norwegian kroner, many were not convinced that petroleum development would be the correct way to go. Suggestions for development funds and funds for reimbursement of damages and losses for fishers due to the activities of the oil and gas industry were seen locally as an admittance from the industry that their activities would in fact damage the ecological foundation for more traditional ways of harvesting from nature, first and foremost within the fisheries. From 2005-2010, the petroleum industry in Norway had put access to the LoVeSe - regions at the top of their agenda in Norway, arguing that access here was the deciding factor for the future prospects for Norway as a petroleum producing country. At the same time, the growing resentment locally towards future petroleum activities had also intensified after the seismic data gathering in the summers of 2007 and 2008 (see below), and national interest groups asked for these areas to be protected from development because of the potential ecological impact of petroleum activities.

What is important to bear in mind is that it is the needs of the petroleum sector itself – coupled with the national interests in keeping the petroleum sector large and strong and enabling it to continue its expansion northwards – that brought the sector to the north.³⁸ Thus, it is pertinent to see the local debate that followed as *a response* to an *initiative from the outside*, from the south. This is important, not least for understanding the local resistance, but also to show how centralized power in Norway is seen by many as having dealt with its peripheries, and North-Norway in particular,

³⁸ Even though there have been initiatives taken – not at least within the North-Norwegian business and industrial sectors – to facilitate for new businesses and introduce new incentives for growth and development, what has been called 'the new petroleum arena' in the north was initiated first and foremost from interests located in the southern part of the country. The idea of Northern Norway as a petroleum region was almost totally abandoned during the 1980s, not because of lack of prospects for finding petroleum, but due to low prices on oil and gas in the international market and – more importantly – because the Norwegian state saw no need for more activity, as the wells in the North Sea were seen as being almost inexhaustible. See also chapter 2.

as ‘clientele’ in the Norwegian economic machinery, preoccupied with managing the north through transferring goods, extracting natural resources, creating work places and building competence which suits the needs of the center for their utilization of regional resources – without necessarily acknowledging the initiative, capital and know-how that is already present in these regions. Informants relied sentiments like these to me on several occasions, as they sought to show the rationale behind local scepticism to petroleum. Ola, one of my informants, argued for instance that the reason why he and a lot of his old school mates, colleagues and friends were against development of petroleum was not based on some idea about preserving something ‘natural’ or something more ‘real’ that could be identified as the very ‘core’ of Lofoten. He instead focussed on the *possibilities for development and growth* that were embedded, so to speak, in the surroundings – both natural and human-induced over time – and how these could be better utilized. Likewise, Tordis Berre who ran the tourist center at Ramberg when I lived there, argued for a utilization of the natural and historical terms of these communities when discussing development. Tordis said:

“It’s not like it creates a lot of surplus, this business, but I’m employing people in my community, and it’s a good place to work for me as well. As the whole world comes to us for a short period each year, we get to meet all these wonderful people. Remember, we don’t see ourselves as a petroleum nation here, but as a fishery nation. And when people come here, they are just ‘knocked out’ by all this that we have, the nature and the inherited way of life ... this is what I want to keep, to protect and develop into something new. And this is also why I am so very sceptical to petroleum, because of what it might do to us, as individuals, and to our communities. We have been marketing heavily on pristine nature, local food and all that, and where does this put us, in terms of credibility, if we allow for drilling her, close to our shores?”³⁹

Seeing petroleum as an ‘outside’ influence is also exemplified by such opinions as those of Sigvald Rist, the manager of Lofoten Produkter AS, a seafood manufacturer located at Leknes in Vestvågøy municipality. His story is one in which local resources and a strong brand had allowed for a strong growth in both annual production

³⁹ Interview, Tords Berre, May 2009

turnover and number of employees since the beginning in 1994, from 6-7 employees with a production turnover of 5-6 million NOK to today's NOK 140 million annually and around 55 employees (depending on seasons). Now, he feared the symbolic connection between Lofoten and a notion of natural purity and quality foodstuff could be weakened if Lofoten instead just as much was to be linked to petroleum:

“We maintain a large range of produced goods, in order to utilize the foodstuff as much as possible, in line with the traditions here. Also, our recipes are based on what we have collected from locals. So we base it on tradition and on the notions of purity that the Lofoten brand stands for. I worry that if we open for petroleum here, the type of installation - whether or not it is a big, rusty chunk of metal outside Eggum here (a community on the northern slopes of Vestvågøy island, my insertion) – is not what will matter. In people's mental images of Lofoten, when they see it on the news that the government or parliament has agreed to an opening of our waters for petroleum, even if it takes ten years before we see a single metal construction – and maybe it'll even be underwater – it still won't matter. As of that moment, people will know that now, there's oil in Lofoten.”⁴⁰

I asked him why he thought it would matter so much, as long as all possible risk aversion and security measures are taken. His answer reflects, in my view, a line of arguments which typically is a part of the basis for local opposition:

“It matters because it will not anymore appear as unspoiled, pristine and unique, not so special anymore – but just a place like any other – and that will undermine the Lofoten brand. It won't feel as exotic having been here, and the products you get from here not quite as unique and pure. I do believe in the technocrats who say that they can extract oil here without much chance of dire consequences. But it will be one of those little drippings of negative publicity that will reduce the quality of our brand, which has been developed since ... the Viking age. Both us selling branded products and the tourist industry are capitalizing on an image built over generations here. (...) This is of great value for us, living along the coast, in Lofoten. And we don't even really need

⁴⁰ Interview, Sigvald Rist, April 2009

the money, do we? It'll all end up in a quarrel about what stocks we should buy for them, what ethical concerns we should have for 'dirty companies' abroad, and so on. The values will still be there, if we don't drill, and when we need them – if we need them – we can go get it later.

Rist's argument is tied to an acknowledgement that there are *other* actors who are in need of the petroleum resources, and that the kind of community development that he is a part of will have to face undesirable *risk taken by others on their behalf* in terms of a devaluation of the *brand* Lofoten.

These actors raised concerns regarding development of their communities in which petroleum do not necessarily have to take a lead role. In other words, the scepticism to the described effects of petroleum development, meant to counteract the negative development trends in the small communities in Lofoten, were not taken 'at face value'. The reason or this, I believe, should be sought in the constructed '*grand narrative on petroleum*' and in the equally hard-coded '*grand narrative about the north*'. I will elaborate on the latter and in particular its explanatory value in terms of being an important *identity marker* in chapter 5. Here, we I will now concentrate on the *petroleum narrative* and how it shapes and is being shaped by political processes.

4.2 The Norwegian petroleum narrative

The social construction of risks depends on trust, - and in the case concerning petroleum production in LoVe, trust in science as the identifier of risks *and* the method(s) through which they can be mitigated is crucial for the biopolitical governmentality to be regarded as relevant. Again pointing to the relevance of a cultural understanding of the basis for an agreement on what is or is not to be understood as risk(s) (Douglas 1992), it has been shown how frames of reference concerning relevant knowledge – and desirable goals for politics – differ between actors in a way that makes consensus in the matter extremely difficult to achieve, and that concerns about threats and risks which influence people's sense of security has different influence.

In many ways, the concerns of those locally opposed to – or at least sceptical to - petroleum are counter-productive to the producers of the North-Norwegian continuation of the grand narrative which can be called the Norwegian Petroleum fairy tale (see also Ryggvik (2009) and Kristoffersen (2007)). This is a narrative that

describes, among other things, the development of politics on petroleum production in Northern Norway. It is based on specific assumptions about how development should be portrayed. I find it interesting to seek to understand the narratives of petroleum development through an analysis of how specific truth-telling practices manifest themselves, and how these influence the debate. In a compilation of texts analysing this ‘second coming’ of petroleum development in the north (Arbo and Hersoug 2010) (see also chapter 2), Gunnar Thesen and Einar Leknes analysed government reports to the Norwegian parliament and revealed how specific narratives depicting the development of petroleum in Norway in general have been consistent in establishing particular goals which were seen as ‘beyond debate’; the Norwegian Petroleum ‘fairytale’ combined with a moderate extraction pace (with the aim of ensuring that the income would last and avoiding an overheated economy) would secure the future of Norwegians with the development of a “... qualitatively improved society”(ibid: 54), based on ideas of what was seen as typical Norwegian ideals: “... equality and welfare (for all), frugality and austerity”(ibid)⁴¹. But they also describe that, in the 1980s, there was an important difference in how the existing petroleum production in the south and the coming production in the north of Norway were depicted:

“In the North Sea (in the south of Norway, my insertion), the petroleum fairytale continues, without significant consequences for fish or the environment. In the drama of petroleum in the North, potential conflicts lurks.”
(ibid: 62)

A narrative depicting potential conflict in the north has thus been established. But another, equally important narrative describing the Northern region of the country has been re-established and strengthened in the debate concerning petroleum in the north; the tale of the back country, the region deprived of development and possibilities, but with great potential, given the right incentives from a benevolent center (ibid: 56). Alternative development goals to oil and gas are here almost totally neglected; the potential conflicts are seen “...not as conflict(s) between diverging values and incompatible goals (... but as) a difference in (financial) interests” (ibid: 58). In the

⁴¹ All quotes from this reference are my translations from Norwegian.

following chapters, we will see that the difference in the values, in the identity of actors and in how one seeks to secure and manage the contingent future is an important background for understanding positions in Lofoten in the debate over petroleum development. I therefore acknowledge Thesen and Leknes' identification of how the petroleum narrative faces new challenges in the north, but question the way in which it is somewhat matter-of-factly depicted as including a number of identifiable premises - based on an understanding of a clash of interests embedded in the realm of 'naturalized' neoliberal economics – which means that the possibility for a critical examination of *how power is played out when establishing truths* is lost. Thesen and Leknes do not include an analysis of non-state actors and their narratives, nor do they offer a concrete analysis of the power inherent in the ability (or the lack thereof) to forge a space for locally embedded, alternative depictions of a possible future. Thus, their description of the tensions and political strife concerning petroleum production in the north still is portrayed as something to be played out on the national arena, with the concerns of the nation, indeed, of the Norwegian Petroleum State, first in mind. Local concerns and a multiple actor perspective disappear from view. In this way, then, the academic debate is also reaffirming the basic assumptions of the Norwegian fairy tale – that it is the (only) way to prosperity for all, and that the concerns of state, industry and local communities go hand in hand. As I show here, this is not necessarily always the case.

The development of a *high north strategy* coupled with a grand narrative of a petroleum fairy tale is an important backdrop for understanding the processes connected to the question of petroleum production in which both opponents and proponents locally and nationally play a part. Through field descriptions and analysis I will elaborate upon how descriptions of local risk and threat perceptions allows for a discussion of the inherent power relations which are to a large extent hegemonized through political practices embedded in the high north strategy – and in the political initiatives that have followed in its footsteps, initiated by government, civil society and private corporations alike. An important intention with this is to show how the hegemony inherent in the relation between political, centralised power and scientific knowledge production can be seen to marginalize and render insignificant local concerns based on other criteria for understandings of threats, risks and security matters.

4.3 Arguments for a Petroleum future

I will present more descriptions of local concerns in scenes to follow. In this first scene though, a typical framing of the debate by a national petroleum actor is presented.

Scene: “A lot is at stake”

On the 27th of March 2009, I was one of about two hundred participants at one of the events popularly labelled ‘dialogue meetings’ or ‘contact meetings’, at Stokmarknes, a small town in the Vesterålen region. Arrangers this time around were the Norwegian Oil Industry Association (OLF), together with the Nordland County administration, and was the first of a number of meetings of a similar kind which I were to attend during the next two years, but also designated as the 14th meeting arranged by the OLF in Norway on petroleum development and spin-off effects in communities and regions. The night before the meeting, at a dinner reception, the CEO of OLF at the time, Mr. Per Terje Vold, held a welcoming speech, in which he said:

“... we already do feel very welcomed here, and look forward to the dinner tonight and, most importantly, to the contact meeting tomorrow. If we thought for a minute that we would destroy the fisheries, the nature, and a whole range of other things, we would not be here, we would not be arguing for our case, let that be clear. We are just as preoccupied with ensuring that nothing gets damaged; it is part of our philosophy, and it has been so since day one of our operations. Another basic premise, is fact-oriented debate, and I think we are quite elegantly arranging for that here now. I will end there for now, by saying that it is a pleasure to come here, and that we are looking forward to what’s ahead.”⁴²

During the time the issue of petroleum outside of LoVeSe had been discussed, the notion of *dialogue*, of reaching *consensus*, of enabling *co-existence* between different industries and interests had been an important part of the debate. A few days before the meeting, a press release from the OLF with the heading “The Future on the Map at Stokmarknes” showed with what intent the petroleum industry invited to this meeting. The stage was set for with the following dramaturgic staging:

⁴² Per Terje Vold, CEO of the Norwegian Oil Industry Association OLF, Stokmarknes, March 26th, 2009.

“A lot is at stake. The Oil and gas industry is in need of new, prospective search areas. The region wants business and competence development, work and future possibilities for their youth. These are among the themes which will be discussed at the dialogue meeting which OLF arranges together with Nordland County, at Stokmarknes, on the 27th of March”⁴³

There is thus in the line of argument from the petroleum lobby no doubt about their intentions: they are in need of new areas on the Norwegian shelf, are confident in their own ability to develop the areas in a manner they label ‘sustainable’, and see themselves as in a position of assisting the region in developing into a new prosperous future.

I will in the following present some of the most common arguments from the petroleum lobby⁴⁴ for the development of petroleum in the LoVeSe regions. Typically, these arguments define a need for regional development, a need to maintain and develop knowledge and experience in the petroleum industry, an emphasis on the income needs of the state for the maintenance of the welfare state, and that Norwegian obligations as an energy provider is best met through increased development of oil and gas on the Norwegian shelf (with the assumption that Norway produces the ‘greenest’ hydrocarbons in the world). These arguments have had influence, although of varying degree, on the debate over petroleum development in Lofoten, and are typically emblematic – each in their own way – of how the center-periphery dimension is played out in the local debate. Interestingly, there is ample reason to suggest that even though the center-periphery dimension is perhaps more visible at first glance when juxtaposing local opponents to petroleum development with centralized petroleum or environmentalist lobbyism respectively, the dimension is

⁴³ Press release, OLF, published at <http://olf.no/no/Nyhetsarkiv/Naringspolitikk/Framtiden-pa-kartet-i-Stokmarknes/>, accessed April 23rd, 2011.

⁴⁴ The concept of ‘lobbyism’ has over the years procured quite negative connotations in Norway, mostly due to strict rules and policies concerning campaign contributions, financing of political activities and – most importantly – a notion of the political realm as ideally free from unseemly influence from powerful actors with a particular agenda. Thus, in political jargon in Norway, the term ‘lobbyist’ has been ascribed negative, almost immoral, connotations, quite unlike the political culture of for instance Washington, Westminster or Brussels. Still, for the purpose of this thesis, I believe it pertinent to use the concept when describing the range of actors actively involved in debating ‘for’ petroleum in the LoVeSe area. I will likewise refer to the many environmental actors as ‘the environmentalist lobby’.

also present between local and national *proponents*, particularly when focusing on the aims and goals of actors, which are clearly diverging and – to a certain extent, conflicting (or at least competitive).

4.3.1 The need for regional development

This point is undoubtedly the single most important argument for those of the local actors who are in favor of petroleum development in the area, with the important reservation that an ‘acceptable’ standard of environmental security is upheld. The demand for regional development initiatives is also one of the most important requirements, if a petroleum future is to be accepted locally. In my research, I have not met any local pro-petroleum actor who doesn’t simultaneously argue for the absolute necessity for local spin-off effects. In fact, the head of the local petroleum lobby organization called LoVe Petro, Mr. Ørjan Robertsen, stated plainly that unless their demands regarding proper oil spill preparations and considerable spin-off effects are met, they will not consent to an opening of the sites in question, - thus refuting the claim that LoVe Petro is running the powerful national petroleum sectors errand uncritically:

“Increasing the national fortune has never been a goal for LoVe Petro. Thus, to say that what we are working for is to get the areas opened without caring about what’s left for us, that’s ... (not true). Therefore, we did something that the petroleum industry disliked a lot; we said that we want the hydrocarbons brought ashore in the region, we want a supply base here, and we want a regionally situated oil spill response capacity.”⁴⁵

What this quote shows is that the different actor groups involved in trying to influence the political process are not easily distinguishable, as local representatives and actors may have quite a different perspective on *what a possible future petroleum development should entail*. For Ørjan Robertsen, the focus is on the possibility for local industrial development, which puts him in a position where he voices demands to the petroleum industry that they might not approve of, because Robertsen's demands represent potential expenses. As Arbo and Hertsoug have pointed out, the relationship between regional actors and strong, international actors involved in the

⁴⁵ Interview Ørjan Robertsen, November 2nd, 2009



Abandoned house. Sørvågen, Lofoten. Photo: The author

petroleum business is *de facto* an asymmetrical one (Arbo and Hersoug 2010: 179-182), where state and petroleum actors want in to exploit natural resources, and where the local actors aim to “... sell as expensively as possible” (ibid: 183). This means that local actors working in favor of petroleum development will be both proponents *and* opponents to the national petroleum actors, depending on what issue is being discussed. Thus, as Robertsen explained, the petroleum companies were not always happy with the way local actors argued for local development and for stronger efforts aiming at securing the exposed coastline of the region against potential oil spill.

At the above mentioned meeting in Stokmarknes, the strongest voice in favor of petroleum development in the area came however from the largest fishing municipality of the Vesterålen region, from Andøy’s mayor Jonni Solsvik. Many regarded him at the time as an eager petroleum lobbyist, who often neglected the strong concerns voiced within his own constituency. Many of the fishers most affected by the ongoing seismic investigations in the licensed petroleum field called Nordland VII just outside Vesterålen had their harbor base in Andøy, and the political tensions in this small community were heard all the way to the nations capital (see below). The picture is more complicated though, as Andenes, the main town of Andøy municipality, had the previous 6-8 years (together with Myre, another harbor in Vesterålen) been able to reposition itself with regards to the fisheries, resulting in an increase in quotas on vessels registered in their municipality. Thus, one of my informants argued that in the case of Andøy at least, an idea of both enabling the

community to continue its fishery traditions (through adaptation to the requirements of a management scheme adapted to the mechanisms of the international market place) *and* a desire to prepare for the potential industrial growth thought to be the consequences of a future petroleum development was present.⁴⁶ But even though an emphasis on the fisheries in Andøy had revitalized the local industry, Solsviks arguments for petroleum development was based on grim predictions, where out-migration and a steady decrease in municipal tax revenues and consequently, the prospects of a public service sector unable to provide the necessary services for an aging population held a dominant position.⁴⁷ This coupled with a fishery governance policy where downscaling of the coastal fleet fell heavy on fishery dependent small communities and augmented the general centralization trends (see chapter 6), provided a background for the discussions on petroleum where the search for alternative, more ‘attractive’ businesses and industries was seen to be part of a new backbone for these communities. For those holding political power locally the matter felt endemic, it seemed, and therefore many of them argued that the future of North-Norwegian coastal communities should be left to those forces in the country able to modernize, industrialize and bring into the fold a region which until now had been kept out of reach of the strongest economic force of all in post-war Norwegian society; the petroleum sector: “We have to give Nordland County the opportunity to become the new strong oil and gas region of Norway”, a member of parliament representing the conservative party, Høyre, stated in a campaign interview in 2009.⁴⁸ Likewise, another influential debater, Vågan’s mayor Hugo Bjørnstad, argued strongly for inviting in the petroleum sector as a means for solving local development issues, based on tough demands:

“I think (we will have to) set the license requirements at a level where spin-off effects are secured, so that we get something back. Because if we don’t, I as

⁴⁶ Personal communication, Ole Osland, head of department, the Norwegian Coastal Administration, Kabelvåg branch, August 2011.

⁴⁷ Jonni Solsvik has on several occasions aired his concerns in this manner, for instance at the Stokmarknes dialogue meeting, March 2009 and the public meeting arranged by the Peoples Action Against petroleum in LoVeSe in June 2009.

⁴⁸ Ivar Kristiansen, <http://www.nrk.no/nyheter/distrikt/nordland/1.6675023>, accessed April 24th 2011.

mayor can only see this going one way; our population is shrinking, our demography becomes all wrong with too many elders – and this is something of a concern, and we need more legs to stand on. I believe in the fisheries, it can contribute because it's a renewable resource that – with sustainable management - can be of importance; I believe in tourism's potential, but it has its limits if it is to stay within a viable relationship with its natural surroundings. And then, we have to take into consideration, like it or not, that the petroleum industry is on its way north. We can choose to be a part of that, or we can choose to stay in our state of petro-policy vacuum, which is what it would be if Lofoten is to become a protected area whilst at the same time, production runs at full speed both in the Norwegian and Barents seas. (...) Thus, my message is clear: if we can create a good dialogue, where all parties speak to each other instead of about each other, where environmentalists, politicians and the petroleum industry can unite based on what is a common goal – a sustainable development, an environmentally secure development – then I have great expectations concerning the possibility of getting things done also here, for us.”⁴⁹

It is important to note that the ultimate goal which Mr. Bjørnstad identified, a sustainable and environmentally secured development, is based on certain ideas of what makes the community (to which he was responsible as its political head figure) secure. His statement also exemplifies how a potential security provider also potentially may inflict harm – to the extent that it produces a feeling of *insecurity*. Bjørnstads answer to this dilemma, is to turn to strategies for policy implementation based on setting criteria that are believed to frame future petroleum production within parameters which ensures a viable future, both for nature and communities: A viable community should be secured through spin-off effects, and environmental security ensured through implementation of tough licensing demands including the necessary security measures.

⁴⁹ Interview, Hugo Bjørnstad, November 2nd, 2009

4.3.1.1 Assessments of petroleum potential and spin-off effects

There is now a need for a description of how a perceived petroleum potential in the LoVeSe area were presented during the period in question (2008-2011). The following examples of presented spin-off effects are not meant to be a complete list of all future scenarios that has been presented by different actors, but will here serve as an illustration of the range, scale and lack of precision such scenarios necessarily entails.⁵⁰ It is also of importance to emphasize that the purpose of these scenarios – to present *possibilities*, not given facts - was locally seen as indications of the petroleum business' lack of credibility. In other words, what was presented as positive news, was by many opponents seen as attempts at manipulating government officials and the local opinion. As one informant put it:

“They make all these promises, but who’s to know whether or not they will follow through, once they get their hands on the oil here?”⁵¹

In December 2008, the newspaper *Nordlys* reported that the petroleum lobby had presented to the Norwegian government a scenario that indicated that the total level of investment nationally as a consequence of an opening of the LoVeSe area could amount to NOK 200-250 billion. The director of OLF at the time, Mr. Per Terje Vold, argued for an opening of the area, “... if Norwegian welfare still is to be based on income from petroleum”, and that “(t)his is an important crossroads of our 40 year old petroleum history, where the (northern) region could join in, could seize this opportunity. We require a competent labor force, which will have a large impact on higher education and will stop out-migration”.⁵² The priorities are clear: Volds argument is *firstly* that the areas are needed if the Norwegian petroleum era is to continue, *secondly* that this is the chance the northern region has in joining in with the rest of the country, to truly become an integral part of the Norwegian petroleum state. The statement is emblematic for the dominating rationality within the petroleum sector described by Arbo and Hersoug, that it will be in their nature to primarily be

⁵⁰ Part of the reason why the issue of trust is interesting in this particular issue, is the fact that the estimates on spin-off effects varies, one might say, from the marginal to the exceptional.

⁵¹ Informant 32, April 2009

⁵² *Nordlys*, December 2nd, 2008. The reports cited in the newspaper article were the first three Konkraft reports which were issued during 2008-2009, seven in all.

interested in the natural resources and potential preconditions for their extraction, not the region *per se* (Arbo and Hersoug 2010: 188). Others have pointed out that the partial privatization and stock exchange listing of state-owned Statoil demarcates a change in Norwegian petroleum policy that has led to an industry more difficult to utilize as a domestic policy-tool:

“For national authorities, oil and gas development in the north is first and foremost about the future development of the Norwegian shelf, about state income, possibilities for growth for the existing petroleum industry, co-existence with other industries, geopolitical- and (state) security considerations and environmental issues and climate change (...) The petroleum sector is thus not only met with acclaims when portrayed as an engine for regional change. Instead it is opposed by a critical public (ibid: 188)

Questions about regional and – even more difficult – local ripple effects are in this way problematized based on the view that the petroleum industry and the petroleum-dependent state has other agendas than those presented *in the region when visiting*. And even though Arbo and Hersoug in my mind correctly describes the strategy of many regional actors as one in which one aims to please the petroleum companies (op.cit), the opposite was also taking place during the two-and-a-half-year period I conducted field work (2008-2010); a remarkably eager petroleum sector spared no expense, it seemed, in trying to persuade both the public and their local political leaders about the potential benefits. And as the strategy seemed to change – from mainly focusing on the national needs (although they never entirely disappeared from their line of argument) to the potential for regional development, the number of reports, assessments and strategic planning documents soared (Nordland 2006; Norway 2006; Holmelin and Forstrøm 2009; KONKRAFT 2009; Norway 2010; Norway 2011). During the same period, speculations on estimates for potential findings and local employment effects took off, to the extent that the Norwegian Business newspaper *Dagens Næringsliv* in October 2009 could report that the estimates presented by the petroleum lobby on potential findings in the LoVeSe-area had almost doubled in four years, from just under 2 billion barrels to about 3,4 billion, without any new research data being produced. The actors had, in other words, found new ways of portraying potential ripple effects that were based on new assessments of

the same data.⁵³ The only *new* data were in fact not presented before April 2010 by the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate (OD), in a report on the results from the seismic studies that had been performed in 2008 and 2009. They then estimated the findings to be around 1.27 billion barrels,⁵⁴ a figure which immediately spurred debate, as the datasets themselves were not made available to others than the OD scientific staff (Oljedirektoratet 2009).⁵⁵ The OD were for instance criticized, though not publicly, for being too conservative in their estimates, and of being “tainted by the political climate”, implicitly accusing the OD for being overtly careful not to be seen as arguing in favor of petroleum development.⁵⁶ Instead of openly criticizing the estimates, Statoil chose to use a figure closer to their own estimates of around 3 billion barrels in a calculation of potential earnings of “around half the Norwegian Petroleum fund” (at that time worth around NOK 2500 Billion).⁵⁷ Only days before the OD - report was presented at a press conference (on April 16th, 2010) in connection with the revision of the management plan for the Barents and Lofoten seas, Statoil released a report written by the research firm Agenda Kaupang which based Statoils much awaited industrial scenarios for the region in case of petroleum development on a figure more in line with ODs estimates (200 million Sm³, or approx. 1.3 billion barrels), though not without emphasizing that Statoils own predictions are somewhat higher (Holmelin and Forstrøm 2009). In this report, the estimates for the number of jobs produced in the region of Lofoten and Vesterålen is predicted to be

⁵³ *Dagens Næringsliv*, October 26th, 2009

⁵⁴ The predictions were in the report described as being highly uncertain, and the image was nuanced through an estimation of probability which showed that there is a 95% probability of there being more than 478 million barrels (76 million Sm³ Oil Equivalents), and the low probability of 5% on there being more than 2.3 billion barrels (371 million Sm³ Oil Equivalents).

⁵⁵ The data is to be made available for the petroleum business some time during 2011, as the government have decided to open for a sale by auction of the datasets.

⁵⁶ The issue was for instance raised, with me present, on a social gathering the night before the hearing conference on the development of the renewed Integrated Management Plan for the Barents and Lofoten seas (IMP-BL) by several representatives from the petroleum industry.

⁵⁷ CEO Helge Lund and Director for High North development of Statoil, Hege Marie Norheim, in *Dagens Næringsliv*, November 5th, 2009. The following day, Mrs. Norheim answered her critics in a letter-to-editor, claiming that her intension had been to “give people who do not think in barrels every day some sort of idea about what we are talking about here”. She did, however, also admit to having little data to substantiate her calculation, and that these predictions therefore should be seen as being only illustrative.

between 720 and 1340 full time jobs, depending on which of the three industrial scenarios are developed (op.cit).

This relatively detailed description of dates, figures and estimates are presented as examples of how quantities vary in this debate, and how actors put different weight on estimates and future scenarios. And while opponents to petroleum development see the usage of figures as speculative and manipulative, petroleum lobbyists argue that scenarios are not meant to represent some inevitable truth, but to indicate potential, as it is perceived by the industry. When I asked LoVe Petro's Ørjan Robertsen about how to make use of the potential petroleum might represent, he answered:

“ I am more than scared and more than surprised that it is not known what sort of development trends we're in. People just tend to neglect it, they are preoccupied with their everyday lives and do not see that there are municipalities that are falling to pieces. When a group of businesses came together and established LoVe Petro in 2006, they did so because most business people living in rural communities are highly involved and care a lot about their communities – and they saw the trends. (...) (the report called) “LoVe 2025” has extrapolated today's development trends and has found that we will loose a population the size of Svolvær, with about 4300 persons. What can we do to stop it? A possible scenario could be a land-based petroleum refinery like the one at Aukra (in the western part of Norway, my insertion) for instance, with a fifty-year time frame and 500 employees – and we know that an industrial work place generates another three or four jobs. Given the developments of today, and without new incentives, we would loose 750 work places in the region. So, new impulses, new drivers would help stop the negative development trends”.

We will in chapter 5 learn more about the way the petroleum debate influences how local actors looked at developmental challenges for their communities. Here, it suffices to say that the seemingly joint national-local petroleum lobby, consisting of advocates from the private sector, from NGOs and the public sector, contained within it a potential for open disagreement concerning the utilization of petroleum resources in LoVeSe, should they be extracted. Again, I agree with Arbo and Herzoug (2010: op.cit) in their assessment of the priorities of both the national petroleum industry and

the national government; that the needs of the industry, and as a consequence the welfare of the future petroleum state, have a higher priority by state actors than local concerns over population loss, lack of income for municipalities and local communities and lack of high-tech work places regionally. That is not to say that neither the industry nor the government are sensitive to the contributions from local actors to the debate. The national government in particular is obliged to include and take seriously the needs of the population, and do balance the needs of the state with local concerns, but also the industry have found it to be advantageous to enter into dialogue with local advocates *and* opponents. Still, one should not be misled into believing that local concerns will be what the plan for a future petroleum development in the area is based on, should it be realized. The final decision on the matter is to be taken on the national level, and thus the decision will be made based on the input also from actors with interest reaching beyond the everyday concerns of local actors in the LoVeSe region.

Continuing on the description and discussion of themes which I see as central to the proponent's arguments, we now turn to the matter of technology development and 'best practices' – and as a logical extension, *trust* – as important effects of petroleum development.

4.3.2 High tech in rough waters

In positioning themselves for a petroleum future in the high north, potential petroleum actors will have to meet a pre-defined need for a heightened preparedness in case of oil spills and other accidents. Local actors often emphasize the importance of a continuation of the political practice of putting tough demands on licensing. The following exchange of words between Ørjan Robertsen (ØR) of LoVe Petro and myself (BD) during our interview session exemplifies a specific belief in technological innovation through an active use of political tools – a techno-positivistic future, perhaps – which is often used when rationalizing the desire to open for petroleum development, in spite of obvious flaws in the best-practices and best available technical solutions of today:

ØR: Today we (in the region, my comment) are in the driver's seat, both in relation to the industry and the political establishment, and we can make claims, set up demands,

even through license terms. If they are to be permitted to utilize these resources, there should be something left for us - a supply base or something - in this region.

BD: What you are saying is that it (the hydrocarbons, my comment) will have to be extracted now?

ØR: - Yes

BD: - But if the technological know-how needed to do this safely is not available, you have said that you will say no.

ØR: - Yes

BD: - Then I guess you might have a problem..?

ØR: - But that's what's so interesting about this – that we see that when the authorities have set demands to the industry, they have always delivered! (...) Thus, for me to sit here as a layperson and say: 'this is not good enough'...? No, then we have to trust those who have been put there by the licensing authorities and their experts.⁵⁸

The quote illustrates what was previously discussed concerning trust as a necessity for the implementation of a perceived objective expert knowledge regime upon which decisions about the future can be taken (Giddens 1990; Beck 1992; Lupton 1999; Lupton 2006; Mythen and Walklate 2006; Walklate and Mythen 2010). *Trust in abstract systems* (the complex web of expert knowledge which, according to Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and others signifies modernity) is essential for the maintenance of the reigning power/knowledge nexus, a premise put under pressure in *risk society* (Beck 1992; Jasanoff 1998; Lupton 1999). A lack of trust, or at least a skepticism to what extent these expert systems provide the necessary security against accidents, is part of the complex web of reasoning behind much of the opposition coming from Lofoten. Here, though, it is necessary to show how the needs concerning technological development within the petroleum sector produces arguments which *supports* opening new areas for exploration and extraction as its main goal. They are of course tied to the realization that the older petroleum fields in the North Sea are

⁵⁸ Interview, Ørjan Robertsen, November 2nd, 2009.

beyond their peak, and that the extraction cost increases for every drop of oil squeezed out of them. Also, an important background argument for the need for new areas, is the notion of a ‘global energy mix’ (that is, the combination of energy sources thought to ensure both the necessary reduction on CO₂-emissions *and* provide energy for an increasingly demanding global market) in which Norwegian petroleum is seen as a desired component, as it is believed that it is the ‘purest’ hydrocarbons available (see also below)⁵⁹.

However, it is in the debate over securing the environment from oil spills, together with the mentioned seismic survey that will be presented thoroughly below, that the fiercest of debates concerning technology and *trust* has been fought. And in the midst of this debate stands a local producer of oil spill technology.

Scene: “Environmental Best Practices”

In the small village of Fiskebøl, 25 minutes from Svolvær in Lofoten and a 25-minute ferry ride from Vesterålen, Terje Olav Hansen still runs the business his father established in the 1970s. At the time I visited him in April 2010, he insisted on providing needed work places and thus a basis for continued settlement in the village, despite pressure from banks and coadjutant businesses. “My father established the company here. I grew up here. My children were born here. This is where we belong”, he told me, when I asked him why he had not move the business to more centralized areas. But there was more, he said: “Also, the price for property is low –could you imagine the costs of having this size of quay in Tromsø, Bodø or Trondheim? And we have free access to the small fjord area for testing right here, outside our window. It’s perfect for testing and improving our most important product.”⁶⁰

The product Olav Terje Hansen spoke of is the oil spill lens,⁶¹ and the company is Norlense, established in 1975 by Olav Terje, his father and a brother. Before that, his

⁵⁹ An argument which also is closely linked to the Norwegian promotion of an international market place for CO₂ – quotas; it is seen as ‘reasonable’ and ‘sensible’ that Norway produces petroleum – with less emissions than others – and buys quotas from other states. This is re-written in political argumentation as ‘taking care of our obligations for emissions abroad’, a controversial and discussable conclusion that reaches beyond the limitations of this thesis.

⁶⁰ Interview, Terje Olav Hansen, April 20th, 2010

⁶¹ A product meant to collect and pick up oil from the sea surface. They are typically attached to small vessels, towed into a spill area before suction pumps gather up the oil for disposal.

father was a fisherman and a seine repairman, but got tired of the travelling and built himself a seine repair yard in Fiskebøl. He then had the idea of creating a new type of offshore lens, based on principles from the purse seine⁶² in the fisheries, and patented the first version in 1973. In 1977, they got their first contract with Statoil, which enabled them to further test and improve the lens, to the effect that they won the tender to deliver 10 000 meters of lens to the Norwegian Pollution Agency.⁶³ Hans Olav explained:

“At that time, oil spill preparedness was not a high priority, but we still delivered some equipment to the Norwegian shelf, and also abroad. But it was after the Bravo accident in the North Sea in 1977⁶⁴ that things heated up and standards were put in place. Since then, we have participated in all oil spill exercises in the North Sea. We developed the second-generation lens in 1988-92, and are now underway with a third, scheduled to be finished in 2012. This lens should manage rougher weather, breaking waves and stronger currents.”

Internationally, there are only a few producers of offshore oil spill lenses competing in the same market,⁶⁵ and the technology is by many regarded as insufficient in terms of being able to handle the rough weather of the Northern seas. As the petroleum production draws closer to land, the effects of even the smallest of spills could have a damaging effect. In this, Terje Olav saw possibilities for his company – both in terms of innovation and contracts – if there would be an opening of the LoVeSe area for petroleum production:

“When we open these areas, it is guaranteed that the security requirements will be the strictest in the world, both in terms of technology competence and organization of

⁶² The purse seine is a fish net gear with which one circles a fishing ground, leaving a net in the boats path which ensnares the fish.

⁶³ SFT, now named Climate and Pollution Agency - KLIF

⁶⁴ On April 22nd that year, the drilling platform Bravo lost control over one of its wells, causing approx 12700 m³ of crude oil to spill into the North Sea in what is the largest oil spill accident of the Norwegian shelf to date. See also <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/artikkel.php?artid=189941> and <http://www.dagsavisen.no/innenriks/article327086.ece>.

⁶⁵ Hansen identified one Norwegian actor – NOFI in Tromsø, and one in Denmark, GB and Spain respectively.

equipment. And we are well positioned by this inlet.” He pointed out the window, towards the quay area just outside his window. “We will have clients close by and the authorities who will be following up on the requirements, will have a show-room right here, for others to see how Norwegian preparedness is built up. It is something to show the world!”

To Hansen, the potential in opening of sea areas for petroleum is a possibility, and not an unmanageable threat. Risky, yes – but manageable through the implementation of technology that will lower the risk level and make it acceptable. The technology did not exist yet, but in Hansens view, this was a matter that would be solved in time. It has been done before, and the requirements in Norway are the strictest in the world.

The essential variable here, then, should again be identified as the matter of *trust*. If you trust the technology - or just the ability of an actor to come up with the necessary technology, as it has not yet been finalized and proven to be sufficient – then there’s no reason why the Norwegian ‘best practice’ shouldn’t be good enough. We will later see how the matter of trust is of importance also for those opposing petroleum development, only that their trust is directed elsewhere and that their relation to the petroleum sector is characterized by its opposite; *distrust*. Hansen ties this notion of trust in technology to what he sees as a natural development of an inherited relation to the sea – in the way the lenses was developed from adapting fishing gear technology, and also in how one relates to the sea as a provider of necessary income for people along the coast. So, when I asked Hansen how he would respond to those who claim that the petroleum business represents a break with traditions in Lofoten, he responded:

“To us, it has always been a natural part of development. We know they have been drilling for oil on other continents, then in the North Sea. And when that empties up, they will have to go north. It is completely natural, and why should we be so selfish as to leave the oil where it’s at? They do have to extract it other places too, and we must enable ourselves to contribute with the pure energy that Norwegian oil and gas is, and export it to Europe and the rest of the world – with pure I mean relatively, compared to coal, which is the only alternative and much more of a polluter. So I have never really understood this environmental debate, in a larger perspective. But it is important for me and those who work here that the petroleum development comes

about using the best and newest technology – and then I mean environmentally high-tech stuff – and that there will be set tough demands from the government, and that it should provide ample spin-off effects locally. We need high-tech workplaces in this region, and new engines for growth. The primary industries, like the fisheries and farming ... well, you have seen how things are going. Efficiency demands have made jobs scarce”.⁶⁶

Hansens demands on government are here made clear: open up, but set tough standards. In other words, he wants the government to act as a *facilitator* for secure petroleum development, as the initiator of processes that will force the sector to come up with the necessary technology. Within limits with set parameters, both the petroleum industry and the local population are provided with the best of possibilities in respect to securing a future. And with technology and detailed risk assessments the contingent future becomes manageable. In this reasoning, one can recognize the Foucauldian notion of self-governing as an integral part of modern governmentality; in the way in which the state play an important part in the management of a population enabled to secure itself.

This way of managing contingency, by applying a techno-scientific positivist notion of the future as manageable and as such risky within acceptable parameters, has its basis in the ‘petroleum fairy-tale’ described above, in the popular acceptance of certain truths upon which a sustainable petroleum development in Norway is built: Best environmental practices, technological innovation due to governmental control and requirements and stern risk avoidance measures implemented. For those who trust this system of management of the contingent, the argumentation from those who don’t might seem unrealistic, unscientific and, seemingly paradoxically, infested with too much *insecurity* about what the future might bring. Hansens statement that he does not understand the whole environmentalist argument concerning the danger of there being a major oil spill in the region therefore makes sense; in order to create an ontological frame in which an understanding of the petroleum industry as secure enough prevails, one has to trust the very basic assumptions of the power/knowledge nexus which is a premise for this notion of truth: That the state provides the

⁶⁶ Op.cit.

framework for a technological development and an investigative assessment of an objective state-of-being (be it of nature, of society or as risk assessment models) which enables actors to move with the freedom necessary to secure themselves, - in this example through development of technology which will enable them to pursue (with an acceptable level of risk involved) a petroleum-enriched future. Again paraphrasing Foucault: As such, the Norwegian petroleum management scheme is a techno-scientific tool for securing population (Foucault 2007).

Whereas Norlense's Olav Terje Hansen focuses on the potential for regional and local development, there are other actors who have a slightly different focus, namely the connection between technology development and the future of the Norwegian petroleum industry as such. An example is the way in which the potential for development of improved oil spill preparedness technology was tied to the matter of opening the LoVeSe area at the annual Conference on Emergency Preparedness arranged by key organizations within the petroleum sector, in Tromsø, May 2010. Here, focus was of course on how to respond to risks and challenges in what everyone saw as – in the words of the state secretary for the Minister for Petroleum and Energy, Mr. Robin N. Kåss spoken at the conference - the “new emerging petroleum province”. But additionally, the potential in the LoVeSe area in particular for challenging the existing limitations in technology was debated. Examples from the development of the *Goliat* petroleum field in the Barents Sea were presented, and a precautionary approach presented as being followed up through a “... robust, efficient and locally adapted preparedness solution”, said Director of Norwegian Clean Seas Association for Operating Companies (NOFO), Sjur Knutsen. Security barriers were described, technological equipment explained and standardized assessments of sea currents presented, as well as a stand-by system for satellite monitoring of an oil spill, were it ever to happen.

For the sake of comparison, and to show an example of how the need for a “robust and efficient” preparedness is followed up, I will briefly stay with the *Goliat* field, outside of the coast of Finnmark, the northernmost county of Norway. Here, the petroleum sector do follow up the criteria set as premises for the development of the *Goliat* field, outlined in Governmental White paper number 64, 2008/2009 (Norway 2008). Here, it is simply stated that the criteria for oil spill preparedness is that it is the responsibility of the field operator to ensure that “ The *Goliat* field is subject to

strict environmental conditions” (ibid: 12) and that “For operations in the Barents Sea, the authorities has demanded that the effects of preparedness initiatives should be at least as good as for the rest of the Norwegian continental shelf” (ibid: 13). The concrete demands are left up to the state environmental protection agency KLIF to present and follow up, after discussing the matter with the operating petroleum company. However, in their summary of target effectiveness for the oil spill preparedness in the petroleum sector, KLIF writes that they can not see that the goal of having “... an oil spill preparedness modeled and dimensioned in such a way that it efficiently contribute to a continued low risk for damage on the environment and marine resources” is met because of the difficulty in documenting that the measures that has been taken in fact contributes to a low-risk scenario.⁶⁷ Still, the preparations for production at Goliat are well under way, without any assurance of the level of preparedness that will be in place at the time of initialization, planned in 2013.

Now, many will say – and they might be right - that what is being put in place around Goliat in terms of environmental security measures are more wide-ranging than what we have seen before on the Norwegian shelf. For instance, the operators wished to strengthen operative capacities both on shore and in sea, they have engaged parts of the local fishing fleet in a ‘preparedness fleet’ and established a four-barrier oil spill response. Still, all requirements given by the authorities are formulated as ‘best practice’-statements without concrete demands for technological solutions or stand-by capabilities, for example. It is thus much left up to the sector itself to define to what extent they will go beyond the security parameters set on the rest of the Norwegian shelf. In frontier areas, it seems, it is much up to the petroleum industry to show what limits there are to a possible preparedness.

The reason why I wanted to describe briefly the situation at Goliat, is that it is often used as an example – by both proponents and opponents – of how things might turn out in the LoVeSe area. And both sides find their arguments concerning petroleum in LoVeSe strengthened when referring to the Goliat process. Proponents looks at the way new technology and system development increases preparedness and thus better

⁶⁷ Taken from <http://www.miljostatus.no/Tema/Hav-og-vann/havomrader/Barentshavet/Mal-for-miljotilstanden-i-Barentshavet---Lofoten/Akutt-forurensning/>, accessed September 1st, 2011.

secures the fragile coastline; adversaries complain of a lack of documentation of whether the equipment and preparedness system is good enough. Again, the two variables *risk* and *trust* comes into play, and preconceived notions of what risks are worth taking are reestablished on both sides. Paraphrasing Mary Douglas, then, I would argue that the way political adversaries in matters of petroleum development in Northern Norway utilizes techno-scientific knowledge is clearly in an argumentative fashion; selective and based on one's own preconceptions of how to politically handle the issue (Douglas 1992: 31). It is - at the last instance - a matter of choice based on ones moral conceptions, ideas about the future and ultimately; ones ontological world gaze. It is symptomatic for the debate that, at a conference concerned with preparedness, the logical end-point of *not to drill at all* if the technology is found not to be good enough is not discussed. What seems to be the case is that the preparedness is seen as a 'appendage' to the petroleum industry, and not a necessary condition for there being petroleum production at all.

This was not meant to be a description of the technologically detailed oil spill preparedness sector of the Norwegian petroleum industry, but an example of how I experienced being present at a conference where preparedness was the topic, but where the ultimate consequence of not having a sufficient oil spill preparedness system in place - *the decision not to drill* - was never on the agenda. Rather, meeting the demands of the Norwegian state within the framework of the techno-scientific solutions through which the contingent is managed is what mattered. Therefore, I assert, the most important goal of any oil spill preparedness system is not the minimizing of oil spill consequences - which rarely happen and which consequences pass unnoticed by most members of the population - but the adherence to *an ontological system through which the world is made manageable*. We (that is, our politicians) tolerate the level of risk because it is the best we can achieve. With a notion of having the strictest requirements of the world, mixed with an aura of 'environmental best practices', the Norwegian petroleum fairy-tale has done its magic, and choosing *not to drill* is thus *not an option*.

In general, on can say that risk tolerance has a lot to do with the potential outcome, and whether we are willing to accept it. The advantages in terms of financial outcome when it comes to accepting risk within the petroleum sector are vast; indeed, they are

the stuff that modern states are built upon. For Norway it has been - and still is – a veritable moneymaker beyond compare.

4.3.3 The moneymaker out to sea

“During the first decade of the 2000s, the Norwegian shelf has provided the country with cash surplus flow never before seen in its history. Although the price on petroleum products has varied, the rent⁶⁸ from the revenues have been so high that, even in 2005, when the prize for oil was at a mere 45 US dollars per barrel, the Norwegian State set a new record concerning its surplus outtake from the shelf. Three years later, in 2008, the oil price reached 150 US dollars, and the Norwegian state was – with no extra efforts –enriched with NOK 200 Billion more than anticipated in the annual budget.” (Ryggvik 2009: 22-23, my translation).

This quote is meant to illustrate the level of income we’re talking about. The very fact that there are few other businesses in the world that can show the same level of profit from investments, combined with the political effort to let these earnings be a part of the financing of an expensive welfare system, of course makes it a weighty argument for advocates for development of the shelf in LoVeSe waters.

In a feature article in the mayor regional newspaper of Northern Norway, two parliamentary representatives from the Conservative Party Høyre, Ivar Kristiansen and Siri A. Meling, presented their views on the importance of the LoVeSe area for the future of the Norwegian welfare state (Kristiansen and Meling 2010).⁶⁹ Kristiansen and Melings message is that in order to ensure a solid, high-level of welfare in this country, we need the petroleum sector to keep earning the funds needed. “For the Conservative Party”, Kristiansen and Meling wrote, “it is important to meet these challenges today with active politics in order to secure future growth

⁶⁸ Rent here refers to the surplus from extraction of natural resources that – contrary to the specific surplus of capitalism based on labour and means of production – is inherent in the natural resource itself, and not in the efforts made for growth and production. The argument is based on Ryggviks (2009: 19-23) description of the principles of rent as laid out by David Ricardo and others.

⁶⁹ The article was also printed in regional newspapers in Rogaland County, where a large portion of the Norwegian petroleum industry has its main base, and Finnmark County where the initiation of the *Snøhvit* gas field and eventually the *Goliat* Petroleum field ha meant that Finnmark has been brought into the petroleum era of Norway.

and welfare. (...) A declining level of income in the future can be mended today with a proactive petroleum politics.” Kristiansen and Meling thus called for an opening of the Nordland VI, VII and Troms II petroleum fields (i.e. the LoVeSe sea area). Other arguments were of course also presented in the feature article, such as the need for new areas in order to secure future development of one of the best offshore technology clusters in the world and the impact it could have on local business as an impetus for growth, but the main argument was clear: We – that is, the nation - need the money.

This strategy was based on an idea that changed the way Norway looked at its fortune located under the bottom of the sea. In the 1980s, the intentions from the 1974 White Paper pointing out the path of *moderation* as most desired for the future of the Norwegian petroleum state were still intact (Norway 1974). A moderate extraction rate was prescribed as the best medicine against an extravagant level of income at the expense of future generations and that the petroleum sector would become overwhelmingly large and influential, causing what has been called *Dutch disease*, bluntly put defined as a situation in which an economic sector becomes so powerful that it puts pressure on the economy with heightened interest rates, higher income rates and a higher level of domestic prizes – which in turn lowers the profits from export from other sectors, due to a worsened position in the international marketplace (Barder 2006; Ryggvik 2009: 140-141). During the 1990s however, this strategy was gradually abandoned, and as the investment rates in the petroleum sector soared, other sectors were left in a difficult position on the international market, due to high domestic expenses.⁷⁰ Today, as I have presented earlier (in chapter 2.2), the petroleum sector itself recognizes its own dominant position and are more than willing to elongate their period of dominance, given that new prospective areas for drilling for petroleum is provided (KONKRAFT 2008).

⁷⁰ Again, things are interlinked; as the influx of petroleum revenues started to sprinkle out over the Norwegian economy, boasting welfare systems, public spending and an overall rise in private finances, the Norwegian fisheries met with an increasingly difficult market place, where a *de facto* lowering of price for fish incited the introduction of a management scheme for the fisheries where a rationalization and effectivisation of the fishing fleet was the goal. In short; to survive, one had to catch more fish per employee – a situation which we shall see has profoundly influenced small-scale fishing communities.

That the Norwegian state relies on its revenues from the petroleum sector is undisputable. For 2011, it is stipulated that the income from the sector to the Norwegian state will surpass NOK 300 billion (Oljedirektoratet 2011; foreword by Minister for Petroleum and Energy, Ola Borten Moe), the year before 21 percent of the overall value of produced goods in the country came from the petroleum industry (Oljedirektoratet 2011ibid: 22). But there are clouds on the horizon. In the same report from *Oljedirektoratet* (Norwegian Petroleum Directorate), Director Bente Nyland states that even though there are positive development traits, the main message is that the amount of assessed undiscovered deposits has been reduced, and findings within already opened fields do not compensate for the declining income from the mayor fields in the North Sea. And even though much of the found resources is still to be extracted, the amount needed in order to keep the level of income – and as an effect the petroleum sector a the most important locomotive of the Norwegian economy – will not come from these old findings.

This represents a challenge for both proponents and opponents to further development of the Norwegian petroleum shelf, a challenge that puts the question of development of the LoVeSe area high up on the agenda. The point here is to show that there was a sense of urgency amongst many actors about the necessity for an opening of these areas, which in turn put pressure on the suppliers of the necessary knowledge needed for the process to continue. Thus, time as a variable – some had all the time in the world, and felt that any postponement of decisions in the process was in part a victory, others felt that time was running out – was an important backdrop for understanding the often passionate and tough debate which was going on in this period. For some, it was a matter of state security, and their obligations towards achieving that was what mattered most. Environmental and local concerns would in this perspective have to be a secondary priority. Here, potential conflict lurked, also between advocates on the national and local level, as there was ample reason to indicate that there was a *discrepancy in goals and expectations*. Just as within the fragile alliance arguing against petroleum - between fishers, local adversaries, national political parties and environmentalist organizations - the center-periphery axis amongst the advocates represented challenges that surmounted the petroleum question; it in fact had roots in the very relationship between a mighty, powerful south and a north which often was seen as marginalized in the political as well as the financial landscape (see chapter 5).

As for counter-arguments against those arguing for petroleum development on the basis of the need for a continued financing of the expensive welfare state, the opponents argued that a continued reliance on petroleum as the main supporting beam of Norwegian economy left us unprepared for a future which inevitably would be less petroleum-driven than today. They would argue that, contrary to the beliefs of the proponents, the best petroleum economy would be to let the resources stay where they are, to be exploited in time of need. This would, they argued, enable the Norwegian labor market to adapt in time to a post-petroleum society, in which a conversion of the high-tech jobs involved in the petroleum development of today would be geared towards creating the high-tech jobs in green technologies of tomorrow. Just as the petroleum industry had benefited from knowledge developed in shipping, the fisheries and the hydroelectric industry, so too would new leaps have to be taken on the basis of knowledge derived from petroleum production, the sooner the better, as Norway was risking being left behind in the development of relevant knowledge which would ensure our future as a energy producing country also *after* petroleum. A future as rentenists, living of the surplus of speculations on stock exchanges around the world would not suffice, the argument went.⁷¹ Again, local argumentation reflecting these concerns will be further presented in chapter 5.

4.3.4 Global contingent future(s): The need for energy and the future of the planet

In the line of arguments that are to be presented here, we have come to those that connected to global climate change, the increasing need for energy globally and what possible obligations an oil-producing country like Norway might be seen to have when facing these challenges. These concerns were somewhat sporadically present in the debate on petroleum development in LoVeSe, though more infrequently locally in Lofoten than in the national debate. In Norway, climate change is by almost all participants accepted as a political challenge, although met with a different view of the severity of its impact on Norwegian society and – more importantly even – with

⁷¹ These thoughts can be found in both the typically environmentalist argumentation, in the arguments of the People's Action for the development of a petroleum-free LoVeSe, and from politicians on all levels who have declared their resistance to petroleum in LoVeSe.

different proposals for solution.⁷² For the case in question, the most important divide is between those who believe that the idea of cutting CO₂-emissions abroad while simultaneously developing what is regarded as a relatively ‘green’ petroleum production at home is the best solution, and those more prone to favor a downscaling of the production of petroleum in Norway because of a perceived moral obligation to cut emissions also at home. In the matter of opening the LoVeSe-region for petroleum development, this divide has become more pronounced, as actors on both sides have global concerns tied into their line of argumentation.

As the end of the year 2009 drew near, the Norwegian Oil Industry Association (OLF) presented its new director, Gro Brækken. In her very first interview, the new head of OLF made an immediate imprint and spurred instant critique from her future adversaries. “If we do not point to oil and gas as part of the solution, we are inflicting an ill turn on our youth,” she reportedly said to the news agency ANB,⁷³ and continued: “Many seem to believe that oil and gas represents something terrible. I do not see it that way. As adults, it is our responsibility to take action and show what is possible to obtain. The climatic challenges are solvable, but it might take a little more time than those most eager wants.” As a former director of the Norwegian branch of Save the Children International, her comments connecting the future security of the children of the earth to the extraction of Norwegian petroleum spurred heated responses from her opponents. “It’s the children and youth of this world who will suffer, while Brækkens generation will escape (the consequences, my insertion),” the leader of the environmentalist youth organization Nature and Youth (*Natur og ungdom* – NU), Ingeborg Gjørum, replied. In the same news article, a critic from one of the political parties in government, the Center Party (*Senterpartiet* - SP), voiced his indignation: “I see it as unwise to use the well-being of children as an argument to argue for an opening of the areas outside Lofoten and Vesterålen for petroleum activities,” said parliamentary representative and leader of the parliamentary

⁷² Paradoxically, the issue has been found to be of minor importance for the general public when asked about which political issues are the most important. Generally, one could say that as its consequences are not clearly visible and the politicians talk but do little, the sense of urgency portrayed in research reports and conference minutes are not reflected in a general public more preoccupied with tax levels or the quality of health care services.

⁷³ <http://www.siste.no/Innenriks/politikk/article4779215.ece>, accessed November 2nd, 2011. My translation.

committee for Energy and the Environment, Erling Sande (SP), and continued: “The best way to secure future generations is through long-term sustainable management of our natural resources. We cannot gamble with an important renewable resource, such as the fish in our waters.”⁷⁴

Now, the statement could probably be put on the ‘rookie-account’ of the new director of OLF, as it must be regarded as both unnecessarily provocative and somewhat overly simplistic, given the complexity of the issue. However, the exchange of words captures an essence in the debate over the future of Norwegian petroleum that serves to illustrate the diverging ideas of how to secure the future – this time in facing the possibility of severe global climatic changes.

In short: for the proponents of an expansive Norwegian petroleum politics, the joint global challenge of climate change and energy deficiency is *only* solvable by adding hydrocarbons – and particularly gas – into the future energy mix. This is in line with the calculations from the International Energy Agency’s World Energy Outlook (IEA) where best practices within production of oil and gas is promoted as the only *realistic* alternative to coal-fired power plants, and with gas in particular as having a key role in meeting the world’s energy needs (IEA 2011).⁷⁵ Also, reports on the needs of the European Union suggests that a strengthened emphasis on gas is the way in which the EU will be able to reach its climate reduction goals,⁷⁶ signals which serves the advocates for a continuation of Norwegian petroleum development well. Europe needs Norwegian energy, the argument goes, and particularly gas: “We do not have

⁷⁴ <http://www.siste.no/klima/article4781096.ece> , accessed November 4th, 2011. My translation.

⁷⁵ See http://www.iea.org/press/pressdetail.asp?PRESS_REL_ID=402 , accessed September 4th, 2011

⁷⁶ See http://ec.europa.eu/energy/strategies/consultations/20110307_roadmap_2050_en.htm for a an upcoming report on EU energy roadmap, but also <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2011/feb/13/gas-firms-lobby-europe-on-emissions> (accessed September 4th, 2011) on how gas firms – including Norwegian Statoil - put pressure on the EU in order to make them go for gas instead of renewable energy sources when seeking to meet their 2020 emission goals. Additionally, the European Commission has - in their report “Energy 2020” (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0639:EN:HTML:NOT> , accessed September 4th 2011) outlined the importance of both a renewed look at the energy mix needed and for stabile partner who can deliver energy which may assist the EU in reaching their emission goals.

any guarantees that coal-generated power will be cleaned up by 2030. I feel it would be irresponsible with reference to European energy needs to make the gamble that Co2-capture and storage will be available so quickly. Europe is thus dependent on green, Norwegian gas, and will continue to be so far beyond the year 2030,” said Per Terje Vold, Brækkens predecessor, when retiring as OLF director to the newspaper *Stavanger Aftenblad* in December 2009.⁷⁷

Similarly, in June 2011, the same argument is used in a Governmental White Paper on the future of Norwegian petroleum production released (were – symbolically – a picture from space showing the Euro-Asian, African and Australian continents at night is used as front cover) (Norway 2011: 7, 45), and repeated by the OLF in July the same year: “The world needs energy, and Norwegian oil-and gas production plays a significant role in this. If Europe is to reach its climate goals, they are totally dependent on Norwegian gas. Besides, Norway runs the most environment-friendly petroleum production with the lowest Co2-released rate per unit in the world,” said Tom Gederø, Head of Information on Environmental issues at OLF, to the weekly paper *Ny Tid*.⁷⁸

In this way, then, the Norwegian petroleum sector is included by the advocates for an opening of the LoVeSe-areas as *part of the solution* to global climate change and the energy crisis. And this line of argument is also present amongst actors in Lofoten positive to petroleum development. For instance, when LoVe Petros Ørjan Robertsen in February 2009 responded to an initiative from the Norwegian Church leaders in which they ask for a recess in the development of new petroleum fields for the sake of sparing the planet for the strains caused by increased Co2-emissions, he argued for Norwegian petroleum in this manner:

“We of course bid the church welcome into the debate, but when bishop Tor Jørgensen says ‘no thanks’ to oil and gas from Lofoten and Vesterålen in concern for the global environment, he should also be aware that he says ‘yes, please’ to nuclear power, more coal-driven power plants and other options that

⁷⁷ Stavanger Aftenblad, December 21st, 2009.

⁷⁸ Tom Gederø in *Ny Tid*, July 1st, 2010

will increase global pollution. Anyone see the paradox?” (Robertsen 2009, my translation)

In a similar vein, Robertsen said during an interview with me that the Norwegian position as a steady supplier of energy to Europe is important, and that the desire to remain in position in the international market and the needs of the region in terms of new incentives for development and growth both pull us in the same direction; towards an opening of new petroleum fields on the Norwegian shelf. “They want Norwegian oil and gas in Europe, because we are a steady supplier. In that perspective ... they are as keen on opening here as we are.”⁷⁹ Another informant, when asked to ponder the relationship between regional petroleum development and global warming, stated: - ... if the world was a rational place, one should use the oil from here to phase out coal-driven power plants. (...) In this way, it (that is, petroleum from LoVeSe, my insertion) would be desirable in a global context.⁸⁰

It should come as no surprise that the opponents disagree. Most environmentalists generally oppose to the idea that hydrocarbons should be argued for in a future energy mix, simply because they believe that a continued focus on the extremely profitable petroleum production will hamper necessary investments in new, green energy technology.⁸¹ Additionally, local adversaries are opposed to the political tactics through which the need for a precautionary approach to the utilization of vulnerable areas are put up against the global need for energy, and that a one-sided approach to a solution of the energy crisis which looks solely on the lack of supply without considering the enormous potential there is for energy saving, and thus a de facto depreciation of the prospected future need for more fossil fuel, is futile. In short, many – both locally and nationally - dismiss the premises upon which the debate over

⁷⁹ Ørjan Robertsen, interview, November 2009

⁸⁰ Informant 1, 2010

⁸¹ The argument has also been presented at numerous dialogue meetings and conferences I have attended by representatives from environmentalist organizations, for instance by the environmentalist foundation Bellonas representative at the meeting previously mentioned at Stokmarknes, Vesterålen, in March 2009 and at the public summer meetings organized by the adversaries to petroleum development in Kabelvåg in 2009 and 2010.

future global energy needs is based and the contribution petroleum from LoVeSe could bring.⁸²

I will in the next section introduce a governmental approach to analyzing the connections between politics and strategies concerning the Northern province, the agenda of an expansionist petroleum industry and local concerns in Lofoten (Foucault 2007; Dean 2010). The reason for this is twofold: One is due to its focus on the rationale that is the ontological premise for the power relations and knowledge production which is the foundation for a policy aiming at securing resources – and ultimately the population. In other words, I aim at describing those “... forms of thought, knowledge, expertise, strategies, means of calculation, or rationality (that) are employed in practices of governing” (Dean 2010: 42). The other focus aims at showing how *regimes of practices* are played out in connection to specific identities – individual and collective. That is, how governmental regimes “elicit, promote, facilitate, foster and attribute various capacities, qualities and statuses to particular agents (ibid: 43-44). My reasoning rests on Deans summary of the dimensions of regimes of practices in which he specified – as did also Foucault in his writings on power in general, and biopower in particular (see chapter 3.2.1.1) – the importance of not viewing “... regimes of governmental practices as expressions of values” (ibid: 45) but rather “... how ‘values’ function in various governmental rationalities, what consequences they have in forms of political argument, how they get attached to different techniques and so on” (ibid: 46). Also, his focus on the visualisation of government is here acknowledged, and is identifiable in my work through for instance the analysis of ‘portraits of management regimes’ like the reports making up the foundation for management plans or the imagery used to back a notion of the High North as ‘the new center’ in Norwegian foreign Policy (see also Kristoffersen and Young (2010) for a review of how the high north is ‘created’ through use of cartography and imagery depicting a view of both the present and (possible) future) – or the need to understand how government has to do with the management of the contingent future – a theme which, of course, hovers over the matter of the possible extraction of petroleum in the LoVeSe area.

⁸² As an example, Bellonas Ane T. Brunvoll cites the International Energy Agency’s assessment that 54 per cent of the efforts towards limiting global rise in temperatures to maximum 2 degrees will have to be energy efficiency measures. Cited from the weekly paper *Ny Tid*, March 20th, 2009.

4.4 Norwegian High North Policy as Governmentality in practice

The management of resources in the north is based on the premise that the progress of scientific know-how will improve our ability to both protect and exploit the resources of the area, - a premise which neglects the specificities of inclusion and exclusion criteria which are premises of particular ‘cultures of knowledge’, or what Dean calls *regimes of practices*:

“Regimes of practices can be identified whenever there exists a relatively stable field of correlation of visibilities, mentalities, technologies and agencies, such that they constitute a kind of taken-for-granted point of reference for any form of problematization. In so far as these regimes concern the direction of conduct, they form the object of an analytics of government” (Dean 2010: 37)

Importantly, the analysis of the construction of a knowledge-base for the political decisions which are to be made concerning the management plan for the sea areas of Lofoten, Vesterålen, Senja and the Barents Sea (abbr. IMP-BL) (von Quillfeldt 2010; Norway 2011) will be based on the analytical assumption that this regime of (political) practice is reaffirmed through two processes; *inclusion and exclusion* of what is considered to be relevant knowledge, and the process leading to the political ideal of *consensus*. Here, questions concerning society’s relation to nature and how to manage, control and utilize it become paramount. I assert that the idea behind the IMPs of Norwegian resource governance should be analysed by seeking to reveal its points of reference within a particular nexus of power/knowledge (Foucault 2007; Foucault 2008) where specific inclusion/ exclusion criteria demarcates what could be called the ‘cultural (or ontological) borders’ of specific knowledge systems. And, following Douglas (1992), I will show how “... (the) consequence of using science in politics is that both sides consult their own scientific experts” (ibid: 33), a point which, contrary to popular and political belief, seems to render science *unable to enable* politics. In many ways, this is a statement that might appear to be overtly critical to objective knowledge, but bear in mind that my assertion has nothing to do with whether real threats exists, or whether knowledge as basis for politics is needed. Of course it is. My main concern is the way arguments based on a specific ‘culture of science’ is taken as the *only acceptable frame of reference* when arguing for relevance and even rationality when deciding what knowledge is to be the basis for a political decision - in this case on whether to open for petroleum activities in the LoVeSe area.

In Lofoten, the way arguments against petroleum activities based on scepticism to the conclusions from risk assessments are discredited is a case in point, and will be presented and followed up below.

The American anthropologist Gregory Bateson once stated that we – as social scientists - should consider what alternatives (to the ruling state of things) could possibly exist and then ask what it is that makes these alternatives marginalized, excluded, or simply why they are not followed (Bateson 2000: 286). Similarly, Michel Foucault argued for a focus on the margins of things, on “ ... a variety of processes that are local and mobile, but that can operate at any point on the macro/micro continuum” (Kendall and Wickham 2007: 130). It is not about re-establishing ways of governing as ideal types or concepts, nor as being made up by entities of necessity (Dean 2010: 31). Rather,

“An analytics of government attempts to show that our taken-for-granted ways of doing things and how we think about and question them are not entirely self-evident or necessary. An analysis of a particular regime of practices (*a governmentality*, my insertion), at a minimum, seeks to identify the emergence of that regime, examine the multiple sources of the elements that constitute it, and follow the diverse processes and relations by which these elements are assembled into relative stable forms of organization and institutional practice. It examines how such a regime gives rise to and depends upon particular forms of knowledge (... and) it considers how this regime has a technical or technological dimension ...” (ibid: 31)

I believe it will be fruitful to regard the Norwegian management plan and how the state manages its resources as based on a specific power/knowledge relation between the governmental rationality of liberalism and objectivist science. I also believe that a combination of Batesons above mentioned plea for a notion of possible alternatives to the way things are ruled and managed and the Foucauldian focus on the margins of society, on the manifestations of the governmental processes in local (community or individual) lives, lies a possibility for an analytics of the local experiences in Lofoten regarding whether to open for petroleum development in the area. When identifying what knowledge is to be regarded as legitimizing government, presenting local perceptions of how certain inclusion and exclusion criteria are invoked becomes

important. Likewise, an analytics of government where local perspectives and understandings of how power is exercised through a (re)construction of the power/knowledge of liberalism and science should be taken into account. As a consequence, the Norwegian Offshore Resource management should be analyzed, seeking to understand how it influences the security situation for *multiple* actors, communities and population(s).

Central to the next section of this chapter is a description and an evaluation of how the requirements for improvement of a so-called *knowledge base* for the IMP-BL are met in a report from an appointed scientific forum, the public hearing process that followed, and the implementation of the results of this process into the new, revised IMP-BL which was delivered by the Stoltenberg Cabinet to the Parliament in April 2011. This document analysis will mainly focus on the above mentioned revised Management Plan (Norway 2011), the report on the knowledge base for the Management Plan, called the Forum Report (von Quillfeldt 2010), the previous Management Plan (Norway 2006), and a selection of written submissions to the hearing process, as well as presentations and debates they spurred at a hearing conference arranged in Svolvær, Lofoten, in June 2010. This presentation will lay the foundation for evaluations and comments from local actors, presented through ‘scenes’, and the analysis in this chapter and in chapter 5. In particular, I will focus on how informants related to the question of knowledge – how its inclusion and exclusion shape the political debate - and what many referred to as ‘the political game’ in which Lofoten often was perceived as having been taken ‘hostage’ by national pressure groups and political parties. I believe that describing both local debates and understandings and the presumably objective gathering of knowledge instigated by the government will lay the foundation for a better understanding of why the matter of petroleum development in the area is so disputed. I will therefore, by referring to the theoretical discussions on risk, threats and security mentioned in chapter 3, question the assumption which lies behind the emphasis put into the IMP-BL that more scientific knowledge reduces local uncertainty and enables society at large to manage risk more efficiently (Knol 2010b: 74), and thus to *protect* local communities. But as we shall see, not even the question of *what is to be protected* is agreed upon by all actors involved.

4.4.1 Creating a new IMP-BL

In this section, I will be focussing on the Forum Report of 2010 (Norway 2010), as it constitutes the main scientific base upon which the evaluated, new Management Plan presented to the Norwegian Parliament (the Storting) in April 2011 was built (Norway 2011). Also, as my fieldwork in Lofoten was mainly conducted during the period just prior to and immediately after its release (on and off from March 2009 to October 2010), it provides a background for much of the discussions and interviews upon which my work primarily rests, and an important backdrop for the analysis of local reflections presented in the next chapter.

In a press conference on April 15th 2010⁸³, the Assistant Director of the Norwegian Polar Institute⁸⁴, Mr. Bjørn Fossli Johansen, presented the Forum Report and provided a summary of the research that had been conducted for the purpose of filling some of the so-called knowledge gaps⁸⁵ identified in the previous management plan for the area (Government 2006). The submission of the report to the government was an important event in the process towards a political decision on the matter of petroleum excavation in the LoVeSe area, but did in no way put matters at ease. The cumulative effort of gathering existing science considered relevant for the report and the publicly announced consensus among scientists about the content did not calm the debate. On the contrary – as was to be anticipated, it continued with increased intensity as actors on both sides of the debate found arguments for their cause in the report. In addition, questions were raised from the scientific community, from pressure groups and lay persons, about the methods used and how the selection of knowledge considered relevant for the political decision was made.

At the press conference, Mr. Fossli Johansen initially stressed that the report could not – in his view – provide anyone with the definitive answer to how the resources of the area should be managed, and that the report yielded information about a range of

⁸³ Accessible as Webcast from http://media01.smartcom.no/Microsite/dss_01.aspx?eventid=5137. Accessed October 4th, 2011

⁸⁴ Mr Fossli Johansen was also the Scientific Head of the Scientific Forum for an Integrated Management Plan for the Marine Environment of the Barents Sea and the Sea Areas off the Lofoten Islands

⁸⁵ See Knol (2010b) on how uncertainties become objective tasks for science through the establishment of the notion of 'knowledge gaps'.

human activities that had an impact on the ecosystems of the sea areas. He also concluded that in light of the previous management plan and its recommendation to label parts of the management area as particularly vulnerable and thus in need of protection, no essential new information had surfaced which had convinced the reporters to withdraw this recommendation. In other words: Unless new political goals (concerning the willingness to protect the environment) were to be implemented, there were no indications in the reported data material that suggested otherwise than to continue to protect the parts of the area that were particularly vulnerable (among which were the disputed sea areas outside LoVeSe).

Most of the more than 300 pages in the report are concerned with the state-of-being for individual plant -, fish- and mammal stocks and the interdependencies of the ecosystems within which they all belong. Included in the monitoring of the state of all living things in the sea are the most important influences on their living environment - foremost of which are different kinds of human activities. As part of the Arctic environment, the Barents Sea is identified – both in this report and elsewhere (AMAP 2002; Corell, Prestrud et al. 2005; AMAP 2009) – as an ‘early warning area’ concerning the effects of climate change, long-range pollution and accumulation of persistent toxic pollutants in ecosystem food chains where humans reign on top. In this regard, the report can be seen first and foremost as being a politically motivated state-of-science-on-the-environment assessment, and not meant to be backing specific arguments in the political debate concerning petroleum.

This is consistent with how the report was presented by the head of the Scientific Forum, Mr. Fossli Johansen, at the press conference before mentioned. He allocated most of his time on a description of the condition of the natural habitats of the management area, focussing explicitly on the knowledge production that had been initiated by the previous evaluation of the management plan of 2006. In particular, the findings from the two major scientific assessment programmes initiated, the SEAPOP and the MAREANO programmes, were thoroughly presented.⁸⁶ Most importantly for our purpose here, though, is the ramifications these assessments have for the evaluation of particular valuable and vulnerable areas closed for petroleum activity in

⁸⁶ See <http://www.seapop.no/no/about/> and http://www.mareano.no/om_mareano for a presentation of the main findings of these programmes.

the previous management plan of 2006 outside the LoVeSe area. As we shall see, the conditions under which these assessments are made are the result of both political, economic and environmental interests, which are not necessarily easier to meet by simply adding more knowledge (Knol 2010b: 62). In addition, the way risk assessments are being conducted, based on a positivist ‘hegemonic ideology’ reinforcing state and expert power in Norwegian natural resource management (ibid: 64) is indicative of the sort of inclusion and exclusion criteria under which the Forum Report has been produced. As such, the report should only be regarded as *part of* the needed basis for a political decision, as it *does not* include important elements concerning how people are enabled (or ‘*un-abled*’) to live their lives locally as a result of national political decisions.

The build-up to the release of the report had been massive, and to a large degree based on the expectations of the proponents and opponents of petroleum production in the Lofoten area. Even though it had been stressed for months before that the report would not come up with a definitive answer to the question and that advocates for the many other concerns – environmental, industrial, developmental and so on – had tried to make their cases heard, it was the matter of petroleum which overshadowed most other concerns. A question of interest to us here, then, is what the report in fact does say about petroleum in the area.

4.4.2 Petroleum in the Report from the Scientific Forum (The Forum Report)⁸⁷

Petroleum production is in the Forum Report seen as just one of several human activities impacting the state of the ecosystems in the IMP-BR area. In Chapter 3.1 of the report, the interest from the petroleum industry for access to areas in the management area is described as profound (von Quillfeldt 2010: 36). Initially, the chapter focuses on the assessment of undiscovered petroleum resources in the area, which are thought to amount to about 30 per cent of the remaining resources yet to be discovered on the Norwegian shelf. The figure in this report is based on information issued by the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate (OD) before their analysis of seismic data acquired in the Lofoten and Vesterålen Sea areas in 2007 – 2009, figures that were issued in a separate OD -report the day after the report from the Scientific

⁸⁷ As this report has only been issued in Norwegian (as of 21st of February, 2011), all quotes, abbreviations and titles (of groups, commissions, forums etc) are based on my translation.

Forum was released. Reference to governmental policies within the petroleum sector indicates that the long-term utilization of the area is necessary, if Norway is to maintain its expected level of production (and thus income for the state) as described in government economic strategy plans (Norway 2009) that is needed. In other words: inscribed as part of the *rationale* for a management plan for the area is the long-term political goal of maintaining a high level of activity on the Norwegian petroleum shelf, an activity level which (as seen by the industry) presupposes access to the undiscovered resources in the area. Therefore, it is important to note that even if the management plan is intended to be a plan for an environmental policy for the sea areas in question, its findings will also have possible ramifications for national economy, for geopolitical strategies and for the future of the Norwegian petroleum state. It is intriguing to find that one in this report – on the scientific state-of-things concerning the management of resources and ecosystems – finds it pertinent to present arguments for *why it would be in the interest of us all* to open for petroleum activities in the area (ibid: 37),- arguments which has little to do with how to secure an ecosystem based management of the area.

Still, it is the assessment of risks involved which are given the main focus also when discussing petroleum activities in the area. Details about allowed minimum for produced water, emulsion mud, drilling fluids and so on during ‘normal activities’ (defined as “everything except occurrences of unintended emissions” (ibid)) are listed, as well as requirements for oil spill preparedness in case of unintended occurrences. The report then lists existing production activity in the South Barents Sea, with a primary focus on the productivity and potential production outcome of the wells drilled as well as a brief description of search drillings and relief wells, before describing the gathering of seismic data by the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate (OD) in 2007 – 2009. The debates that surfaced in connection with the seismic shooting in the prospective areas Nordland VII and Troms II will be presented below, here it suffices to note that the Report states that “the seismic data material is considered to be sufficient for the necessary scientific evaluation of possibilities for

petroleum to be made, which in turn will strengthen the basis for a new updated management plan” (ibid: 40).⁸⁸

I will later present stories that exemplify how people locally problematize the very notion of what knowledge should be acknowledged and who is being put in the position to produce the knowledge and decide what knowledge is relevant. In the next section, though, I will reflect more broadly on the way in which a particular knowledge regime has taken hold in the process of producing a new management plan for the Lofoten and Barents seas.

4.5 Producing knowledge

“(In the integrated management plan)... there has hardly been any focus on knowledge needs related to social and socio-economic issues. As a result, a broader discussion on the social acceptance of petroleum activity or the different risk perceptions among the public is largely absent” (Knol 2010b: 71)

With the implementation of a new, revised Management Plan for the Barents and Lofoten seas (IMP-BL) then, a specific process in which a particular synthesis between power and knowledge - a specific *governmentality* - is re-established. And as the above quote indicates, many commentators, researcher, political actors and local protagonists are heard voicing concerns over what seems to be a lack of questioning the social acceptance of the basis for political decisions and thus ultimately the matter of what makes people locally feel ontologically secure. Central to this concern is the question of whether the IMP-PL can be seen to have any relevance at all for lives

⁸⁸ As a curiosity, it can be mentioned that the seismic data was presented in a separate report – produced by the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate (OD) – and was not a part of the report produced by the scientific community, to whom the assessment task was assigned. As such, the report on the seismic data and analysis could be seen as an additional piece of information that, it seems, lies beyond the original knowledge-needs for an ecosystem-based approach to management in the region. Many argue that the need for knowledge about *how to manage the ecosystems* of the region should not – in principle – include assessments of amounts of hydrocarbons beneath the ocean floor. It is therefore interesting to note that out of the approximately NOK 500 million spent on ‘increasing the knowledge base’ for a new management plan, NOK 400 million was spent on the gathering of seismic data, i.e. data that *does not* add knowledge about the possible *consequences of human activities* to the marine ecosystems – only the potential for finding hydrocarbons – and instead potentially stirs resentment to and produce questions concerning the aim of the ecosystem-based management plan. For what might it cost us to protect an area? If the potential for income from petroleum production is high – might not the goal of protecting the vulnerable areas be put under pressure?

lived along the coast, as most of it is concerned with the management of the ecosystem as if its only link to socio-economic and cultural activities are the kind of impact these human activities can be seen to have on ecosystems. What is lacking, many argue, is the focus upon people and communities, enabling a broader conceptualization of the interaction between humans and their environment – where the interdependency of nature and humans are at the forefront.

Following Foucault (2007), Dean (2010), Marlow (2002), Jasanoff (1990; 1998) and others, I argue that the IMP-BL is a *technology of security*, as it is designed as a tool of governance based on a specific governmentality, that of the coupling of (objectifiable) science and a (neo)liberalist rationality. With this tool – or technology - resources are mapped and presented, risks analysed and future possibilities objectified and made coherent with a linear understanding of progress and development. The *frontier landscape* of the north – clean, unsoiled, wild and primitive – is presented with all its opportunities for development and exploitation, but also as a place in which human activities are accepted as being potentially problematic in terms of ecosystem maintenance. Questions about whether or not to open for petroleum activities are thus answered by following the criteria developed within the ruling power/knowledge nexus of management of resources, as described in the foreword of the most recent edition (as of May 2011 a White Paper to the Norwegian parliament, awaiting parliamentary processing):

“The purpose of this management plan is to arrange for wealth creation through a sustainable usage of resources and goods in the Barents Sea and the sea areas outside Lofoten, while simultaneously upholding the structure, function, productivity and diversity of the ecosystems. The management plan is thus a tool both for preparing for wealth creation and for maintaining the environmental values of the sea.” (Norway 2011: 6)

In her book “The Fifth Branch”, published in 1990, the American professor of science and technology studies, Dr. Sheila Jasanoff presents what she sees as the two reigning ideologically based perceptions of the relationship between science and politics; the ‘technocratic’ approach, arguing for seeing scientists as objective validators of politics, and the ‘democratic’ approach, which holds that processes of inclusion of public debate and participation ensures that a politics based on scientific authority

never turns into a meritocracy; in other words believed to be "...the antidote to abuses of expert authority (Jasanoff 1990: vii). I will argue that the process of establishing a management plan – under the umbrella of the larger High North-political agenda – is in fact a combination of these two approaches, the ‘technocratic’ and the ‘democratic’ in Jasanoffs terms, but without the understanding of the deeply rooted connection that exists between science and regulation and management in the very *objectification of research*, a matter which, in its exclusivity, reflects a paradoxical anti-democratic virtue of the power/knowledge nexus here described. In the words of Jasanoff,

“we regard a particular factual claim as true not because it accurately reflects what is out there in nature, but because it has been certified as true by those who are considered competent to pass upon the truth and falsify on that kind of claim. (ibid: 13)

It is not my intention to go further with the matter of scientific integrity, as I have not the required technical, scientific expertise needed to objectively test the results of the research that have been done as part of the process of establishing a knowledge base for the revised IMP-BL. I am, in fact, just as excluded from being a qualified critique of the objectified knowledge itself, as it is presented, as any layperson. This leads to an important point for the presentation I am about to perform; on the matter of scientific authority. Jasanoff writes:

“When an area of intellectual activity is tagged with the label “science”, people who are not scientists are *de facto* barred from having a say about its substance; correspondingly, to label something “not science” is to denude it of cognitive authority” (ibid: 14)

So how was this ‘exclusivity’ of scientific knowledge produced in the case in question? Did it in effect exclude a lot of actors from insight into the highly technical and scientifically based concerns which debates like this often emanate from? If so, did it in effect it leave politicians, managers, laypersons and the likes with no other choice but to *trust in science*? Following Douglas (Douglas and Wildavsky 1982), Jasanoff (Jasanoff 1990), Foucault (Foucault and Gordon 1980), Latour (Latour 1987), Dean (Dean 2010) and others, I assert that producing science is no objective task. In the following, I wish to empirically show in a scene from my fieldwork how ‘knowledge’ was produced. It is connected to the hearing process to the management

plan, where a basis report on the selected scientific material that was to be a basis for a renewed management plan for the Lofoten and Barents seas was the main topic for discussion.

Scene: Governmentality ‘LIVE’: The hearing conference in Svolvær

In June 2010, about 250 delegates participated in a one-and-half day hearing conference in Svolvær, Lofoten, where the revision of the Integrated Management Plan for the Barents and Lofoten seas (IMP-BL) was on the agenda. The background for the conference was the publication of a scientific report two months earlier consisting of the main findings of a Forum of scientists. The aim of this forum was to report back to policy makers on what state the ecosystems of the area in question are, and to give advice on how to manage these areas in the years ahead. The following description is an example of how, in practice, knowledge production is politicized through a process in which practices of inclusion and exclusion of knowledge are governed. The conference as such is but one in a series of events in which these inclusion and exclusion practices are performed, with the aim of producing practically relevant knowledge – to be used as a basis for policy decisions.

Minister for the Environment, Mr. Erik Solheim, opened the conference. His speech – held without a manuscript, in a loose, cordial manner – started off acknowledging what he perceived of as a particular strength of Norwegian management practices, that people with different opinions can join in and discuss the issue at hand, and that *a knowledge-based debate* ensures that we achieve the best possible result. In particular, he was proud that the ecosystem was what was in focus when discussing management, and that every possible influence on its well-being would be taken into account. He was happy, he said, to see that the fish stocks are in good condition, but alarmed at the state of the seabird populations. He also proclaimed that the report showed clearly which areas was in need of special care and protection. In his speech, no reference to the possible ramifications of human activities described in the management plan background material on people – on individuals and communities and their *ontological security* – was given.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ Minister for Environmental issues, Erik Solheim, Svolvær, June 2010

The Minister for Fisheries, Mrs. Lisbet Berg Hansen, followed suit, proclaiming that her responsibility was to 'life at sea' and to the Norwegian population as a whole, as it is still depending on the resources we claim from the ocean. "The Lofoten area is our common food resource, our golden reserve, but other gold has also been found." Therefore, she continued, there is a need for a mapping of resources, for an evaluation of the responsibility and needs of the state in terms of utilization of these resources, for the benefit of all. And with the introduction of the notion of the state as the main deliverer of benefits for all, she continued: "There are scientific discrepancies in the material, and disagreement prevails. Risk assessments and research can only take us to a certain point – it is we, collectively, as a society, who will have to evaluate what risks we are willing to take. And remember: Not everything can be marked with a price tag!" The importance of the ocean, the minister continued, is beyond financial calculation. There's an ecosystem value involved, so too is the overall importance it has as a source of well being and health. Knowledge about biological processes at sea are valuable, are we to manage them properly, - and to be able to secure our foodstuffs adequately. Still, she emphasized the position held by Norwegian seafood in the international market, declaring that the 2.6 million tonnes of food – "35 million meals per day, all year round!" – was too important to gamble with. Therefore, we needed to focus, she said, on "coexistence within the limits of natural viability".⁹⁰

The final representative of the national cabinet, Minister for petroleum, Mr. Terje Riis Johansen, summed up the governmental framing of the debate that was to follow. He extended his gratitude to the researchers and bureaucrats for their "collection and systematizing" of knowledge, as basis for the work ahead. For petroleum, the work done mirrored the important aspect, said the Minister, that under normal circumstances, the effect on oceanic ecosystems from petroleum production is perceived as a low risk activity. This is not because low risk is a condition *a priori*, so to speak, but something that is created through strict conditions and regulations and a continuous demand for better solutions. Riis Johansen upheld the seismic shooting activities of 2009 as an example of how improvements in governmental framing of activities due to voiced concerns and disagreements makes for an improved knowledge base for future management, as the research following the seismic

⁹⁰ Minister for Fisheries and Coastal Affairs, Lisbet Berg-Hansen, Svolvær, June 2010

shooting had provided us with new knowledge which would influence the final decisions in the management plan. He continued: “The management of resources in Norwegian waters are based on co-existence, and there should therefore be a place also for petroleum – *where we want it* (my italics). This is not particularly fashionable to state, but necessary”. The bigger picture is needed, the Minister said, as the petroleum potential for the region as a whole is too substantial to be dismissed without due consideration. The other aspect of petroleum production mentioned by the Minister is the seemingly undeterminable, but nonetheless very real damage potential it represents once an accident actually occurs. “The Deep Sea Horizon – accident is a stark reminder of this”, he stated, and proclaimed that the accident in the Gulf of Mexico would surely have an impact on the decision concerning the vulnerable areas of defined in the coming revision of the Management plan for the Barents and Lofoten Seas. In particular, the Minister added, there will be an additional emphasis put on the potential for “unwanted events” and possible damages they can have on particularly vulnerable areas.⁹¹

Summarized then, I suggest that the very presence of no less than three Cabinet members – the ministers in charge of environment, fisheries and petroleum - in itself accentuated a framing of the debate within a specific power/ knowledge nexus. In particular, all three ministers explicitly associated themselves with a political regime of practices that sets parameters on *what knowledge is to be taken seriously*. Typically arguing within the rationale of a neoliberalist governmentality (Marlow 2002; Elden 2007; Hamann 2009; Dean 2010), the ministers all upheld the production of scientific knowledge and a connection to the logics of the market (Foucault 2007) as imperative for the decision which was to be made on matters of management of resources in the integrated management plan (including a decision on whether to continue to define the sea areas outside Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja as in need of special protection for also the next management plan period). When Minister Solheim referred to a *knowledge-based debate*, the knowledge he spoke of was heavily based on a trust in science’s ability to *map, assess, evaluate – and conclude with a high level of certainty*. Thus, he emphasized trust as an important inclusion/ exclusion criteria (Foucault 2007; Dean 2010) and as the preferable basis for the debate to follow. Minister Berg

⁹¹ Minister for Petroleum and Energy, Terje Riis Johansen, Svolvær, June 2010.

Hansen, in charge of fishery politics and coastal matters in the cabinet, spoke of the importance of the foodstuff we harvest from the sea, its position in the international market place, and that the scientific knowledge we can obtain about biological life was valuable if we are to manage our wealth at sea in the best possible way. She emphasized the role of the state as provider of welfare and security, and its need for adequate mapping, surveillance and scientific assessments in order to enable policy makers to make the best possible decisions. According to the Minister, it is up to the state to ensure the viability of life at sea, but also the continued viability of local communities, through national policies that arrange for continue growth and commercial success within parameters set by an active resource management scheme – also pertaining the Norwegian petroleum sector. It's the advancement of a *politics of truth* resting on establishing the necessary framework within which actors *manage themselves* that Hansen here adhered to. And finally, the Minister in charge of petroleum politics, Mr. Riis Johansen made explicit the relation between threats and possibilities typical for a technology of management of contingency based on a scientific calculation of risk. He argued that the Norwegian experience concerning risk management has been a success, but did remind the audience that things had changed after the Deepwater Horizon-accident. Extreme events will potentially influence national policies concerning allocation of petroleum fields, he said, but also said that the realization that extreme events may have extreme effects will have to have a greater influence on how we define risk levels.

With the three ministers' opening speeches, then, the main themes for a techno-scientific focus on the needs and concerns that should be taken into account when discussing the management plan was established. Firstly, there was a clarification of the importance of knowledge – understood as a process of establishing 'facts' which should be acknowledged by all; secondly, the importance of the principles of the market is brought up; and thirdly, the considerations surrounding how to manage the chronically contingent future *through the establishment and use of techno-scientifically based risk assessments* were introduced. Let's look at this last point first.

It will, in light of the analytical framework here sought implemented, be constructive to call these risk assessments governmental technologies (or techniques, strategies), and analyse them not as if they represent definitive answers to a particular threat, but rather how they inform and strengthen a specific way of doing politics - a

governmentality. Shelia Jasanoff calls this “a socially acceptable risk management strategy” (Jasanoff 1986: page v), and describes the balancing between the potential benefits and dangers built into most political decision making as “ (...) controversial because technological risks and benefits are often intangible, and there is no agreement on the way they should be valued. (...) In the effort to manage risks, public authorities are thus drawn into mediating not only among competing economic and political interests, but also among conflicting technical interpretations informed by widely divergent views about pollution and nature, illness and death.” (Op.cit) It is important to bear in mind that this political technology is first and foremost based on an expressed need for answers on how to avoid what Jasanoff calls “technological risks”:

“We expect our scientists to make increasingly sophisticated measurements of risk and our government officials to translate this information into immediate and effective policy prescriptions” (ibid: 1)

Often, achieving consensus concerning the identification of a particular risk is not the problem; rather, it's the *weighting of the possible ramifications of the risk involved against the potential gains if one accepts it* that causes political tensions. The idea of basing technological risk assessment on science is a result of a desire to master the contingent, a wish to be as certain as possible that the risks we are taking are within some sort of measured framework that can sustain questions concerning accountability. But there are several problems with this notion of science as a provider of a ‘truthful’ basis for risk assessment; one is that science cannot accurately predict the future (but that it tries to render the contingent future more predictable, as does any knowledge system), the other that science is not created by some objective entity scribbling on a *tabula rasa* but created within a culturally and sociologically defined knowledge system. In short, scientists are human beings, brought up, trained and thriving within a knowledge system (both ontologically and epistemologically speaking) that influences their work and their findings (Douglas and Wildavsky 1982; Jasanoff 1986; Giddens 1990). Further, the perception of what risk assessments should ‘do’ for politics are often misleading, as the perception is that with good risk assessments one has efficiently reduced to possibility for something happening, or to be more precise: Political (and often public) perceptions of risk often tend to create a correlation between *the possibility for something happening as infinitely small* and it

will never happen. For this, science itself cannot of course be blamed, as any serious scientist dealing with risk assessments will describe its methodological shortcomings and thus its usefulness. However, as Jasanoff explains, “Faith in science independence from social influences has gradually eroded” (1986: 3). Scientists are people – with ideologies, family ties and fields of interests; they are members of a community and trusted by their employees (who more often than not – in this case, at least - are private companies or independent research institutes). Scientists therefore often bridge this (imaginary) gap between science and society; indeed, both regulators and the public require their active participation as actors in the decision process. People want to be informed about where science stands on this and that matter of concern, and policy makers rely on expert advice.

What this all adds up to, is a realization that risk assessments are not written in stone, that their methodological *raison d’etre* is based on the assumption that there is a correlation between the logics of rational science and the needs and desires of society at large. However, as Minster Riis Johansen pointed out, extreme events may have extreme consequences, and a risk assessment that assess the need for a precautionary approach to the risk in question as small, because of a low probability of it occurring, might lose political significance. Thus, politics and societal responses to events and risk assessments may change the parameters of risk models. In other words: societal responses to dangerous events and the subsequent valuation of risk assessments might lead to a change in the weighting of variables in risk models. Riis Johansen states it explicitly – the need for us all to take stronger into consideration the possibility of extreme events like the Deepwater Horizon happening means that even though the risk assessments have not been proven ‘wrong’, they will as policy makers need to implement a more precautionary approach to these possible extreme events, due to public response. The evaluation of risk changes as the consequences of even the least probable of events becomes apparent.

The question of local knowledge and how – if at all – it is considered relevant in the debate on oil and gas development in the north was actualized during the 2007-2009 seismic shooting controversy in the marine areas outside of the Lofoten and Vesterålen regions of North-Norway, a case-in-point which will be presented and analysed in chapter 5, with a particular focus on how a local actor, namely the Coastal Fishers Union (CFU) handled the issue. Before we get there, though, it is time for a

change of scenery as we move more and more into an analysis of local responses – and reflections – on the issues that have been presented. And we will begin with an interlude, meant to refocus the reader’s attention, away from the political games of national politics to the everyday lives of some of those who generously shared with me of their time and ideas about where they lived and how they thought it should develop in the future. Again, notions of *ontological security* will be at center stage, as well as more concrete concerns about environmental, financial and societal security. Some of these concerns will be presented directly by the informants, while yet others will be presented by me, as I analyse and interpret my fieldwork experiences. But first then, an interlude in which the story of one person is meant to illustrate more general development trends in the Lofoten region.

Interlude: Fish, oil and Politics

The following scene is based on conversations I had during my fieldwork stay at Ramberg, Lofoten in 2009 with one of the most visual of protagonists acting on behalf of the small-scale, coastal fisheries, Mr Steinar Friis. Our talks took place around the coffee table at the Coastal Fishermen's Union (see chapter 5), his fishing shack at the quay, or in his home. Steinar's interest in politics and 'societal development' both directly and implicitly, of course included matters of concern for fishers; we would over the three months I stayed in Ramberg cover many topics ranging from the detailed matters of ITQs (Individual transferable Quotas) to the global developments driven by free-trade and neoliberal notions of development and how to secure the right to other ways of living. As we shall see, Steinar is no stranger to the political game, and should therefore be seen as an actor who moves in the realm of center-periphery politics, that fifth dimension to national politics – added to the military, judicial, economic and cultural systems – that Stein Rokkan named *the centre-periphery axis* (Rokkan 1987); "... (where) center and periphery constitute a bounded hierarchical network." (Buck 2006: 36) More often than not, studies of this relationship tend to start from the favourite entity for most political scientists – the (nation) state. Here I wish to show how the reflections around the center-periphery relationship that Steinar and I had during our conversations are entry points for understanding better how Rokkans notions of *distance, difference and dependency* as emblematic for the periphery (ibid: 40) are reflected upon *in the periphery*, in small communities, and how *meso-level* political actors like Steinar often stands in a paradoxical relationship to the centre. This is a scene that shows how a local actor perceive of the relation between center and periphery, between local concerns and national challenges and between *different types of knowledge*. As such, it here serves as a transition from the main concerns of chapter 4, which focussed on governmental strategies, its practices and ontological framework and the responses to it from the local level, to the refocused, locally based analysis in chapter 5. In this way, I aim at providing space for reflections on local identity and the contingent future of the region that the petroleum debate spurred in conversations with informants during the time of my fieldwork.

We will in other scenes find that other local political actors also relayed a similar ambivalence to the salient determinism of the centre-periphery thesis, arguing for the

need for local and regional empowerment in order to ‘balance out’ the relative strength of the nation state. In this way, then, the ‘outside’ forces (that is, outside of ‘the locality’ Lofoten – or the broader Northern Norwegian province, respectively) of state interventionism and petroleum and environmentalist lobbyism should not be regarded as political forces upon which the regional or local level had no influence, both in regard to those processes taking place on the national level or the way in which they influenced everyday lives.

Scene: Steinar’s story

In the summer of 2009, in a small village called Abelvær in the Northern part of Trøndelag, Norway, a local historical association acquired an old, 55-foot fishing boat called “Håheim” for use in sight-seeing and tourist fishing activities. The boat was built in Rognan, Nordland County in the 1960s, and is a traditional ‘cutter’ used in commercial fishing all the way up to 2006, when the owner chose to downscale his activities at sea. The boat and the fishing quota that followed it was first bought by a ship owning company in Vesterålen, wishing to increase the size of the total quota for one of their efficient, modern commercial fishing vessels. Thus, and in accordance with the strict regulations of Norwegian Fisheries management, “Håheim” was to be demolished, as its worth was close to nothing without a commercial quota attached to it. As commercial fishing from the vessel would be illegal, and the cost of maintenance of the beautiful wooden hull too large for most private recreational use, the Abelvær Historical Association could acquire the boat for only a minor sum; thus securing a boat for the future which represents a particular style in naval engineering now almost abandoned in the commercial coastal fishing fleet.

Three years after the association purchased the boat, I was sitting in the living room of Steinar Friis, a fisher in his sixties and the former owner of “Håheim”. His house, the first as one enters the fishing village of Ramberg, Lofoten from the east, stands on top of a small hill, overlooking the ocean in three of four directions. We had been chatting for about an hour when he started talking about his old boat. “We could be up to six men on that boat”, he said, “and it was a good place to work. We all trusted her with our lives out there”. Steinar was sad to see it go, he said, but the choice was made; he wanted to ‘cash in’ and downscale, securing his future retirement and enabling him to have calmer days at sea with less pressure.

Steinar's story here presented can serve as an introduction to the developments in small-scale fisheries of Norway the last 35 years. Even though his father deeply resented the interest Steinar as a young boy took in his grandfather's occupation, he managed to buy his own boat at 22. Steinar said: "I used to sneak out of the house when I was a kid, to go to my grandfathers shack by the ocean. There I watched and listened with awe as the grown fishermen straightened their gear and gossiped about this and that. There was also a lot of rough talk – this was a very macho environment - and the thrill and excitement of the ocean life seemed irresistible at the time. My grandfather helped me a lot – against the will of my parents – and I started early to row my own small boat out for small catches."

To many in Lofoten (and beyond) with knowledge of fishery politics, Steinar Friis is somewhat of a living legend - for others, a political nemesis. He is a fine story teller, enjoys the company of anyone willing to sit down around a coffee table, and is involved in a number of institutions and organizations – both semi-state run and pure civil society, takes on committee-work and is chosen to be part of investigative bodies, such as the Regional Developmental Panel (Landsdelsutvalget). Also, he has for many years been active in local and regional politics, mostly as a representative for the Centre Party (Sp). As a politician, Steinar had established an identity that had as its basis a fundamental opposition to the centralization trends, the efficiency improvement of commercial industrialization of society in general – and the fisheries especially – and a free-spirited, frontier attitude: Living here should not necessarily be easy, it should harden you, you need to be tough, but it is a good life, an you make the money you need, as long as the state does not interfere too much. During our conversations, Steinar appeared to under-communicate his life as a political figure. But the fact was that he had for a long time been a strong voice in the debates concerning the fisheries in Norway, and in 1991, he established – together with close fishing colleagues in West-Lofoten – the Norwegian Coastal Fishermen's Union, in opposition to the well-established Norwegian Fisher's Association (see chapter 5). It soon became a radical force in the debate, with Steinar as their first leader. "I'm just a simple fisherman", he would say to me, "lucky enough to have had parents who kept debates running over the kitchen table. That's what taught me to talk to prime

ministers and researcher, like yourself.”⁹² His adversaries will arguably regard him as somewhat of a demagogue, as the fisheries in Norway is a matter of continuous political controversy. The state-run rationalization of the coastal fleet, the quota system – all of it had been fiercely protested against by the Coastal Fishers Union – and Steinar Friis had been among the strongest opponents to these changes. His radical political stance on these matters remained unchanged over the years, and he never hesitated in stating it publicly.

During our discussions, Steinar would often refer to the problem of the state as an intervener without the necessary understanding of the lives lived in his region, and the needs of the common men up here, in the north. Still, he could be heard calling for an active state, especially in times of crisis for the fisheries. The following quote is a speech given by Steinar at a public meeting with the Minister of fisheries present in which he describes the initializing processes of downscaling of the coastal fisheries in Norway in the 1990s. It is presented here as a testament to the political vigour and intense passion with which Steinar Friis struggled for the coastal fisheries at the time, - a passion which he had preserved when I met him as well, in 2009:

“Today is January 17th, 1990. The coastal fleet has been sat ashore and the fish-plants are at a standstill. The fishers and their families are in serious economic difficulties. They fear what the winter, the spring, the fall, next year, the next five years ahead will bring. They fear the message from the bank, the sound of the auction hammer. But mostly they fear the government who under the cover of democracy destroy the life work of thousands, turning the coastal people of this country into refugees on their own land.

Honourable Minister! This is how reality plays out for us, for the people of the coast, in the year 1990. A reality caused by decades of reckless resource management. A reality caused by unintended speculative investments in large vessels and gigantic fish-plants on shore. A reality caused by the ideas of modern economics of short-term profits insensitive to the fact that our future lies in nature. A gigantic crime is about to be committed. An act of insanity blessed by central government and trusted politicians. Politicians from the district, chosen in trust.

⁹² Conversation, Steinar Friis, March 2009

We no longer accept that cold, arrogant analysts, seemingly bursting with self-confidence but without relevant knowledge of the consequences of what they are up to, are given the opportunity to destroy basic values and fundamental truths. We no longer accept all the talk about alternative traits, about salvage packages, financial redistribution, tax reductions, interest rate bargains, relocation offerings and all the sympathy in the world. Sympathy in the form of propaganda and quasi-solutions. Bullshit, in plain Norwegian.

We will never, ever accept this assault, this crime, which makes our youth run away because of the misery, that the people are taught to be desolate and miserable, without purpose and meaning in life, and that human tragedy unfolds on a daily basis and that the ghost of depopulation thus infects us all.

We are used to rough seas, to stand on our own feet, we are used to mortgage and bad weather. We can handle this, like all others. We believe in the recourses, the sun, night and day, the four seasons and the fishery seasons. We believe in the future, in the possibilities to survive where we are, where we have always been, and still will be. We do not want gold and abundance; we demand only to be given acceptable living conditions. A possibility to survive where there are possibilities. In nature, in the periphery, close to the resources. We want to be able to shape our own future, we have the knowledge, we have the experience, the faith, courage and the will. We have what it takes to survive along the coast, for generations to come. We ask for permission to use what we already have. We ask that the population along the coast may harvest from the sea, freely, but with responsibilities, under control. We ask all those who believe, all regular folks, fishers, scientists, professors, to tell the authorities the truth that the only sound economic thing to do is to commit to a modern, varied costal fleet when we in the future still wish to make use of the resources of the sea – a fleet which harvests sensitively, exploiting the transporting system of the fish itself, thus maintaining both the cod in the sea and the people onshore. This is our historical heritage, one that proves the fact that a coastal fisher has never represented a danger to the resources he exploits. We ask that the small man in the boat must be relieved of being held responsible for the insanity of international overfishing which has been going on for a long time in the Barents sea. We ask, that the thousands of coastal fishers who have lost their right to catch cod be given that right back immediately.

We, the people of the coast, will never yield in our fight for what is our right. We will manage – no matter what.”

Steinar Friis, in (Gjerstad 2002, my translation)

In this speech – and reflected almost twenty years later, in our conversations on the matter – there’s an obvious reference to what Giddens would call an *ontological security realm*, that is, a sphere in which the situation of 1990 and 2009, respectively, can be understood. The worldview presented is based on a rationality that to a certain extent is contradictory to the general societal development trends. In the speech, Friis makes use of several metaphors which should be seen in light of a political strategy where the specific identity of ‘*coastal communities*’ is (re)constructed. This particular identity does not refer to all people living along the coast line of Norway (which, in fact, would include far too many to be of relevance as a *constructed oppositional identity*), but specifically to those living off the sea, - or at least to those living *in communities* where living off the sea is an important identity marker. Still, Friis makes so many references to the archetypical North-Norwegian coastal inhabitant that it seems reasonable to say that he here invokes a particular *North-Norwegian* coastal identity as rallying point for a political stand on a particular issue. State affairs, resource management, community safety and the question of identity are deeply intertwined. It’s a dramatic tale Friis here presents – one of hardship and suffering, but also of matters of power and freedom, independence (from the rule of man) and dependence (on nature). In this sense, Friis stands in a long line of protagonists from Northern Norway who have stood up to centralized (national) state power. It fits well within the tale of North-Norway as a colonized region (Brox 1984), a tale in which crisis has replaced crisis, where depopulation, poverty and backwardness has been sought solved through use of state mechanisms and modernization initiatives. And all along, voices from (and for) the north has proclaimed the failure of these initiatives due to a lack of understanding of the ‘true nature of the northerner’ (Jaklin 2006: 457-460) or the apparent lack of a ‘cultural modernization process’, leading to state clientilism (Eriksen 1996: 36). The point here is to note that this apparent inevitability of the backwardness of the northern province (and as a consequence, the northerner stuck in his old ways, or as one of my informants put it: “stuck with the cultural

debris of days gone by”⁹³) indeed in itself is an important identity marker, regardless of whether or not one agrees with the idea that this is *per definition* backwardness as such. On the contrary – many of my informants insists on naming it *an alternative* understanding of development and what the future should look like.

With Steinars story and the reflection that followed, the themes that are to be the basis for the next chapter of this thesis has been presented. Questioning how people I have met during my fieldwork have presented their understandings of threats and risks – be it because of possible petroleum development or because petroleum development *is not* made possible – it is from here on my intention to show how these themes triggers reflections about what it means to be secure(d) locally.

⁹³ Informant 34, September 2011

5 Security ‘from below’: Local understandings of Threats, risks and security matters

People in Lofoten are used to the concept of risk. A whole seasonal fishery may very well fail, but then there’s also that prospect of almost unbelievable catches during the *skrei* fisheries in January through March, a spectacle which has attracted fishers to the Vestfjord every winter for centuries. The North Atlantic cod, called *skrei* when spawning, arrives annually from the Barents Sea to this area, where it once was hatched. Millions and millions of *skrei* spawns billions and billions of eggs; one fish can lay from 3 to 9 million eggs, and if two eggs from a female live to spawn, the stock is kept viable (Kurlandsky 1997).

Historical and archaeological findings strongly suggests that this abundant access to large resources for a short period annually has laid the foundation for a flourishing international fisheries trade from Lofoten, which in turn has made a significant mark on economy, local settlement, urban development - and Norwegian international relations since at least the 12th Century (Bertelsen and Urbanczyk 1988; Bertelsen 1990). The indications of a specific regulation of taxes for the stockfish trade found in an amendment to the historical Frostating Law (written in 1103-1107) supports the notion that “... the stockfish trade probably started in the 11th but grew into a major enterprise during the 12th century” (ibid: 102). As the demise of the Iron Age in the 12th and 13th centuries meant a rise in political and economic power for the urban trading elites at the expense of a rural aristocracy in decline, the city of Bergen for hundreds of years held a firm grip on the stockfish trade (ibid: 105), as the established trade centers (with elites of some merit) transformed into fishing villages of only minor political influence. Here, the German Hanseatic trade organization came to rule mercantilist trading and provided Norwegian fish to the markets in England, Germany, France – but most importantly in Portugal, Spain and Italy (and later, to West Africa, South America and the Caribbean). Some argue that the colonialization of Iceland and Greenland as well as the early discovery of the American continent by the Norwegian Vikings (and later the travels by discoverers from Southern Europe) would have been impossible without the stockfish (Kurlandsky 1997).

For centuries, then, the stockfish and salted fish held a unique position in the European market place, providing a livelihood for many and wealth for a privileged few. As a consequence, the fishers of Lofoten have for generations been a part of an

international market, within which specific ideals of the relation between governance and freedom/ liberal rights have developed. Within social science, where the past is often used as a backdrop for the analysis of the contemporary, history should be questioned and seen not as an objective representation of a past just lying there to be described, but as a activity of the present, embedded in the ideological, economic, social, cultural and political processes of today's world. Thus, traditional, linear descriptions of how the Norwegian offshore resource management regime – which here includes both the management of fish and petroleum – will simply not suffice as the only way of understanding the past. Rather, it should instead be regarded as *a tool of governmentality*, seeking to present in a coherent way, the presumed natural laws of history and free market as being the main rationale behind the changes in management of resources; changes which influences the everyday lives of many, but which also are seen as absolute premises for the ultimate goal for governance; the security of population (Foucault 2007). For some of those we will meet in this chapter, History (capital H demarcating the presumed historically ‘correct’ depictions of development) is often replaced by *stories*, both those told to them by others, and their own – as the stuff upon which identity is constructed and ontological security reaffirmed.

5.1 Identity in Northern Norway

As nearly every individual on Earth is defined as a citizen of a nation state, this national identity can be at least partially incompatible and in conflict with other identities. The identity denominator *nordlending* (roughly translatable to ‘*northerner*’) is connected to the population living in – or with roots in – the three northernmost counties of Norway (Nordland, Troms and Finnmark), and is in my material found to be of importance as a contrasting identity to national identity, as well as a basis for reactions locally to both the way the debate over petroleum in LoVeSe is fought *and* the aims and goals promoted by *both* opponents and proponents. I have found that actors themselves ascribe their position on the matter of petroleum development to knowledge, symbolic lifestyle and ‘cultural traits’ attached to the archetype *Nordlending*. As an identity marker, it demarcates cultural characteristics deemed necessary for inclusion into the category. Now, almost by default, and at least in popular speech and small talk, the main oppositional identity to *nordlending* is *søring* (‘*Southerner*’), a characteristic which in its widest sense incorporates all

Norwegians living south of the North-Norwegian geographical demarcation (thus in effect *all other Norwegians*), but which becomes more and more an accurate description of *those relevant others* the closer you get to Oslo (traditionally), and additionally - in the case of petroleum – Stavanger (which is in many respect the petroleum capital of Norway).

Our main focus in this section will be on the way a difference between *nordlendinga* and *søringa* in Norway has been created, through interpretive storytelling. I will seek to show how tales about the relevant other has provided both *nordlendinga* and *søringa* with a necessary contrasting category in which one has been enabled to define oneself. The descriptions of who ‘we’ are and descriptions presented *by the others of who ‘we’ are* need to be scrutinized with the following in mind; if identity is created in meetings with others, then what the others think of ‘us’ is highly relevant. Therefore, it is of importance here to describe how Northern Norway, its history, population, natural scenery and so on has been described, both in the past and the present by both *nordlendinga* and those relevant others *nordlendingan* stand in a reflexive, oppositional relation to; *søringan*.

A word of clarification is needed concerning the identity of the narrator. Being a *nordlending* refers to being born in – or at least having grown up in – Northern Norway. For newcomers arriving in the north as adults, like myself, identity becomes even more blurry and situational than for those ‘fitting’ the demarcation stereotypes. In particular, my lack of a genuine North-Norwegian accent in fact gives me away as holding a ‘*søring-converted-to-Nordlending*’ identity, meaning that I identify strongly with the North-Norwegian community at large (without it being my only, exclusive identity affiliation, of course). It must be admitted though, that not all will approve to my self-ascribed affiliation to a *nordlending*-identity. It is something you’re born with, most *nordlendinga* themselves would argue. Some see it a stigma and try to get rid of the dialect (once they move south, for instance), others feel a sense of pride which means that they do not take lightly to outsiders trying to ‘become’ a *Nordlending*.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Not that hospitality and cordiality is seen to be lacking in these parts of the country – on the contrary; it is regarded as an important *identity marker* for most *nordlendinga*.

Northern Norway has typically been described as a ‘backward’ area, the region farthest away from the centre of the country, cold and for many down south seemingly uninhabitable, and thus habituated only by a special kind of people; hardy, close-to-nature, easy-going descendants from fishermen and reindeer herders with a somewhat different take on life than the rest of ‘us’. Just as Edward Said shows that the stereotype of *the oriental*, constructed by western intellectuals, politicians and colonial administrators, “... generally acts, speaks and thinks in a manner exactly opposite to the European” (2003 (1978): 39) there’s every reason to describe how the construction of relevant contrasting categories has been important also in Norway. In her doctoral thesis, Kari Myklebost (Myklebost 2010; Myklebost 2010) describes the way in which Norwegian folklorist research in the 19th and early 20th Centuries failed to include the northerners in their accounts of what was to be regarded as the cultural roots of ‘Norwegianness’ (as opposed to the Russian endeavour to locate ‘real’ Russian roots in the north). She elaborates on the notion of *Borealism* (from the Greek *Boreas*, meaning Northern wind), an analogy to Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (Said 2003 (1978)) as a way of understanding the way in which the northerners (originally relating to the Non-Norwegian ethnic groups which lived here, but soon to be imprinted also on the fisher/ farmer population of the region) were seen as ‘relevant others’ to be managed and controlled by a (more) significant cultural other – just as Said describes for the Orient:

“I myself believe that Orientalism is more particularly valuable as a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient than it is a veridic discourse about the Orient” (Said 2003 (1978): 6)

Thus, Myklebost writes in a short presentation of her thesis:

“Like Said’s *Orientalism*, the *Borealist* discourse within 19th Century folklorist research was informed by an asymmetrical power relation between the hegemonic creators of the imagery of the others and the study objects” (Myklebost 2010; my translation from Norwegian)

The creation and re-creation of those *Imagined Communities* (Anderson 2006 (1983)) around which much of our lives are organised – the nation state – has been just as much about creating imagery of what the nation *is not* as it has been about identifying specific cultural trait around which an *ethos* for the nation in question could be built.

This identification of significant similarities and differences could take place both within and outside the geographical borders that the nation was seen as ‘naturally’ connected to. In Norway, the population of the northernmost regions, be they of Saami, Kvæn or Ethnic Norwegian origin was, Myklebost shows, excluded from the cultural base upon which the Norwegian state was built:

In Norway, the positive, joint national imaginings of ‘Norwegianness’ that was created through among other things folklorist research from around 1830 to 1920 were primarily built around the culture of the Eastern interior landscape of Norway, with the Norse heritage, the Harding fiddle, the local farmer ideal type called ‘dølabonden’ and ski sports as important symbols. The geographical Norwegian North, with fisher/farmer communities, Saami and Kvæn Culture were to a smaller degree of interest for the folklorists. This can be interpreted as an expression of an understanding of the High North as something essentially different from the ‘true’ Norwegianness, as a cultural deviation from ‘*The National*’ (Myklebost 2010: 10-11, my translation)

The farmer/ fisherman-identity⁹⁵ (which includes both men and women in a working relationship, traditionally) is an example of how particular historically constructed ‘ideal types’ describing the typical Northerner act as rallying points for an understanding of the question of petroleum production in the LoVe region which defies the preconceived notions of what the means and goals of development should be. As a model upon which identity is constructed (Eriksen 1993), the farmer/fisherman symbolizes hardship and struggle, dependence on nature, a life of relative poverty (financial, at least) - but also a frontier mentality and a sense of *being different*; all qualities which forms the basis for a scepticism to ‘naturalized’ notions of what the future should look like, presented ‘from the south’.

⁹⁵ The farmer/ fisherman identity is most aptly described as based upon the historically typical household structure of the North, where income was based on fishing and farming, and where the division of labour to some extent was gender based – as fishing mostly was conducted by the men while the women took care of house, children, animals and crop. While at home, the men would take their chores, but as fishing was time consuming and meant staying away for long periods of time, the farms were more often than not the responsibility of the women.

The story of how the summoning of delegates from all over the country to the constitutional assembly at Eidsvoll in May 1814 never reached the Northern province is well known in the north. Less so in the south though, where the idea of the Eidsvoll assembly as representative of the *whole population* is prominent (Pryser 1993: 244-245). The incident is just one in a series of tales that are told through which the *nordlending* is depicted as *an outsider*. For instance, it is with no small sense of pride that many social democrats in the north relay that the first representatives of the Labour Party to win parliamentary seats were representatives from Northern Norway, in 1903. The socialist movement of Northern Norway had two concrete aims; improvement of the working conditions of the industrialized workers of the mines and factories, and the securing of a decent livelihood for the fisher/farmer community (Jaklin 2006: 35). And while most of the industry was based on a migrant labour force, and thus were to some extent similar to the more traditional labour base upon which the party was based traditionally, the most important rally point for the socialist movement of the north was the conditions for the fishers. For example, in 1890 the commonage of the seas were threatened as steamboats equipped with seines and large nets, owned by petty kings and businessmen, sought to shut out fishers in small rowboats from one of the most fish-abundant fjords during the Lofoten seasonal fisheries. The people along the coast reacted with an uproar, which became an important basis for the radical political mobilization of the northern province (Jaklin 2006).

Decades before the rest of the country *nordlendinga* stood up against what many saw as oppressive forces from the south. Or so the story goes, at least, again with the aim of specifying what is particular and different about *nordlendingan*. But there is another story too, namely the one about continuity and interconnectedness between the north and the south, about a strong and – for the development of industry and trade important – stabile North-Norwegian bourgeoisie, a landowning and trade-controlling elite of petty kings, bank men, members of the clergy, intellectuals and industrialists, whose contacts with important businessmen, academics and politicians in Bergen, Trondheim and Christiania (now Oslo) were important for development of

industry and trade functions.⁹⁶ Still, during the 20th Century, the fisheries remained the backbone of many Northern Norwegian everyday lives, and reliance upon the inconstant fruits of the sea made a versatile and adaptable population along the coast look for pragmatic solutions. As the women took care of children, animals and crop, men would fish the seasonal fisheries (like the *Skrei* fisheries in Lofoten during winter), work periodically as miners, carpenters, car mechanics, and so on.

Scene: “We will endure”

In Ramberg, Lofoten, I met Ole, a man just turned eighty, who together with his brother started a transporting agency in the 1950s, besides working with fish onshore. His grandfather had arrived in Ramberg in 1891, established a general shop there, and started buying and selling fish while also holding animals, which were the responsibility of his wife. Members of Oles family still own both shop and fish buyer facilities in Ramberg, but for Ole, the transporting business became most important. Ole said:

“Us brothers started helping out during the seasonal fisheries when we were just small kids, I have been a part of it since I learned how to walk! Back then everybody here grew small crops of potato, carrots, and cabbage... It was kinda fun, to be able to make things grow! But later, we brothers, there were four of us, ran a transport business, in order to have something to do, off-season. When the building of the Lofoten road⁹⁷ started in 1955, there was a need for materials and machines – so things just grew rapidly from there. Soon we were ten to twelve men working in the firm, and periodically, during the fishery season when we also bought fish and transported it out, we would be 27-28 on the payroll. Us brothers, we would work twenty-four-seven, both with fish and with transports. And then there were the times away, on plants or major development projects, like in Skjomen (close to Narvik, my comment) where the NVE (Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate) strengthened the electricity grid for North-Norway.”

⁹⁶ Examples of which are the mining industry in Fauske in Nordland County, which in 1927 employed almost 2000 men, and the production of industrial products like canned food, herring oil, spinning mills and clothing in places like Mosjøen, Melbu, Bodø, Svolvær and Tromsø (Jaklin 2006).

⁹⁷ Today the European freeway E10, reaching as far west as Å in Lofoten.

“The four of you have made an impact then, I assume, on this community?” I asked.

“Yes. For a while there, we raised about 25 per cent of the municipal tax revenues here, and we owned part of the fish buying complex, buses, taxis, trucks and construction machinery ...”⁹⁸

The example illustrates how people in a fisher/ farmer – based community had to be flexible and adaptable, in order to utilize the possibilities for income there was. And as new opportunities arose with mechanization and industrialization the inherent flexibility prevailed, as ‘cultural residues’ from the fishing/ farmer household economy meant that many still got involved in the seasonal fisheries if they could. Even though Ole had lived most of his life in the Norwegian post-2nd World War society where a gradual development of welfare state benefits helped curb the anxieties of living a life dependent on the sea, the village Ramberg he grew up in was still a place in which a resilience against a harsh environment and the prospect of poverty and despair were highly appreciated. “*Vi står han av*”, meaning “*we will endure*” or “*we’ll manage*” is an iconic statement in Norwegian, a demarcation of *being a nordlending* which has gained an exclusivity which is also accepted amongst those relevant others, the *søringa*. I heard that statement often when living in Ramberg.

Stories like this one, depicting North-Norwegian lives, are examples of the type of narratives upon which historical account of *what Northern Norway is* has developed. For me here, it has been important to show how a past *reinvented*, either by interviewees, North-Norwegian journalists and historians or indeed myself, gain an *explanatory value* both in terms of *why things are as they are* and why ‘*we*’ are the way ‘*we*’ are. In other words, these stories and others aid people in their construction of an *ontological position in the world* that helps them makes sense of it. As we shall see, it also influences directly how people reflect on matters of threats, risks and security when discussing the petroleum question in LoVeSe.

⁹⁸ Interview, Ole Johansen, April 2009

5.1.1 Identity in Lofoten

In the following, the identification of an ambivalence with an imagined ‘true Norwegianness’ as basis for the identity *nordlending* - and as an extension, the identity *Lofoting* (from Lofoten) is seen as one of the important backdrops for an understanding of the center-periphery dimension of the matter of developing petroleum in these waters.

In Lofoten, being a *nordlending* is of course an important identity marker. There are strong ties between communities in the north, and a sense of a common fate for all of us *up here* has been established. But even amongst close friends, differences are important, and being *Lofoting* (‘from Lofoten’) matters vis-à-vis someone being a *Vesteråling* (‘from Vesterålen’). Likewise, within Lofoten proper, being a *Kabelvågving* (‘from Kabelvåg’) has implications locally, as we shall see, when discussing for instance petroleum production with a *Flakstadværing* (‘from Flakstad’). And particularly interesting for my work is the divide between the eastern and western parts of Lofoten.

5.1.2 The east-west axis in Lofoten

It is important to acknowledge that this east-west divide here described must not be understood as a clear demarcation of characteristics typical for all living east or west of it. Neither does it reflect a desire on my part to construct what has been called ‘cultural islands’ (Geertz 1973), devoid of impact on and impulses from the outside. Rather, it is a dichotomy meant to clarify that there exist typical structural traits and identity markers in the east and west respectively, which influences the debate on petroleum. Neither will I with this description argue for a devaluation of the potential for change – be it initiated on the background of outside impulses or as an impetus embedded *in culture* (as for instance accounted for by Fredrik Barth in his description of *the North-Norwegian entrepreneur (1963)*), which of course exists on both sides of this schematic demarcation. It should be understood as a description of some of the premises that I have found to exist in the west and the east respectively, that can have explanatory value when describing concerns that are brought up locally.

An example from the field gives a good indication of how the relation between east and west in Lofoten is depicted in local discourse, this time seen from Svolvær, that is – the east. A scene based on my fieldwork notes from mid-March, 2009, serves as an

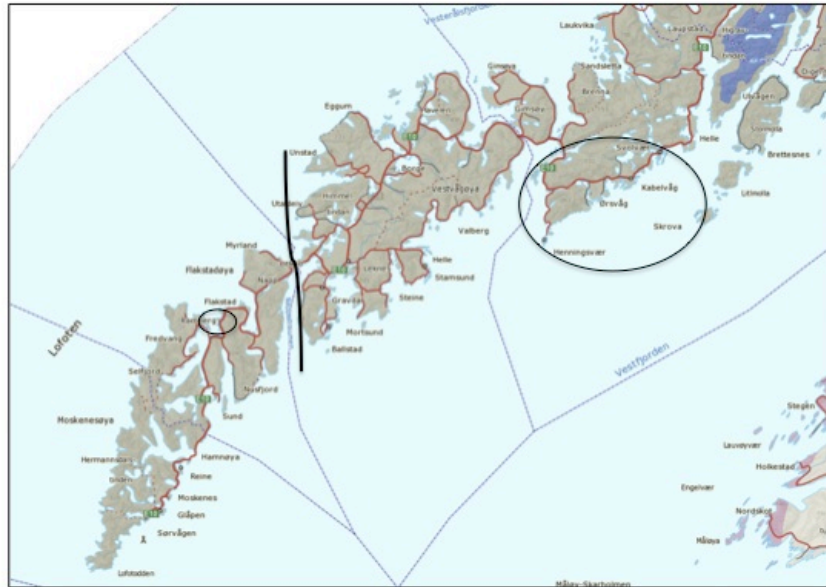


Figure 2: The constructed east-West divide, at Nappsundet. Main fieldwork sites are demarcated with a circle.
Map: www.skogoglandskap.no

introduction to the themes here.

Scene: “the further west you go, the smaller things get”

Field notes March 2009

Yesterday, I was discussing petroleum with a guy – let’s call him John – from Svolvær, during the Cod Fishing World Championship⁹⁹. As usual when I tell people what I am focussing my research on, the question of petroleum development triggered many themes and debates concerning the fish in the sea, the natural surroundings, cultural heritage and, for John in particular, the differences between east and west in Lofoten, which seem to become more and more distinct.

“Svolvær is about to become a small town, an urbanized area”, John commented, as I tried to outline my initial, sketchy analysis of the matter. “East of Napp (on Flakstadøy, see below), the coastal fisher is no longer the most important financial backbone of the community. To be sure, Vestvågøy does still hold an important fishery fleet, but is heavily dominated by the trawler fleet at Stamsund (their major

⁹⁹ An annual event set in motion to boost winter tourism in the area, the Cod Fishing World Championship is more of a festival than a sporting event, with thousands arriving in Svolvær for a long-weekend of fishing, hiking, live music and nightlife.

port facing the Vestfjord, my comment). And even though a few hundred fishers still live in the municipality of Vågan their relative status and importance have slowly diminished.” John and I shared a toast with some of his childhood friends living elsewhere who had come back to their hometown for the event before he continued: “West of Napp, though, the coastal fisher still rules. The development there is also towards larger boats, but still not sea-going trawlers, and they are still dependent on being able to deliver fish locally. I think there’s a major difference in how people think of economics. In the east, you find a more diversified economy, more adapted to the rules of the market place, and more modernized and efficient, also when considering the fisheries. In addition, we have the two dominant town centres of Leknes and Svolvær, where trade, industry and tourism prevails hand in hand – in Vestvågøy the economy is also influenced by the modern trawler fleet and a strong agricultural sector.”

As more of his emigrant friends joined in and the joviality grew (not in an small way contributed by a steady flow of beers landing on the table), gossipy stereotypical imprints about ‘the other’ – in this setting the ‘Lofoting’ from the western parts – were introduced into the discussion, which soon faded away completely, replaced by other, less complex topics for discussion.

A few hours earlier, as Ole – another informant - and I took on the short walk from Kabelvåg to Svolvær, the topic was also debated. “Svolvær is actually a rather multifaceted and complicated place,” Ole said. “There are class differences, immigrants from many different places of the world, a string of cultural facilities and in general a city-feel which separates it from the traditional fishing village. In this way it resembles a small town, and where you used to have class differences characterized by the relationship between petty kings, merchants and fishers, you will now find a more dynamic relationship between local entrepreneurs/ businessmen, skilled labour, intellectuals, and artists, all informing an active political debate which creates a dynamic – based on a multi-layered social life – which you will find no other place in Lofoten”.

Ole shrugged and smiled. “It’s as simple as this: The further west you go in Lofoten, the smaller things get”. And by smaller, he meant, I believe, more intimate, less complex, more fishery dependent – and more vulnerable. Business-minded and prone

to invoking an economic, liberalist analysis on community welfare and potential future(s), his analysis also included an implicit death-sentence to life as it is lived further west, where small scale fisheries prevail, and communications are less developed than in the east. “With the exception of Røst, perhaps” he added, thus paying homage to local patriotism and drive in the community of a few hundred still bargaining for a life based on fisheries on that small island, on the very tip of the Lofoten range.

In many respects, travelling from the two larger municipalities of Vågan, then to Vestvågøy before entering the village Napp, at Flakstadøy in the western part of Lofoten, is like travelling from one version of Lofoten to another. One travels from Vågan, with its almost 9000 inhabitants¹⁰⁰, three small towns, a booming tourism development, a significant shipyard industry, a successful fish farming business and a thriving urbanized centre, through Vestvågøy with over 10000 inhabitants, a mixture of tourism, large-scale fisheries and farming and the trading centre of the region at Leknes. When arriving at Napp though, one has entered the first of a number of small fishing villages, making up a total

FACTBOX

By May 2011, the municipalities of Lofoten had the following registered number of fishers in registry B (full-time fishers, main occupation):

- **West-Lofoten:** **East Lofoten:**
- **Flakstad: 143** **Vågan: 226**
- **Moskenes: 106** **Vestvågøy: 299**
- **Værøy: 76**
- **Røst: 66**

Source: The Norwegian Fisheries Directorate:
http://www.fiskeridir.no/register/fiskermanntallet/?m=utl_mant,
accessed May 18th, 2011.

of just below 4000 inhabitants, in four small municipalities, all dependent on the income of their native fishers and the synergy effects their surplus causes. We move here from municipalities in which specialized division of labour (in a modernist sense) has gained a foothold and where the national ideas of regional centralization fits well with local ambitions, to the part of the region where one meets the strongest resentment towards state-run regional politics, and where, it must be admitted, the

¹⁰⁰ Statistical figures on population taken from figures presented by Statistics Norway, accessed and reorganized September 15th, 2011:
<http://www.ssb.no/emner/02/02/folkendrhist/tabeller/>

consequences of a centralized re-structuration of the fisheries have been felt the most, due first and foremost to a lack of clear alternatives.

In the next scene, I will present a trip on board a small fishing boat in order to give a small taste of the life at sea so typical for the construction of a fishery-based identity. The scene is again based on fieldwork notes, and exemplifies how the fisheries are ontologically important for local communities, particularly in western Lofoten, and how references to the sea and the relationship between sea, weather and people over time has shaped the way one frames risks and threats locally.

Scene: “Often, there’s just too much talk amongst people”. Onboard the MS

Svana

At 4 AM, on a chilly and misty morning in March 2009, I was picked up at the house I was renting in Ramberg by Olav, the only crewman onboard MS Svana. The boat skipper, Steinar, was already at the shed on his private little quay a few minutes due west of Ramberg. That is, calling it a ‘shed’ would be an insult to the standard and quality of the facilities; Steinar is what is called a self-producer of stockfish, and has therefore built a small fish-landing facility that meets the demands of the fishery authorities. With the low prizes in the market for fresh or salted fish, he couldn’t care less about trying to sell the catches to traders; he instead hung everything up in the traditional ‘gjeller’ – wooden scaffolds which hold thousands of gutted skrei, hang in pairs. He hoped the market for stockfish would improve, and accepted the risk. In a separate storage room he has stored about 40 barrels of fish eggs that will be sold to caviar producers in both Norway and Sweden.

The MS ‘Svana’ was a small, somewhat worn-down fishing boat. As she was well past her prime, it was considered unpractical for the modern fisheries, and the work onboard thus less lucrative. With Olav as crew, though, Steinar made enough to keep things going, and had managed to build facilities that made him an independent actor within the fisheries. During the season, they told me, they worked for 12-14 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In the dark, Steinar steered his boat in the course he had chosen for us to reach Vestfjorden just south of the Lofoten islands, and I was grateful for the promise of quiet weather. Reaching the fishing nets, Olav and Steinar prepared the boat for the catch that they hoped the nets will provide. Steinar ran the mechanics that hauled the

nets onboard while Olav prepared the net for re-launch into the sea. All of us had ceased talking, and as each of the chains of fishnets were between 650 and 700 meters, the quietness lasted for about an hour before they were put back in the sea. Steinar released the fish from the net and threw them in the first tank. Every once in a while, Olav left the nets and walked aft, grabbed the fish, and with one finger in the eye socket and the thumb just in front of the gills, he held it in a firm grip while cutting open the fish' main arteries so that they bled out before throwing them back in tanks where flowing fresh seawater make sure the fish quality remained as high as possible. The bleeding is a must, as the shining white flesh of the skrei would otherwise turn pink and thus fall in quality. The procedure is called 'blogging', and is controlled by both fish dealers and governmental controllers.

The first row of nets made up for a good catch for a boat this size, about 250 kilos of skrei. Steinar was pleased: "Lots of fine fish", he said with a smile. "It's in here, in the Vestfjorden, that the quality is like this. The fish caught north of the Lofoten islands (an area called 'yttersia', literally meaning the outside, my comment) is of lesser quality. Those who are in here have fought the currents and are strong, lean and fit".



Steinar at sea. Photo: The author

Between the hauls, short coffee breaks were ritualistically performed. While working, small talk was reduced to a minimum, as Steinar and Olav most of the time were on different spots on the boat. Olav said the same goes for the short breaks, as one had to steer Svana to the next line of nets while the other took a break. Efficiency was a key element in their everyday lives onboard; with 12-14 hour workdays, there was no time to waste. "We work well together, and give each other short messages, but other than that, there's not much talk. I guess we're both silent types", Olav said. When I asked

Steinar a bit later about his relation to the sea, he implicitly confirmed: “I like working outside, it’s nice that way. Often, there’s just too much talk amongst people.”

I would argue that there is a tendency in western Lofoten for a very strong, local identity as the primary basis for opinion when it comes to the matter of petroleum, combined with a doubtfulness about whether the advocates of national interests are the ones best suited to ensuring that necessary precautions are taken on behalf of local communities. More often than not, the explicit concern is based on distrust in the definition and management of risks. “Why should we take all the risk, when so little is being channelled back?” is a typical remark often heard in local debates. Here, local identity is to some extent based on what one might call ‘counter-power’ tendencies: One questions the national rhetoric on security through petroleum production and energy supply, and challenges the prevailing notions about the inevitable rationality of the establishment of an ITQ-system (Individual Transferable Quotas) in the fisheries (Jentoft 1993; Hersoug, Holm et al. 2000; Holm and Nielsen 2007). Talk about these themes, together with stories about the struggle for the right to fish are emblematic in the process of (re)constructing local identity. And in processing a local identity – as a group – relevant others have to be identified, and in these waters (literally), *the significant other(s)* have been many: traders from Bergen, petty kings, local merchants, the state bailiff, occupying Germans during WW2, fishery researchers and the Oslo-based national bureaucracy. And now, it seemed as if the petroleum industry was next in that line.

Another striking feature is that the *opposition* towards petroleum in Western Lofoten seems to dominate the public discourse. People from the western parts in favour of petroleum (there are indeed also fishers who are positive to petroleum development) have told me that they usually keep their opinion to themselves; a strategic choice, I would suggest, that only strengthens the apparent linkage between a local identity based on a symbolically constructed heritage from the fisheries and a ‘no’ to petroleum. This impression of subdued advocates in the west does not tell the whole story, though, as some – also fishers in the west, otherwise seen to be the most stern group against petroleum – do speak their mind, and argue that an arrival of petroleum production is a ‘natural’ development for a region with such strong ties to the sea, and that the usage of skilled seamanship in petroleum development further south is a merit to such an argument. Still, stories connecting the past with the present are an

important part in how identity and belonging plays a part in the debate over petroleum in the west, and an outcome of these stories are most often favouring a negative view on petroleum development. It is my intention on these pages to relay some stories like this, typical for this kind of re-establishment of identity, but also to analyse them as such; as symbolic constructs with the aim of reconstituting values and traits deemed important for local identity. Again, the power to decide, this time on *what is relevant for 'our' identity* is of importance, and different interpretations do of course exist.

As mentioned, in eastern Lofoten, at least in the urbanized center of Svolvær/Kabelvåg, a more stratified social structure and diversified business base had developed. There, I found that the premises upon which the debate was run was to a larger extent focussed upon similar premises as in the debate that was taking place nationally, even though a strong emphasis on local culture, knowledge and sense of obligation for taking care of the surroundings was still present in the debate. Thus, one can argue that as I moved eastward in Lofoten, towards Svolvær, the tendency by informants to consider national and even global concern was more frequent. Interestingly, this tendency could be found amongst both supporters and opponents to petroleum development.

In the following section, the presentations of the opponents and proponents of petroleum development in LoVeSe will be analysed, considering the relation between ontological belonging, knowledge production and trust, and how it effects local perceptions of what it means to be secure.

5.2 Local opponents to petroleum

As I entered the 2nd Annual meeting of the People's action for an oil-free Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja (abbr. PA) in a hotel in Svolvær in October 2010, I was handed a recruitment pamphlet with a headline that immediately struck me as indicative of the political climate the matter of petroleum production had produced locally. The hand-out, which on closer inspection turned out to be a printout from their web page, was a re-print of a letter-to-editor to local newspapers in the north written by a member of the PA and in it, she questioned the very rationale of the petroleum companies and their intentions in the area. "Can the Oil Companies be trusted?" she rhetorically asked, and cited a Canadian sociology professor, Dr. Peter Sinclair, who had visited the annual Arctic Frontier conference in Tromsø earlier the same year. His

take on the matter, according to the folk movement activist, was that there was ample reason to be sceptical of the oil companies' intentions in terms of promoting development and welfare for local communities, in upholding environmental demands and securing rights for fishers in a co-existence-at-sea scenario.¹⁰¹

The arguments from the Canadian professor, which I have not been able to confirm as I was not present at the conference in Tromsø, fits well with the People's action movement rhetoric that this is a matter of *trust*. Their argument when it comes to the oil companies and their potential presence in the LoVeSe area is based on a deep scepticism with regards to intent, knowledge and, ultimately, the risk defining, risk taking and risk averting measures the industry will adhere to. Likewise, there is a deep scepticism amongst many of my informants and interviewees about the intentions of the petroleum lobby; indeed, many argue that this yet another example of how Northern Norway is about to be exploited by the central government and a centralized financial elite. As with the fur trade of the middle ages and the fisheries of the past thousand years, critics in the north see themselves as once again having to succumb to the role as a provider of raw materials - for others to capitalize on. Who is right in their predictions is not for me to answer here – rather, I will focus on why the petroleum sector is not trusted by some actors and trusted by others. What is it about the arguments in favour of petroleum development in the region in question that spurs such distrust of the industry that has influenced the development of the Norwegian welfare state as it stands out today? The question links directly to several of the basic issues that I am concerned with in this thesis, amongst them the matter of *trust* as an important precondition for a sense of (ontological) security (Giddens 1991). As I am not primarily concerned with identifying objectifiable threats and risks, I instead focus on what makes people feel (in)secure(d). Thus, the local identification of threats and definitions of risk is of the outmost importance, as is the matter of trust in expert opinion.

Another matter reflected on in the following scene is who is in position to define inclusion and exclusion criteria for acceptable development aims and goals? Who gets to have a say on what the success criteria for development of the region might be,

¹⁰¹ The letter-to-editor is accessible online, in Norwegian, at <http://folkeaksjonen.no/node/5564>, accessed April 26th, 2011

regarding petroleum? And finally, the matter of trust (or lack thereof) in the petroleum industry is also based on a presentation of its environmental track record which questions its ability to operate in the vulnerable areas in question, and a fundamental understanding of the industry as being bad for the environment, both locally, nationally and globally. I will therefore show that both in terms of presentations of regional and local spin-off effects, such as influencing the potential for individuals and communities in seeking *ontological security*, and in environmental security matters, large parts of the population in the Lofoten region found it difficult to fully trust the petroleum sector and their assessments.

Scene: The fusion of an opposition: The People's Action for an Oil-free Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja

In 2006, two parallel action movements resisting the plans for petroleum development in Lofoten and Vesterålen respectively were formed after public meetings. Initially, they were ad hoc-based and a more or less spontaneous response to the political debate that had for some time pondered the possibility for a petroleum-based future. The initiators of these movements were predominantly fishers, environmentalists and local politicians who opposed the seemingly undisputable congruence between (economic) development and petroleum production, that did not consider possible threats and conflicts it might lead to. During 2008, the dispute concerning seismic activity¹⁰² and the potential threat to fish stocks and thus the fisheries (most importantly the coastal fisheries) had turned many sceptics into opponents, and the size and force of these movements soon required employing a person who could take care of both the administrative and political tasks. Therefore, a joint manager for both action movements was temporarily hired – part-time – and at the founding conference of the joint People's Action for an Oil-Free Lofoten and Vesterålen I (abbr. PA) in January 2009, the board formally employed Gaute Wahl as manager.

I first met Gaute in November 2008, before his formal employment. At the time, he worked as manager for two separate movements, and had planned the merger for some time. Also, he had aided in forging an alliance with four of the major environmentalist groups in Norway: Bellona, WWF, Young Friends of the Earth

¹⁰² See section 5.3.

Norway ('Natur og Ungdom' – abbreviation NU) and Friends Of the Earth Norway ('Norges Naturvernforbund'). But now, Gaute said, sitting by the window at café Baccalao in Svolvær where we had met for lunch, the time had come to create a stronger, locally based movement free from direct linkages to the environmental organisations. This was because they wanted to be seen as being without ties to existing political currents or parties (the Norwegian environmental organisations are to a large extent seen as positioned to the left in the political landscape) – and the action group had already been criticized for not having room for other local opponents of oil and gas who at the same time did not feel like siding with the national environment organisations. I told him about a meeting in the Lofoten Council¹⁰³ that I participated in the night before, and asked him what he felt about the frustration voiced there that the fishermen were almost taken hostage by the environmental organisations, and that they therefore were used as a small piece in a bigger, national discourse on oil and gas development of Norway as a whole. Gaute responded with laughter, and said that in his view, this statement is totally wrong, and that they had seen the opposite process developing, where fishermen, who traditionally have been very sceptical to the environmental movement (particularly in Norway, where themes like whaling, trawling and resource management as well as local pollution from the fisheries have been areas of confrontation), had been contacting the environmental organisations, asking for their assistance in their struggle against the seismic activities in the summer of 2008.

I asked him if the action group was in fact focussed across party lines, or if it in reality was just another radical anti-governmental, leftist movement? Gaute seemed to enjoy the question, stating that they in fact were seeking actively to avoid radicalisation; instead, he focussed on the appeal the movement has across political lines. He pointed to active movement members from both the conservative party Høyre and the Labour Party (both parties that were more than happy, it seemed, to open new areas for oil exploration) and that the traditionally leftist Lofoten branch of the Norwegian Labour organisation (LO) was in favour of development of petroleum. With this he explained, he wanted to show that the traditional political lines couldn't

¹⁰³ The Lofoten Council is an advisory regional body, made up of the mayors and the municipal managers of all 6 municipalities in Lofoten.



Youngsters and an anti-petroleum banner, Kabelvåg, Lofoten. Photo: The author

be drawn in this matter. A lot of high-ranking Labour party members in the region were working actively for the development of oil and gas, while representatives from conservative parties and also business representatives were divided on the matter, he observed.

As he left from this interview – which was to be the first of many meetings, Gaute wanted me to understand that it was important, in his view, that the PA would not be seen locally as a purely environmental organisation. He would therefore in the future focus on it being first and foremost a developmental interest organisation, preoccupied with long-term development in the region. What was important, he said, was to understand that for many in the regions, this was a matter of identity, of what sort of values one cherished in life – and what sort of future one wanted to see evolving. Therefore, he would also work more with the dissemination of arguments based on ‘facts’, – thus responding to increasing claims from the oil industry that most of the arguments against petroleum were based on non-factual argumentation.¹⁰⁴

Back in my office, in Tromsø a couple of months later, I remembered Gaute Wahl’s insistence on identity and values as basis for many of those opposing petroleum development, and wondered whether the opposition to petroleum could be seen as an

¹⁰⁴ See chapter 4.

empirical example of what Trent H. Hamann describes as “ ... critical responses to temporary forms of governmentality” (Hamann 2009: 55)? Hamman continues thus:

“These struggles question the status of the individual in relation to community life, in terms of the forms of knowledge and instruments of judgment used to determine the ”truth” of individuals, and in relation to the obfuscation of the real differences that make individuals irreducibly individual beings. Tying all of these modes of resistance together is the question “Who are we?” (ibid: 38)

This was indeed the first time I recognized from my fieldwork an empirical linkage to Foucaults representation of the kind of analytics of government called *governmentality* (see chapter 3). I found that local reflections and responses (like those from the PA) to the technology of governmentality that framed the debates on petroleum development emanated from locally based actors who’s agenda was to secure local life, in a manner consistent with *their* world view, *their* ontological frame of reference. It seems pertinent therefore, to continue the analysis of both the oppositional and the advocating ‘forces’ (actors, actions, arguments and processes) using tools that can clarify to which extent I could find identity-based opposition to the *particular governmentality* (that is, *the rationale behind* governing) which was deployed, mainly from state actors:

“The concept of governmentality suggests that it is important to see not only whether neoliberal rationality is an adequate representation of society but also how it functions as a “politics of truth,” producing new forms of knowledge, inventing different notions and concepts that contribute to the “government” of new domains of regulation and intervention.” (Lemke 2002: 55)

What is important to bear in mind, though, is that as I continued to participate in meetings, discuss with both Gaute, other members of the people’s movement and others with opposing views to petroleum, a rough sketch, so to speak, of the framework in which I eventually would analyse what Foucault would call “critique” of *a specific governmentality* began to form. This, I assert, influenced the way I approach the field and therefore had an impact on *how I saw the field* as well (see chapter 2.6). In retrospect, it is apparent that I went back looking for this critique, for an identity-based opposition to a mainstream political discourse, where a neo-realist

rationality supposedly rules (Lemke 2001; 2002; Marlow 2002; Hamann 2009; Dean 2010). For as time went by, the PA continued to focus on an identity-based opposition, on the idea that a petroleum development would put in danger the inherited way of life upon which the identity “*Lofoting*” was based. As I have noted earlier, identity is both theoretically and empirically a highly contested matter (Von Busekist 2004), and it is important again to remember that both advocates for petroleum and those opposed to some extent claim to act according to traits, signifying practices and norms consistent with an idea of a ‘real’ local identity, true to the concept *Lofoting* (see chapter 3 and 5.1). Still I will claim that my initial one-sided coupling between opponents’ arguments against petroleum and local identities was to be significantly downplayed over time, as I discovered that local identity was described as an important basis for *proponents* locally as well (as will be presented more thoroughly in section 5.3).

In addition to arguments based on identity and belonging, the PA also focussed on delivering ‘facts’ in the debate. The following scene is from a discussion I had with Gaute Wahl in October 2010, on how he saw ‘facts’ and knowledge being presented by opponents and proponents respectively.

Scene: “We have to start setting some limits”

“Of course, we have an interest in bringing forth things that are good about living here, while the petroleum industry – at least a part of it - wants to focus on the negative,” Gaute said to me when describing the strategy that the people’s movement had chosen.

“So it’s about polemics, then”, I argued, “as both sides charge one another with being unfair, without being ‘fact-based’. You have called your opponents ‘disrespectful’ which is quite a statement, and I would assume that it’s based on an experience of you having a different understanding of reality...?”

Gaute leaned forward, grinning: “Yes, it is pretty obvious that there exists a different understanding of reality, and that it is mainly based on a different value base, concerning what one wants, what sort of identity one ascribes to, both personally and the community of which one sees oneself a part. I can sketch for you a couple of archetypes: On the one hand, you have the traditional ‘energy-socialist’ who says we

need power plant and industrial development and holds that the only viable working places are those tied to industry. His or her take on it would be to develop as much industry as possible and to bring as much hydrocarbons onshore in the region as possible – because that’s what creates work places and ripple effects for the rest of society. On the opposite side is the ‘fundamentalist environmentalist’, who believes we should not touch anything at all, not in this area or anywhere else, for that matter, because this type of development should be stopped. The human race is too plentiful, and human life on earth should be more in harmony with nature. But these are the extremes, and we have to look for a way to reach the necessary compromises: to deliver energy to the world and simultaneously deal with the challenges we’re facing with climate change.” Gaute shrugged. “We’re opting for an obvious compromise: as we promote a no to petroleum here, we argue that as there is a need to stop somewhere (with the extraction of fossil fuels). We know that if we extract all the fossil fuels we believe are available globally, then we’re in trouble. There are reports out there stating that we can only utilize about one fourth of what is out there, if we are to reach the goal of a maximum two-degree increase in global average temperatures. The thing is, if we have to draw the line somewhere... Of course there are things to be done with the consumption rates, efficiency improvements, alternative energy sources and all that, – but we cannot take it all up. Therefore, we need measures that safeguards some of the areas which have been defined as having potential in terms of petroleum development. We have to start setting some limits,- some places we will have to begin to say ‘no’. And naturally, the most obvious places to start saying ‘no’ will be in the areas which are most vulnerable, where the value of the natural surroundings - beyond mere exploitation value and possible commodity value - are of national, if not global concern, and where conflicts with other industries are more profound. This would be my answer to that question”.

Gautes answer is interesting in many ways. First, he saw both ‘reality’ and ‘identity’ as contestable, as something which needed to be defined, according to a number of variables, and not something which can be pre-determined according to some objective standards. Differences in understandings of reality are based on values, he said – and many informants have emphasized how their identity (which is highly value-based, of course) indeed informs their way of understanding reality, their way of understanding and making sense of the world. As mentioned, identity is much more

than a set of tools for survival, e.g. language, skills, protection for a group of fellows and the knowledge through which one makes sense of the world; in other words that which makes it *ontologically secure* (Giddens 1990; Marlow 2002; Hawkins and Maurer 2011). Secondly, Gautes insistence on the PA as something ‘beyond’ party lines indicated that traditional political preferences are put aside, favouring a politics based on local identity, affiliation to nature and an alternative future for the region and not party politics and traditional ideological divides. Contrary to the environmentalist movement, the PA were careful not to advance an end of the petroleum era; their only goal is to prevent petroleum production in these waters, outside Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja. Many members of the PA were also however members of environmentalist organisations, and had a strong anti-petroleum engagement (in particular members of the environmentalist youth organisation *Nature and Youth*) and a more pro-protective attitude towards the natural environment – and the divide between the environmental organisations and the PA became more explicit from 2008 to 2011. But from the very beginning in 2006, the way in which the PA has argued for an alliance with the fishers has made the environmentalist organisations more cautious in their agitation for a ‘greener, better protected future’. As Bjørn Kjensli, a central member of the PA, and also of one of the political parties most prolific against petroleum - the Socialist Party (SV) - said:

“We in the PA who are working closely with the environmental organisations acknowledge that they have provided us access to resources and competence – had we not been able to tap into this, we had not been where we are now, not by far. In this sense, we see that they’re valuable to us, in that they – voluntarily – work day and night, with an enormous effect. Their engagement is passionate indeed, but it is based on another point of view, because a lot of them live in a different setting. Still, I think that when for instance WWF showed up here in 2006, arguing against petroleum using the list of endangered fish species as an argument, I told them that if they wanted to a part of this alliance and engage with people locally, this is not the strategy to follow. Imagine meeting fishers here with that kind of argument! And they toned it down considerably, which shows that they have learned something through the connection they had with locals: you cannot come here from Oslo and rant on about a highly controversial list of endangered species, wanting a

permanent ban on all exploitation and industrial activity that can be potentially dangerous for the fish.”¹⁰⁵

By the time I had this conversation with Bjørn, the political struggle over petroleum on LoVeSe had already had an impact on the political campaigning preceding the general elections the previous fall (2009). It had also raised a more general interest in and awareness of the way petroleum politics influences both local lives and national priorities (Johnsen 2008; Ryggvik 2009; Arbo and Hersoug 2010; Sætre 2010). But it also made politicians aware of the mismatch between political priorities on the local-national axis. As Bjørn explained:

“I have spent a lot of time within the Socialist Party to argue that in LoVeSe, fisheries, nature, settlement, environmental issues with reference to tourism, these matters must be on top. Then climate change, seabird population trends and so on will have to come second, - not because it is not important, but for maintaining the spirit here, it is a consideration, whether environmental concerns should surpass other concerns. The typical fisher does not take care of the environment altruistically, but uses it for his own benefit. The consequences of the actions of only a small number of coastal fishers are of little concern, environmentally speaking, but it is important that we take care of the small-scale fisheries and the renewable resources, that we take care of nature and the environment for the benefit of the local communities and the structure of industry which is already in place here, and which we can further develop. Then, climate change, seabirds and sea mammals will have to come second. If the environmentalist organisations’ main conclusion drawn from the report¹⁰⁶ is that we have several weak seabird populations – then it is surely directed towards a different audience!”

Again we see that there is a discrepancy between actors in perceptions of *what threats there are* and *what it is we are risking*, also amongst fellow opponents to petroleum. On the surface, it may look like an environmental struggle with the aim of protecting

¹⁰⁵ interview, Bjørn Kjensli, April 2010

¹⁰⁶ Bjørn here referred to the scientific report which were to be the basis for a revised management plan for the Barents and Lofoten seas. See chapter 4.

wildlife from the potential for pollution and industrial development which will necessitate interventions in nature, but underneath lies more fundamental and overarching tensions; those between regions, business sectors, political ideologies and ontologies. And for the local opponents to petroleum development, the connection to the coastal fisheries was of the utmost importance.

And in the summers of 2007-2009, the strongest oppositional voices concerning petroleum were those that protested against the gathering of seismic data in the seas outside the LoVeSe regions.

5.3 Back to sea: Seismic shooting and its effects

But first, I will tell the story of my meeting with the representatives of the Coastal Fishers Union (CFU) whom I spent three months in office with (as they were kind enough to provide me with a desk on their premises) and how the questions surrounding the seismic data gathering that took place during the summers of 2007-2009 was tackled by the CFU in particular, as their strong focus on the consequences of seismic activities has undoubtedly influenced the petroleum debate, also nationally. When searching for potential sub-sea petroleum resources, geological surveys of the conditions are a necessity, and for this, seismic shooting is by far the most effective and therefore also the most prolific method. A large sea vessel tows a number of cables of 3 to 10 kilometres in length, on which several receptors called hydrophones are attached. On board the vessel itself airguns— usually two – are positioned, which produce a sound wave every 25th meter or so, depending on the specific aim of the data collection and the known variables of the area thought to influence the results. In practice, much of the work of the CFU concerning petroleum during my stay with them consisted of assisting fishers with their applications for compensation for loss of income, due to the seismic activities. But, around the coffee table and on occasion in public meetings and in interviews, the representatives would also discuss those other issues that the petroleum debate had spurred; the future of the fisheries, the fishing villages and communities and – hovering above it all – the matter of *who we are* and *who we might become*.

Scene: The Coastal Fisheries Union

In mid-March 2009, I went to my first day at the office of the Norwegian Coastal Fishers Union (CFU) in Ramberg, Lofoten. I had planned to spend three months

there, getting to know the staff, the way they worked, as well as using the office as a stepping-stone for making other acquaintances. Around a kitchen table at the office, people would meet daily, I knew, discussing all sorts of matters. As I was about to enter a setting in which I considered the other actors to be the experts on issues that other people often thought I had some knowledge about, I was a little nervous. My concerns would prove to be unfounded, though, as I was met with sincere cordiality by the staff at the office, and also by the two fishers present. I shook hands around the table, with five persons in all, of whom three were employed at the office: the manager Håvard and the administrative consultants Bente and Hilde. The two others were the fishermen Steinar,¹⁰⁷ one of the initiators of the CFU and Ivar,¹⁰⁸ Bentes husband. Small talk accompanied coffee, before most left the table, except for Steinar and myself. He said he wouldn't go to sea that day, as the fish broker had stopped buying cod. "I won't be rowing today", he said.¹⁰⁹

In 2009, there were four employees at the Union's office. Their main task was to assist members with legal matters, with employment contracts and terms of settlement for catches sold, and with applications and advice on how to comply with a growing set of rules and regulations. In addition, they spent quite a lot of time promoting the view of the coastal fishers in public hearings, media debates and political discussions, thus influencing policy-making in matters of particular concern for their members. The issues could range from detailed questions about security equipment requirements, implementation of online registration of catches on board fishing vessels, new regulations concerning mesh width for use in seasonal fisheries, the annual settlement of fixed prices for white fish, to more general topics concerning fishery management and policy. At the time of my stay at Ramberg, though, the head of administration, Håvard Jacobsen, stipulated that the 'petroleum case' (as he called it) took about half of his time, - and that he could have done so much more, if he'd had the time.

¹⁰⁷ Steinar was also the main protagonist in the prelude to this chapter

¹⁰⁸ We will meet Ivar again later, together with his brother, in a scene describing their work onboard their fishing boat, the MS Veines.

¹⁰⁹ 'Rowing' is a typical analogy for going out with the boat which links modernized, motorized fishing with a mythological past through an implicit statement of the importance of knowledge derived from tradition.

Of most concern during my stay at the CFU was the matter of the seismic activities at sea, used to gathering data that could inform on the possibility for petroleum deposits in the sea area outside LoVeSe. Håvard was of the impression that too much focus was put on the compensation that fishers were given, based on their reported losses the year before. It had a double negative effect, he claimed. First, as applications for compensation for loss of catches were considered individually, the ability to write a good application – and not necessarily the actual loss each fisher had suffered (a matter of controversy, indeed, as there is still no way to determine beyond a doubt whether or not anyone actually gained or lost anything at all) – was what made the difference. The system of compensation could therefore cause internal strife and disagreements amongst coastal fishers. The other negative effect was that it in his view undermined the argument which emphasized the importance of fishers being able to go to sea in order to make a living, and concealed the problems reported from fishery-dependent business onshore: Håvard had been informed, he told me, of several fish salesmen who had suffered losses due to the lack of fish delivered in some areas. And the development went the wrong way, he thought, as he believed the Petroleum Directorate (OD) had other plans for this year's seismic testing.

In a report submitted to the Norwegian Oil Directorate, the Norwegian Fisheries Directorate and the Norwegian Pollution Control Agency, a group of scientists presented what is known about consequences on marine life from seismic shooting and what knowledge gaps¹¹⁰ remained to be filled in order to issue valid, scientifically based advice on when, where and to what extent seismic activity should be performed (Dalen, Hovem et al. 2008). In the report, the authors showed that there had been three major epochs in which research on effects on marine life of seismic shooting had taken place, in the mid-1980s, the early 1990s and finally, in 2002-2004. The Norwegian Institute of Marine Research pointed out already in the 1980s that there were substantial knowledge gaps in this field, and that "...further research is needed in order to strengthen scientific knowledge on impact of seismic activity on fish" (ibid: 51, my translation). This advice was repeatedly brought to the attention of the

¹¹⁰ See Knol (2010b) for an interesting discussion on the way 'knowledge gaps' are constructed, defined and then identified in the work leading up to the revision of the management plan for the Barents and Lofoten seas.

Norwegian authorities, seemingly without concrete results. In 1993, findings from a specific research project on incidents in the Alta fjord in Northern Norway in 1989 resulted in formal applications from the Institute for marine research to the Ministry of fisheries for funding of much needed continued monitoring of effects. Not even after obliging the precondition of documenting scientific findings thus far in the project did the application for funding succeed; the ministry clearly did not find the research being performed to be of relevance to the management of resources in coastal waters (op.cit).

In light of these incidents in the not so distant past and the substantial knowledge gaps on these matters, there is ample reason for the authors of this report to state that these knowledge gaps are “striking ... not at least considering (the lack of knowledge concerning) the most important commercial fish stocks” (ibid: 52). It is also curious, considering that scientific documentation of effects of seismic activities on commercially significant fish stocks could potentially impede on the processes of which the seismic shooting is such an important element: the search for new oil and gas reserves on the Norwegian shelf (as well as the monitoring of extraction from producing reservoirs). In other words, scientific monitoring of possible effects could be seen to be a potential threat to petroleum development, as it might be the variable that could stop drilling in a particular area. Be that as it may, the debate on the damage potential of the seismic shooting to fish stocks and marine life has slowly been diverted towards a debate of technicalities, and theoretical risk analysis which has the viability of the fish stock as its referent object, while many of the debates running locally rather focuses on the potential weakening of the fish stocks as a threat to important sources of income for a relatively stable coastal fisheries sector. In other words; while the concern(s) of the petroleum industry, the environmental organisations and – most importantly – the government – is the viability of the fish stock and the risk to its very survival that is the focal point, the discussions in fishing communities like Ramberg, Sørvågen, Andøya and Røst is the risk involved when the premises for as the fisheries as basis for thriving communities is weakened. This difference in focus for the debate reveals a difference in weighting of local traditional knowledge and ontological world views when matters of viability are concerned; both with respect to the fish stocks themselves and to fishing communities.

What is at stake here, is in a sense the ability of science to provide an estimate of the risk involved in seismic shooting of harming commercial fish stocks and thus in effect influencing the potential for commercial fishing. It is imperative, though, to emphasize that the ecosystem-based management regime upon which principles for evaluating risks are positioned to a large extent fails to take into account the potential risks involved for local communities who's dependency on the short term well-being of fish stocks follows a different sequential pattern than considerations of long-term robustness of stocks. In short, focus was on research on the (presumed) vulnerable fish stocks, not on the vulnerability of the communities who would have to face the risks impeded on them by the petroleum industry through seismic activities. Be they right or wrong in their assumptions of a negative impact on the fisheries, it nonetheless produced a strong sense of *insecurity* in many communities.

During the summers of 2007, 2008 and 2009 then, the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate arranged for a seismic mapping of the geological conditions on the continental shelf outside LoVeSe regions in the county of Nordland. The results from this mapping was to form an integral part of the information which was the basis for the revision of the management plan for the Barents and Lofoten Seas (the IMP-BL), presented to parliament in April 2011. As a case in point, the clash between fishermen and the seismic vessels here serves as another empirical example of processes of inclusion and exclusion in debates on relevant knowledge, sustainable development schemes and the power/knowledge nexus of government (Foucault and Gordon 1980). All three summers, reports of what locally is described as "black sea" (meaning no fish in the water) emerged, spurring the initial irritation into aggression and frustration. Small-scale fishing from boats with only a few men on board (1-5) is vulnerable if a local stock of a specific fish is scared off, - especially because the time frame in which they can harvest from this particular stock is limited, and the amount they can catch can be dependent on what others get. In other words, it's often a race against time, where a sudden lack of catches – like what fishermen reported concerning both Greenland Halibut (which spawns outside of the LoVe area), coalfish and haddock for weeks after the seismic shooting had ended – might cause serious economic losses, and therefore pose a threat to the economical viability of fishery based communities. The fishermen saw no other logical explanation to this sudden loss of catches, their representatives claimed, than the seismic shooting. On this basis, a local



Figure 3: The narrow edge of the Norwegian continental shelf outside the area in question complicates the question of co-existence and cooperation between fisheries and petroleum. Map: The Norwegian Petroleum Directorate.

representative of the CFU in Vesterålen angrily stated the following in a newspaper interview:

“...coexistence with the oil industry is utopia. The shelf is only 12 nautical miles wide, and the scare effect has been proven effective for at least 18. Either we cut down the (coastal-near) fisheries, or we leave the oil where it is. It’s as easy as that.” (Hamnes 2009)

On the other hand, oil company representatives and other proponents of petroleum development were swift to accuse the fishermen of using the seismic shooting as a convenient explanation for an event (‘black sea’, no fish) which are less than uncommon in these waters; indeed, the fishers’ status as risk-takers is not only connected to the risk involved in working in high seas and a rough climate, but also to the unpredictability of catches. And because the catches had been bad also the year before, and because other fishermen (more positive to the idea of having petroleum activities in their area) reported that individual catches in close proximity to seismic vessels in activity were decent, the debate on the scare effect of seismic shooting was for a period taken out of the realm of science and conducted on premises from both sides based on hearsay and ideology rather than measurable ‘facts’.

The economical, ideological and cultural clash between fishermen and the petroleum industry was one of several hot spots in the debate concerning an opening of the areas

outside LoVeSe for oil and gas production during my fieldwork period. The means of subsistence of two very different economical niches met, and to a certain extent entered into a competition of space. Importantly, the case here serves as a possibility to analyse how the Norwegian oil industry and central governmental agencies understood the importance of local knowledge and the complexities of identity construction and self-perceived meaningful existence. Likewise, the response of the CFU to the seismic activities initiated with the aim of opening for production of petroleum in the region serves as an opportunity to analyse how one locally reflected on the hegemonic power/knowledge that influenced how future prospects for living in these areas were framed. The following scene illustrates local concerns about seismic shooting and its effects. One afternoon in April 2009, the head of the Norwegian coastal Fishermens Union (CFU), Håvard Jacobsen, came into the meeting room, where I had temporarily set up an office space. He had just had a phone call.

Scene: On the receiving end

Håvard told me that the Oil Directorate (OD) would come visit to discuss the implementation of the seismic shooting this summer. He was concerned about what sort of suggestions OD might come up with, and that he suspected they had ideas about a pre-payment to be offered as compensation to those in the fishing fleet who had planned to fish in the areas where 3-dimensional seismic shooting was to be performed this summer. He said that the OD was probably aware of the fact that the fishers could, by law, cast their nets where they wanted to, and the OD probably wanted the seismic surveys carried out with little focus and attention so that protests could be minimized. This is why Håvard believed they would offer up an advance settlement for fishers if they stayed out of the areas in question. The CFU would be strongly against this, as it would weaken the arguments upon which they had based their resistance to seismic shooting. Because, he explained, if fishers would stay ashore and watch as the seismic shooting was carried out, money was proven to be the factor that staggered the opposition from the fishers. As a consequence, worries from fishers about a scare effect and the potential killing of larvae and spawn could be taken less seriously the next time around. With the fishers ashore, the seismic shooting would still be a threat, Håvard claimed, and if one accepted the compensation, one implicitly also accepted the argument that the opposition towards seismic shooting was about the threat it represented *for the fisheries* and not for the

fish stocks. Put differently, one would then indirectly accept that the question of vulnerability was moved from being a matter of nature's vulnerability to the question of vulnerable communities and a vulnerable business: the coastal fisheries. But what was also accepted was that this vulnerability could be made up for through financial compensation. The matter of vulnerability would be seen not as founded on negative ecological consequences of seismic shooting, but on a calculation of inadequate income possibilities, in the near future. Thus, one acknowledged – again indirectly – a notion of the coastal fisheries as not being as important for local identity and (ontological) construction of values, and that all that was needed was a sufficient economical compensation - which in the long run would, in Håvards view, severely undermine the foundation for fishery-based local settlement.

This adds up to an interesting angle concerning the opposition to the seismic activities. It was all through this debate considered important for the opponents that the seismic shooting was understood as having a detrimental ecological effect, or at least that one felt that we do not know enough about the effects of seismic shooting for it to be allowed here, where the fish resources are so important. The risk involved was considered too high for the CFU to accept. A complicating matter though, was that in hindering the collection of seismic data one would also sabotage the research which was meant to be performed, in which one sought to deepen the understanding of the consequences of seismic activities on fish, larvae and spawn. The research performed was supposed to assist in making a better judgement considering these areas and the potential for petroleum production when developing a new management plan in 2011, but the question was: would the fishers accept the impartiality of the researchers? Another question was whether the research performed would help make concrete and unarguable some of the concerns of the fishers in terms of scare effects and damage to fish, larvae and fry, or if one again would experience a debate following unclear results which consequently only added to the general insecurity concerning this matter.

A positive response to the offer to be economically compensated was seen by the CFU to hamper their aims, which were to successfully partake in the opposition to petroleum development in the LoVeSe area. As an organisation acting on behalf of others, the CFU administration's evaluation of the actions of other actors was influenced by their concern for the livelihood of their members. In other words: the CFU's role as a defender and promoter of ontological security was threatened, also by

their members, as the basis for their arguments against petroleum production would be weakened if individual fishers accepted the offer to stay away from the disputed areas for a financial reimbursement of calculated losses.

A few days later, I was present at the anticipated meeting between representatives from the Norwegian Oil Directorate (OD) and the CFU. The following scene describe parts of the discussion that took place:

Scene: Distrust in scientific methods

A representative from the OD informed the CFU staff that they had been in meetings with other fishery organisations, and that they had set a period for the implementation of seismic data gathering, lasting from June 29th to August 9th. This, she added, was the period between the seasonal fisheries for Greenland Halibut,¹¹¹ and should therefore be of as little nuisance for the fishers as possible. The seismic boat was to arrive in the area a few days before, though, as its crew would need time to place the necessary equipment in the water and plan its mapping pattern.

The OD representative went on to say that, regretfully, circumstances beyond their control had meant that last years research on consequences on marine life of seismic shooting was abandoned, but that this year they had – in cooperation with the Norwegian Marine Research Institute (Havforskningsinstituttet - HI) – made every possible preparation, and were better prepared than last year. The HI wanted, she said, to conduct research before, during and after the period of seismic shooting, in order to map how it possibly affected migration patterns, but also if it could be found to have a negative effect on the reproduction of local and migrating fish stocks. They therefore wanted to sign contracts with local fishers who set their fishing nets overnight in local waters, so that HI could obtain data (that is, both size of hauls as well as individual fish for post-mortem dissection) from several localities, for comparative measures. As expected, Håvard reacted with scepticism, conveying what he saw as the overall general opinion of the members of CFU. He said that in their mind, the 10 day period of gathering of data after the seismic shooting had ended in no way was enough:

¹¹¹ A species with migration routes ranging from the fjords of Northern Norway to the icy Greenlandic waters, thus the denomination.

“This research will be worthless unless the period for registration of hauls is extended”, he stated, and noted that the important thing to get established, was whether these new investigations could say more about when fish again would start entering the areas after the seismic shooting had ended. Their members, Håvard said, had reported that it took as much as three months before the fish was back last year (in 2008, my comment), after the last seismic survey was implemented. He states as an example that the Haddock, which last year arrived in May, vanished completely in the areas in question after the seismic shooting had started, and was not back until this winter. Overall, the reports he had gotten from members indicated that there was little Haddock to catch at all before Christmas. As for Coalfish, he continued, the best month for hauls has always been in September, now the fisheries are best in December, when the days are shorter and the weather a lot more sinister – which means that the good hauls are much tougher – and more risky - to get at. Håvard continued:

“These examples are based on the past and hands-on experiences of some of the best experts we have on fish populations, migration patterns and so on; the fishers themselves. Their losses were substantial. The fisheries expert accompanying the seismic vessel himself reported that the Herring stood still all through the seismic shooting, - it was not affected. Well, if the Herring was there, why didn’t the Coalfish go after it? Usually, it goes straight for the Herring, but last autumn it took weeks before it arrived.”

The scene again illustrates a *lack of trust in science* as well as a sense that the competence and knowledge of CFU members, by Håvard called ‘*some of the best experts we have on fish populations*’ is disregarded. The practical and financial difficulties that these fishers might or might not experience during the seismic shooting is not our main concern here; rather, it is the way the CFU argues that the fisher’s competence is disregarded and, likewise, the way the CFU finds it proper for them to question the scientific methods through which the gathering of data for an analysis of consequences of seismic shooting on fish population is performed. This lack of trust in the ability of government agencies (like the OD described in the scene), the scientific community and the petroleum sector to include other sources of

knowledge, is of fundamental concern for the local opponents to petroleum I have talked to.

When considering research/ science as one of several security providers, it is of essence to look into how research is understood locally, in what way one sees the information provided from research as relevant for the local situation (see also chapter 3, sections 3.2.2. and 3.2.3). In the case of LoVeSe petroleum activity, it seems like the research conducted is a part of a larger debate which - for now at least - serves as a source of insecurity, rather than security, simply because the feedback from research gives few answers which are regarded as adequate in terms of giving concrete answers to concrete problems as they are perceived locally. The same feeling of insecurity and doubt is raised by local politicians, who more often than not will have as their goal to look favourably on oil and gas development, but regards research as such as being unable to provide concrete answers to their questions. Therefore, research is rarely - from a local point of view – regarded as a provider of security in this particular case.

The questions concerning potential threats from seismic shooting has been clarifying in the sense that they have revealed how a specific, scientifically based management ideology, the ecosystem based management of the IMP-BL, interplays with the need for mapping of petroleum resources in the area, and how these two concerns puts a squeeze on the local population of fishers, their families and the small communities which are still dependent on their access to resources in the waters close to their homes. When commenting on a presentation of the plan for seismic activity and the scientific data gathering to be conducted in the LoVe area for the summer of 2009 at a seminar arranged by StatoilHydro, Håvard Johansen of the CFU thus stated the following:

“Considering the scientific program, we are of course not satisfied with the time allocated (for sample catching, my comment) after the shooting has come to a halt. What we are told by representatives of the fisheries is that the scare effect can last from a couple of weeks up to six months. There are beyond a doubt very different opinions that exists on how long this effect lasts and those 8-10 days is way to short a time frame. It is a very complicated matter, and it needs to be dealt with thoroughly, so that we can get a research result that we

can use, and which is beyond reasonable doubt. So I hope there will be money available for this... The resources needed in order to keep a couple of vessels running this sample catching are relatively small.”¹¹²

The request can only be regarded as partially met, as the catching of fish for scientific purposes only continued on for about three weeks after the seismic shooting ended on August 6th 2009. The project manager, Dr John Dalen of the Institute for Marine Research wrote an e-mail to the author of this thesis on September 28th 2009 and stated that “...Ultimo week 34 - primo week 35 we made an assessment of the catch rate data gathered so far as well as an analysis of data from the fall of 2008, and evaluated these with the aim of measuring probability of getting catch rate data which significantly varied from that caught thus far. Another minor, but not essential factor, was that the Institute of Marine Research had to carry the costs of this additional research effort, as the Norwegian Oil Directorate declined to cover these expenses (my translation).” Again we see how politics frames research to the extent that scepticism concerning its results can be maintained, and even strengthened, as opponents’ suspicions concerning the portrayed ‘objectivism’ of the scientific assessments were seen to have been confirmed.

This is an example of how a common sense notion of insecurity in the small fishing communities in the LoVeSe area is expressed; that the long-lasting effects on the fish stock concerning availability is not adequately investigated in the scientific programs which are to be the basis for the knowledge-based decision concerning oil and gas in LoVeSe. So, even if science might reach the conclusion that the seismic shooting is of no particular threat to the stock itself, the perceived lack of investigations into the possible effects on availability of fish for the coastal fisheries is a matter of concern locally, creating insecurities about the way the ecosystem based management scheme as a governmental technology is able to secure the (part of) population living along the coast involved in the coastal fisheries. As a consequence I would claim that the ability of the coastal fisheries (be it the individual fishers or their union, the CFU)¹¹³

¹¹² Håvard Jacobsen, at the Lofoten Aquarium, April 16th, 2009.

¹¹³ It is worth mentioning that the CFU is an alternative organization to the larger, national organization for all fishers in Norway, *Norges Fiskarlag*. The relation between the CFU and *Norges Fiskarlag* and how the latter handles the petroleum issue in the north is beyond the scope

to play an active part in securing the future of their communities is devalued. Instead, the power/knowledge rationale promoting purely scientific assessments leaves the bearers of traditionally based knowledge with the option of – in the words of Håvard Jacobsen – “hoping for money” available for research to confirm what the coastal fishers believe to be the effects (even though they have not been picked up by science), that the seismic shooting scares fish away and thus creates more insecurity concerning the viability of the coastal fisheries. Thus, science in this particular case does not assist in creating a sense of security amongst practitioners of fishing locally; a sentiment shared by many of their fellow villagers as well. On the contrary, it is a source of insecurity, ontologically.

One of the important incidents this last summer of seismic shooting in the LoVeSe area (before the release of the management plan, at least) was the fact that more than half of the fishermen who initially had planned to go fishing actually took the bargain of staying onshore whilst the seismic shooting took place, thus eradicating an important argument for the survival of the fisheries. For if one acknowledges the fact that seismic shooting is something which is done all through the production phase in an oil field, then the Oil directorate has signalled that the potential resolution of the coexistence-problem can be to buy out the fishers. But also the fishers themselves had sent a signal in more or less the same direction; that it could be a solution for them to stay onshore – not to fish – if they were economically compensated. Thus, they undermined, some would say, the *identity argument* where one sees the fisher/farmer identity as a core symbolic historical figure, which it was of some importance to retain, for reasons reaching *beyond* pure economical argumentation.

I assert then, that there is a phenomenon in the public debate which I have previously referred to, and which is very important: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for ‘relevant knowledge’ is framed by actors *with the power to define*, be they politicians, researchers and academics, public administrators or industrialists, all prone to define *progress and development* in terms of *growth, efficiency, technological development and the ‘taming of nature’* (see chapter 3.2 in particular). Without succumbing to a debate on whether these assertions about development are ‘true’ or ‘morally right’, I

of this thesis, as neither the organization itself nor their representatives has been in focus in my fieldwork.

which to emphasize that they rest on the power/knowledge nexus described earlier which forms the basis for a *governmentality* which seeks to *manage resources through assessing (objectified) risks* with the aim of securing population – a power/knowledge nexus which presupposes a *trust in science* and the establishment of certain *inclusion and exclusion* criteria which defines alternative knowledge systems as useless. Typically, the knowledge which Håvard Jacobsen of the Coastal Fisheries Union conveyed on behalf of the members' concerns about the problems they encountered during the seismic shooting, when their hauls were either diminished in size or they have to try catching them at different times of the year when the weather conditions are tougher – thus exposing them to higher risks, creating *insecurity* – was dismissed as *unscientific* and without merit as 'objective' data upon which one could make 'realistic' assumptions concerning losses and gains. Likewise, alternative development ideas set forth by the People's Action for an Oil-free LoVeSe was dismissed by many industrialists as being unrealistic and based on romantic assumptions of a world without global competition and global need for energy and fossil fuels.

The local opponents to petroleum differs from the proponents then, in their understanding of what the future should look like; they have a perception of *how to secure the continent future* which differs from that of the proponents. In the following, I will present how these *proponents* argue for their point of view, and aim to show how their perceptions is also - just as the opponents – colored by ideas about belonging and a wish to contribute to a secure future for individuals and communities with whom they feel they share a common identity. In this sense, these two groups – the opponents and proponents to petroleum locally - could be seen to have more in common than the polemic statements uttered in public debate might indicate.

Recapitulating, I would suggest that there are three mayor points for analysis that is of particular interest here. The first is to what extent one *trusts science*, as described in chapter 3.2. The second is how informants perceived of the desired future that lies beyond the political decision to be made. For advocates, the desired future obviously lay in a more industrialized business life as basis for a revitalization of their communities. For the adversaries, the desired future was in the potential that they saw inherent in the well-preserved nature and inherited cultural landscape, together with

prioritizing and building alternative energy sources. In other words, the advocates saw a future based on *that which other regions in Norway have got* – connected to petroleum development, while the adversaries aimed for a post-petroleum society – although it is also tied to a retrospective, nostalgic view of the past reliance on the coastal fisheries. Both these themes are present in the scenes, interviews, quotes and fieldwork descriptions I present in this thesis, and they point towards an understanding of the contingent future that exposes the differences in ontological world views the two groups represent. However, there is a third dimension of the debate on petroleum that unites them, and that is the center-periphery dimension. As we have seen, for instance in chapter 5.1 and in the interlude, the identification of an imbalanced power-relationship between the south and the north of the country, between *søringan* and *nordlændingan* is present in the argumentation of both adversaries and advocates. In the following, we will see how these dimensions played a part as local advocates argued for the development of petroleum in LoVeSe.

5.4 Local proponents for Petroleum

In March 2010 – a month or so before the scientific report that was to lay the foundation for a renewed management plan was to be presented (see chapter 4) – a debate opened up in which north-south tensions (or center-periphery, if preferable) again became apparent. And it was the Oslo branch of the Labour Party (Ap) that started the brawl. During their annual meeting, they issued a statement in which they asked their government not to allow petroleum development outside LoVeSe, due to concerns about the environmental risks involved and the controversies it would lead to vis-à-vis fishing interests in the region. As was to be expected, the statement from Oslo provoked local responses from proponents for petroleum, in particular from within the Labour party itself.

In a radio debate the morning after the statement from Oslo was issued, and after being asked by the radio host if there is ‘an anger in the north about those sitting around coffee tables in the south, wanting to decide what should happen to North-Norwegian resources’, the mayor of Vågan municipality in Lofoten, Mr. Hugo Bjørnstad, left no room for doubt about what he thought about the matter:

“I’m more than puzzled by the fact that the Oslo branch (of the Labour Party, my insertion) has decided to opt against the joint party resolution of awaiting

the knowledge-gathering process and the renewal of the management plan due next year. We who live up here, along the coast, refuse to be ‘strangled by protectionism’, and I invite the Oslo branch to come up here and have a look at what has happened with the fisheries here. I can tell you that from 1999-2000, we have lost 2000 fishing boats here.¹¹⁴ If people do not understand what that means, and that it implies a need for a different sector for our survival, then this statement from the Labour party in Oslo is the same as effectively declaring us all a part of a large museum, through permanent protection (of the so-called vulnerable areas, my insertion). This we do not want at all. The strategy here is clearly to protect these areas so that rich tourists can come here and see how things once were.”¹¹⁵

Bjørnstad, himself a Labour party member, criticised his fellow partisans for wanting to decide on the matter ‘over the heads of the northerners’. In this way, he referred to a notion of an asymmetric power relationship between the north and the south in Norway and implicitly, I would suggest, to the history of alleged exploitation of North-Norwegian resources and opportunities by outside forces, as described in chapter 5.1. In this, we again see that proponents of petroleum development locally also evoke identity-based arguments when arguing against a ‘forced protection of nature and preservation of culture’ which Bjørnstad and many of his accomplices feels is being placed upon them by an ‘Oslo-based’, or *søring*-elite.

The petroleum debate lays the foundation for the strangest of bedfellows. In the same radio show, Mr Ketil Solvik-Olsen, a parliamentary representative for the right-wing Progress party (Frp), elected from the petroleum-rich county of Rogaland, joined in with Bjørnstad in his concerns for the local population if unable to tap into the potential resource which petroleum could be. He of course also took the opportunity to criticize the Labour party for what he saw as a radical turn away from its roots in modernization and industrialization towards a ‘café-latte culture’ of environmentalism,

¹¹⁴ Mr, Bjørnstad did not in this interview specify if he referred to his own municipality, to Lofoten, or indeed to the whole LoVeSe area. See chapter 5.1 for an overview of the decline in people employed as fishers in lofoten

¹¹⁵ Hugo Bjørnstad, interviewed in the radio show “Politisk Kvarter”, March 22nd, 2010 (my translation). Accesible from iTunes as podcast, downloaded April 19th, 2010.

leading to centralized control of the districts with the aim of preserving them for the sake of having “nice tourism sites to go to.”¹¹⁶

Bjørnstads and Solvik-Olsens statements show how the center-periphery axis is being invoked, an axis which will be illustrated further below. But they both refer to an equally important basis for arguments in favour of petroleum, and that is a *trust in science and technology*. And while Bjørnstad was sober and careful in his argumentation, stating that his only desire was that one should produce “more knowledge before making any decisions”, Solvik-Olsen went further, and stated that “ ... if Stoltenberg (the Labour party Prime Minister, my insertion) lets this replacement of industry based Labour party members with these young environmentalists continue, it will be the sentiment-based mentality of the young that will prevail, instead of people who know the petroleum business, who can see the real potential. (...) This kind of ‘no’ to petroleum is in fact a fundamental distrust in all potential technology development from here to eternity. I have just been to Lofoten and Vesterålen, and have met people who want to take care of both the fisheries and the petroleum industry.”¹¹⁷

A few months before, at his office at the town hall in Svolvær, Lofoten, I interviewed Hugo Bjørnstad, who was at the time the high-profiled mayor of one of the two largest municipalities in Lofoten, Vågan.¹¹⁸ He was also Head of the Lofoten Council, an advisory assembly of mayors and municipality chief officers which over time developed a strong position as a ‘local voice’ vis-à-vis national authorities, political leaders and the petroleum sector. The following scene describes the interview and my thoughts concerning Bjørnstads reflections about a possible petroleum future.

Scene: “We cannot support these local communities with these small boats anymore”. The mayor.

As we sat down at his desk, Bjørnstad inquired about my research, and wanted to know what I wanted to talk to him about. I told him that I had spoken to several actors

¹¹⁶ Ketil Solvik-Olsen, op.cit.

¹¹⁷ Solvik-Olsen, op.cit.

¹¹⁸ When this is written, in September 2011, the local election results were not yet clear, and it was still uncertain who would become the mayor of Vågan for the next four years.



Abandoned fishing boats. Sund, Lofoten. Photo: The author.

in Lofoten about their reflections on the on-going petroleum debate and the potential futures one could see, with or without oil, and that I was interested in his opinions, both in the capacity of being an elected mayor and as a citizen, living in Lofoten. Bjørnstad nodded, then began talking:

“I was born in a neighbouring municipality, but came here as a one-year-old, and therefore count myself a *Svolværing* (being-from-Svolvær, my insertion). I am a teacher by trade, and have been an active politician since 1982, when I first joined the Labour party (Ap). I have been a registered fisher and participated in the Lofoten fisheries, the large Herring fisheries in the Vestfjord in 78-79, I’ve been trawling for shrimp in the Barents sea and partaken in the seine fisheries outside of the Lofoten Wall (a sea area called ‘*yttersia*’, my insertion). I was also a foreman on building of a high-voltage power line across Bjørnfjell (close to the town of Narvik, my insertion), and I have been working on a freezer ship in Mauretania, as an employee of the Nigerian state. So community life, teaching, politics and practical experience is what has laid the foundation for my take on what it is that we’re struggling with here in Lofoten.”¹¹⁹

Again, the adherence to a specific set of experiences deemed to be of cultural relevance in Lofoten is important. Bjørnstad’s focussed in particular on his practical

¹¹⁹ Interview, Hugo Bjørnstad, November 2009.

experience that enabled him to understand ‘what the real problems were’. In other words, he ascribed a specific knowledge based on what I earlier (in chapter 3) referred to as *enskilment* (Pálsson 1994) as a prerequisite for a level of understanding that enabled Bjørnstad to evoke his identity *as a Svolværing* and *Lofoting* as a basis for political legitimacy in the petroleum question. Bjørnstad thus continued:

“I need to say here, that I always say that it is the fisheries we live on here, in Lofoten, I have myself contributed as a crew member, and my father-in-law was a coastal fisherman (*sjarkfeskar*, referring to the type of boat traditionally used in the small-scale fisheries). So I’ve had it close all along. There are two things, though, that influences my take on the petroleum matter, concerning the fisheries. One is that we have lost 199 fishing boats in Vågan since 1999. (...) The other is what I picked up during a conversation with a fisher a couple of days ago, where he said that the regulations combined with international market prices means that they are uncertain what to go for as haul these days, as for instance the flatfish would have to be sold for under NOK 7 per kilo. And his message was clear: Now, they have to take the gamble on oil and gas, as we cannot support these local communities with these small boats anymore.”¹²⁰

The reason why I described Bjørnstads argument at some length here, is to show how he anchored his position in the debate on petroleum locally in a notion of a specific Lofoten identity. This means that when describing a tight connection to the fisheries, he situated himself as an *insider*, as *one of ‘us’*, and not – as is being claimed by the adversaries to petroleum locally – as one running an errand for the big international petroleum corporations or for the Norwegian state. Similarly to Bjørnstad, the leader of the regional lobbyist organisation LoVe Petro, Mr Ørjan Robertsen, held on to a description aiming at explaining to me the important differences there were, in his opinion, between the petroleum companies, the state, and the local and regional interests, some of which he represented in the debate. I met him at the offices of the local company Norlense in November 2009, a meeting that was to be the first of several opportunities to discuss these matters with him. The following scene includes

¹²⁰ Bjørnstad, op.cit

Robertsens description of his own background, and how he ties his reflections concerning petroleum development to a desire to secure a future for the region.

Scene: Times have changed ... we need more feet to stand on". The petroleum lobbyist.

“I was raised on a small farm on the outside of the Lofoten range, in Melbu municipality in Vesterålen”, Ørjan Robertsen said. “My dad was a fisher, but we also had some cows and whatnot, and ... well, even if I don’t remember it all to well, it was a rough time, poverty ... one didn’t know what to live on the next month. But one of the drivers for change in that area was the initialisation of trawlers, which the Germans established in 1945. Then, in the 50s, the stern trawlers got established in Norway through an innovative business sector in Melbu. This meant that jobs were secured, prosperity and growth. But with the structuralizing moves necessary in the 1990s, again, the local communities were struck hard. The processing plant, became out-dated, and as time went by, a new factory was built, but with only 120 workers instead of 420 at the old one. A comparative loss for Oslo would have been 45000 jobs! ¹²¹

The loss for the community was of course severe. And for Robertsen, with a background from politics and the finance industry (as a bank manager), it was logical to look for on the one hand what incentives had initiated the first way out of poverty in the area, and on the other, what incitements elsewhere in the country could represent a new chance to build a basis for jobs, development and prosperity. The answer, Robertsen said, was obvious:

“Times have changed, and our youth educates themselves away from the traditional industries. There’s not much to do about that. Therefore, if we are to maintain population here, we need more feet to stand on, other drivers that are in need of a different type of competence. Whether it is renewable energy or oil and gas ... the opportunities are there. But with oil and gas, strong international players have come here to stay, and they’re in the drivers seat. And with development moving northward, there will be opportunities, if local politicians work hard at it. The Aukra-complex is one example. Kristiansund were like us, they had seen nothing of the development

¹²¹ Interview, Ørjan Robertsen, November, 2009

from petroleum come their way. But then, politicians worked ‘the quiet diplomacy’ for a long time, and the landing facility at Aukra was built. The petroleum industry fought the idea, as it was not the most cost-efficient solution, but the parliament made the decision: the gas had to go onshore, be processed and shipped from Aukra. (...)”¹²²

As we can see, the examples here show that the focus is on how the downscaling of the fisheries, combined with a sense of responsibility in terms of providing young people an opportunity to stay in or to return to their communities (and of course invite newcomers as well). Bjørnstad’s focus as a politician is congruent in many ways with the concerns of the businessman Robertsen; they both see the fragility in still being dependent on a relatively one-sided primary industry that has been seen to be extremely vulnerable to fluctuations in prices internationally. And as a consequence of this vulnerability, what is left of people in the fishery sector has increased efficiency to the point that only a fraction of fishers and buyers compared to 20, 30 or 40 years ago today handle the same amount of fish. In this way, labour force had been freed from primary production – but without local alternatives. Therefore, young people moved away from the region. And it was time, Robertsen and Bjørnstad argued, to bring them back.

The following section then, is a description of some of the discussions I had during fieldwork with business owners (and as such providers of work places) concerning the best options available to secure the contingent future of local communities in Lofoten, where discussions about the future of the fisheries served as a starting point.

5.5 Business as usual or inevitable change?

“There has never before been less fishers in Norwegian fisheries than today. The accumulated debt in Norwegian fisheries has never been higher. And the threat to the main fish stocks and our way of life has never been more immanent. This management system sucks.”¹²³

¹²² Robertsen, op.cit.

¹²³ Conversation, fisher (anonymous), Ramberg, march 2009

The downscaling of the small-scale fisheries all along the Norwegian coast for the last twenty years have struck fishing communities in Nordland County hard, and particularly in the Lofoten and Vesterålen regions (Jentoft 1993; Jentoft and Chuenpagdee 2009). As mentioned previously, the number of active fishers has decreased steadily, in parallel with the decrease in population. One can therefore state that small-scale fishers (or those who would be recruited into the small-scale fisheries) have to some degree found other work other places. The interpretation locally of what this does to the small communities is on the one hand characterized by a ‘counter-power’ movement, meaning *a certain resilience* to the perceived inevitability of the need for efficiency measures if Norwegian fisheries are to overcome the global competition. On the other hand, local entrepreneurs both within and outside of the fisheries, have for some time seen the need for a certain downscaling of the fisheries, and as a consequence, a need for new incentives for a private sector characterized by high production turnover but relatively low profits, a shortage of investment capital and high salary expenses. As a fish buyer said to me during a brake in a meeting on local business development, arranged by the local opposition to petroleum:

“There are too many who need too high a salary touching the fish. We need less people handling the bulk products and more people producing industrialized quality products.”¹²⁴

Another informant – a man in his eighties who had seen his share of development within the fisheries - told me the following a year before:

“There’s one thing we haven’t been good at, and that is that we’re still running the fisheries like we did when I got started. We pack up the salted fish in on-thousand-kilo crates and ship them out of the country, the roe we send in barrels to Sweden. Stockfish is freighted in 50-kilo bundles to the South-European markets. The salmon is carried fresh to Denmark, where they have built a huge processing industry based on Norwegian fish. The Swedes makes all kinds of delicacies based on herring and roe, which we sell in barrels. This

¹²⁴ Personal communication, fish buyer at the business development seminar in Svolvær, April 2010.

we should have done ourselves! And it would have employed a lot more people than the petroleum industry, I'm sure of it!"¹²⁵

These statement here represents a reflection of an inheritance within the coastal fisheries in that it was first and foremost to provide an income for fishers, not be a bulk merchandise for an industrialized business sector that needs to succumb to the rules of the international free trade system: production costs must be as low as possible, so that the business is less vulnerable in case of a drop in prizes. And indeed, the restructuring of the Norwegian fishery sector has to a large extent been geared towards this goal (Jentoft 1993; Hersoug, Holm et al. 2000; Hersoug 2005; Holm and Nielsen 2007), although some might feel that an even stronger restructuring regime will have to be implemented. In short, one could argue, as did Bjørn Kjensli – a former researcher at Statistics Norway, now a local politician and business developer in Vestvågøy, Lofoten (and also a prominent member of the Peoples movement against Petroleum, the PA) that the restructuring of the Norwegian fisheries was inevitable under our current resource management regime, given that it was the last of the primary sectors to undergo a reorganisation geared towards making it less vulnerable and more competitive on the international market. Bjørn explained:

“When we here in Lofoten now focus on the decrease in population, we seem to forget that the effect we get now is the same they had for instance in the forestry based communities in Eastern Norway in the 1960s and 1970s. (...) There, 7000 loggers suddenly disappeared, left was modern production machinery and about 300 men. What's happening here isn't any more dramatic than what happened there decades ago. And even if there's been a steady decrease in fishers, the amount of fish taken ashore has been stable – even increased! And as there are fewer fish buyers receiving the fish onshore, the possibility for all-year work places is better, thus creating a situation of higher predictability both in terms of expenses and production volumes.”¹²⁶

Bjørn went on to argue that these mechanisms in fact changed the very nature of the fisheries; from being first and foremost a source of income and work for small

¹²⁵ Informant 5, April 2009

¹²⁶ Interview, Bjørn Kjensli, april 2009

communities to becoming a large-scale industrialized sector where centralisation around a few larger production units –larger vessels for catching the fish and big fish buyer facilities replacing several smaller ones dispersed out in the small communities. Bjørn – and most of those agreeing with him on the petroleum issue – would argue for a political intervention for the salvaging of the small scale catching and production units within the fisheries, for the sake of small community survival:

“The thinking nowadays is that the smaller boat will have to yield for the larger vessels. But they are so mobile that they can deliver anywhere, which is bad for the local fish buyers. For community development therefore, a much more free and open access to small scale fishing than there are today would ensure that small boats and fish delivery plants could provide all-year jobs which would make these places more attractive to live in as well.”¹²⁷

This divergent view on the future of fisheries and what type of fishery management is the most beneficial is a part of a larger debate within fishery management studies, a debate too wide-reaching and technical to delve further into here (but see for instance (Jentoft 2007; Johnsen, Murray et al. 2007; Bundy, Chuenpagdee et al. 2008; Jentoft and Chuenpagdee 2009)). It suffices to note that this debate is to a large extent congruent with a divide in opinion concerning the potential for a viable future for the smallest, most fishery-dependent communities. As we shall see (and which was also visible in the interlude before this chapter), practitioners of the small-scale fishery trade will often argue that the viability of small-scale communities are hindered by ‘big business’ and ‘big society’; forces upholding that centralisation and industrialization is what is needed for a prospective future. In this sense, the debate points back to my description of a typical tension between notions of ‘the village’ and ‘the center’, described in chapter 5.1, and is also related to the discussion about *ontological security* which precisely points to the problem of articulation of different *world views* or *ideas about the future and how to make sense of it*. Thus, in the western part of Lofoten in particular, where small-scale fishing villages dominate, people (both for and against oil) shared a specific concern for the future of these small communities that underscored center-periphery relations which explained the strong

¹²⁷ Interview, Bjørn Kjensli, April 2009



‘Urbanized village life.’ Hotel facade, Svollvær, Lofoten. Photo: The author.

emphasis on local concerns and the relatively small influence from national or global concerns in the petroleum debate.

In the urbanized Svollvær/Kabelvåg area, though, in eastern Lofoten, concerns about what is best for the country and for the world are more often heard (even though local concerns are also here the most important). A concrete example of how this difference plays out in local discourses is concerning the protection of nature. In the west, the arguments are based on a notion of living in some sort of balance – or equilibrium – with nature, and that the outside disturbance of this balance, here represented by petroleum, will hamper with this balancing act. In the east, similar arguments can of course be heard but then more often than not put forward *on behalf* of those communities where the fisheries are an important backbone for society, mostly situated in the west.

The following scene is processed and rewritten on the basis of interviews and fieldwork notes taken in relation to discussions with local business entrepreneurs in East Lofoten. It reflects, in my view, a *pragmatic approach to the matter of petroleum production* that first and foremost has its roots in the very reason why these successful businesses are still located in ‘the outskirts of things’, in the communities they once grew out of. In what way, their arguments can be understood in light of my previous discussions of how local identity plays a part in the identification of threats, risks and thus matters of security – both for communities and individuals. The scene is set at

the industrial area of Osan in Svolvær, the date is April 2010, and I am about to be given a lecture on what it means to run a business in a small place.

Scene: “Business here is dealing with neighbours and old friends from school”

From fieldwork notes and interview transcripts, April 2010:

With the downscaling of the fisheries that has taken place over the last two decades, repair yards and ship technology providers in Northern Norway has become more and more reliant upon the activities connected to offshore petroleum production. However, in Svolvær, the traditional connection to the fisheries still stands firm, and even though there are less bookings for dock place and repairs now than before – due to the fact that there are fewer boats out there, overall – the contracts they get tend to be bigger, as the boats themselves are larger and more technically advanced.

As many advocates of petroleum development in LoVeSe pointed to the potential for what can be called supporting businesses (shipyards, ship technology installers, mechanics, small-scale spare-part industries, and so on), I had decided to ask for an interview with a representative of these businesses in Lofoten. Fortunately, the proprietor and manager of the largest yard dock in Lofoten called Skarvik, Mr Svein Harald Løken, was generous enough to spend two hours with me, discussing matters connected to the potential petroleum development in particular, but also general concerns he as a business owner and entrepreneur had about the development trends of his community. Løkens statements are typical in the sense that they portray a certain sober-mindedness in the description of what to expect from a future petroleum development in the LoVeSe area. I base this statement – that Løkens approach can be described as ‘typical’ - on a notion I have developed after talking informally and formally with several business executives and industry leaders in Lofoten. Most of them held a wait-and-see attitude to the potential for their particular business or trade in connection to the petroleum industry. Not to say that that in itself referred to some sort of resistance to the petroleum industry; rather, it is I believe a reflection of a positioning in which few wanted to take the risk of getting stuck in planning for a development which then was seen not to be fulfilled. In addition, the risk-taking capacities of these relatively small firms in terms of being able – or willing – to raise high-risk capital in order to position themselves vis-a-vis the petroleum business was not very high; indeed, the future with petroleum was seen as a road paved with

insecurity and difficult decisions which may put at risk the relatively stability of these small-scale businesses. The 'grow-or-die' mentality of large-scale industrial development can in itself be a source of insecurity, not least because the implication that those who risked everything and won would be in a position where they vacuumed the labor market for what little there was of a locally based competent work force. Thus, with petroleum, the option of deciding not to take the risk could mean risking going down. Svein Harald Løken explained:

“I’m in a line of business where many believe that there will be increased opportunities here, with oil. This business was founded on the activity that has been along the coast; the fisheries, ferry transports, rescue boats and so on – that still is our backbone. Overall, I’m certain that the yard business in the north has been halved. For example, 25 years ago the shipyard industry in Harstad occupied 1000 men. Today, there are 45 left. In Svolvær things have not been so dramatic, but yards in Bodø are close to shutting down, and those at Ibestad, Skjervøy and Rognan have all gone down. There’s some pressure from some actors who want me to say that our yard is dependent on the opening of LoVeSe for petroleum. Not so! But it has been important for us that the petroleum development has moved northward, but outside here ... I dunno. We have to carefully exploit the natural resources here, and if we can get the same heightened activity in the north as such by opening more in other (less vulnerable, my insertion) areas, then that would be one and the same for us, and perhaps better overall.¹²⁸

Løken also said he thought it to be ‘unrealistic’ that much of the jobs and business opportunities would come in the small communities or even in the smaller towns, like Svolvær:

“It would be no use to say that you want 30 civil engineers to work in Ballstad (a small community in Lofoten, my insertion). If you do, you’ll get two who want the job – those two from Ballstad originally who sees it as an opportunity to move back home, where they can fish coalfish and walk in the mountains. But for thirty engineers ... not even Svolvær would be able to handle that, I think. But Harstad could, and Tromsø, of course...”

¹²⁸ Interview, Svein Harald Løken, April 2010

Løken thus focused on the premises for his business inherent in the society in which his family built it, but without dismissing the potential for learning something new. It's small scale and fragile, he argued, and questioned the potential for concrete benefits for the smaller communities of Lofoten – but simultaneously argued that the incentives for the north as a whole that petroleum might bring could have positive effects also in Lofoten. But when questioned if he would bid for growth, come petroleum, he hesitated slightly before answering:

“We are part of a conglomerate who are in a bid for a maintenance-contract for the Norne petroleum ship. Our partners in that bid have more experience when it comes to the petroleum sector, so most of what we might get out of it would naturally flow their way. By now, I have no idea what there will become of it, and we have not based our future ... but it is one of many options for ... you know. But if we are chosen, it is a way to start learning something about the petroleum industry. It would not be a mayor contract for us, by all means, but it would be a start.”

We continued discussing other aspects of the petroleum industry and its consequences in general for North-Norwegian business before he again started talking about his own business, this time focussing on its local roots:

“Remember, I represent a family business, and we have ... well, we are building this dry dock here now, but we are building it, not to grow into something big, but to secure what we have. We have to make money, otherwise it's ‘goodbye and goodnight’. But we are more concerned with securing what we have than to engage in larger experiments and grow to, say, employing 160 men. It is more important that we employ 60 here and that we keep that level of activity for 20 years than to grow based on taking high risks. Here's the thing: some think that the best thing to do if you inherit a million is to invest it, to either grow or loose, sort of. But others will think that it might be smart to save it, in case you get sick and so on. I'm like that. We are doing ok here, the fisheries still provide for a sound basis for our business, we are well positioned in the market – I think we'll manage! But of course, we will be curious about developments, and ready to learn new things. But if someone comes here and offers me a five-year contract, involving another 100 men in the yard ... I'm not so sure I'd take it. What would it mean for us? What sort of spin-offs ...?”

“Do you mean outside the business?” I asked.

“Yes, one would have to think hard about this,” Løken replied. “It would not be ok for me to just let 100 men go in this small community, after a contract’s finished. We’re dealing with neighbours and old friends from school here. Therefore, family-run businesses in small places like this one will be much more geared towards securing what we have than in larger places, I think. I have four men here, who I went to school with, in the same class; another ten were in classes just before or just after me. That’s how it is here, and they have the same needs as I have, to have a certain level of security and to be able to provide for oneself, family and community. I have lived all my life here, except for a few years at school in Trondheim. My kids live here, and some of them even work here with me. Therefore, a business like this one will more likely be founded on another set of values than those strictly geared at profit maximization all the time. A family business like ours will think more in terms of long term, local spin-off effects.”

Just next door to Løkens repair yard in Osan industry area in Svolvær, Paul Lillestøl manages a manufacturing plant for pelagic fish processing. Now a part of a larger industrial complex owned and run from the western part of Norway, Egersund Lofoten AS was originally established based on the combined efforts from local fish buyers and businesspeople and the municipality. Originally a cold storage facility for pelagic fish enabling the fish buyers to receive catches from an increasing number of trawlers (not least due to the influx of Russian trawlers in Norwegian harbours), the partners soon began thinking bigger, Lillestøl said¹²⁹ :

“In 2002, they decided to rebuild the facility, aiming at processing and not only storing pelagic fish. This also meant investing in production machinery, and in the development of better capacity on the quays for receiving, both from small and larger boats. The increase has been phenomenal, and after some start-up issues, we have increased our annual turn-over of fish from 12-15 tonnes the first year, to 52 000 tonnes last season. But the local owners soon saw that rationalisation was the rule of the game, and with pelagic fish the competition is fierce – so they decided to sell off their ownership to Egersund, last year (in 2009, my comment). One plant like this

¹²⁹ Interview, April 2010.

alone is too difficult in today's market. And the savings on interest rates alone is phenomenal.”

Naturally, we talked quite a lot about the international fish trade systems, Lillestøl and I, and he explained how the producers of pelagic products was stuck in an internal competition in which they all lost. Also, we discussed the matter of seasonal changes in work force and the need for more and more skilled personnel, a matter in which conflicts with a possible future petroleum production might become apparent. Lillestøl said,

“We have about five or six on an all-year basis, then another thirty or so during peak season. We have twelve coming in from Lithuania every year, hard-working from September ‘till Christmas, then back here again in January ‘till the Herring season is over. Then there’s the rest ... recruited locally, and they do other work the rest of the year, on Salmon farms, or maybe they do some construction work or whatnot. Besides, they make very good money for the months they work here, so many have the possibility to slow down a little for the rest of the year. All these we are dependent on, their expertise and their flexibility. In the future, though, I expect it to become increasingly difficult to recruit personnel. As the factory becomes more and more sophisticated, we are in need of highly skilled personnel, and compete with the petroleum industry, a sector with which not even we can compete in terms of favourable conditions.”

“How come it’s a problem? Isn’t it rather so that there is a need for more high-tech work places and interesting job possibilities here?” I asked.

“Well yes”, Lillestøl replied, “and no. The thing is, the right people for us, they would prefer the petroleum industry, going back and forth, long off-shift periods, a good salary ... more spare time. But I still do not think that we should leave the oil, just lying there. At one point or another, we should make use of it. But I’m not so sure it will benefit us here, concretely. There is, of course, the matter of risking oil spills and the concern over the Lofoten brand – as a guarantee for something crisp and clean. But in the end, I do believe that coexistence between the sectors is possible.

Løken and Lillestøls responses to my initial questioning of how they would position themselves with regards to a potential future petroleum development should not, then,

be read as a ‘no’ to petroleum. In fact, they would both adhere to arguments for a necessity for change that in one way or another would preferably involve the petroleum business, and similarly relate to the matter of petroleum in LoVeSe on a more ‘aggregated’ level; that is, they would eventually refer to the national or global circumstances which, they thought, spoke in favour of extracting the petroleum to be found there. However, they were less likely to adhere to the notion of the petroleum sector as being that which would ‘save’ the regions from the ‘ghost of depopulation’, as it is phrased in Norwegian. A *pragmatist* attitude towards the notion of the petroleum sector being able to ‘make Lofoten a more secure place’ instead characterized the opinions of most of the industrialists and businesspeople from the region with whom I discussed the matter. They would hope that things would be better, but was not at all convinced. Besides, arguments connected to the national level – ensuring the viability of the all-important Norwegian petroleum industry, for instance – and global concerns – the ability to produce relatively ‘greener’ energy than, say, brown-coal power plants – were also voiced more frequently amongst these informants than those more embedded in coastal fisheries, further west in Lofoten. But they were also sceptical to what many called a ‘scare campaign’ from environmentalists, portraying the petroleum business as the most imminent threat to the Lofoten seashore. Still, a typical opinion in business milieus prone to be positive to oil was that the matter is in the end to be decided elsewhere, and that meanwhile, they continue to do business based on what there is, not what might or might not be of opportunities.¹³⁰ I believe the following statement is symptomatic for this type of sentiments:

“There’s a lot of talking going on, I must say. They come up here, petroleum companies, politicians ... and we have to stop what we are doing, present our business, what it is we are doing and our visions for the future. And then they leave, and we hear no more from them – until next time they’re up here again, with the national press on a leash. (...) In fact, I’m quite at ease with the whole thing. My working days take everything I have out of me, in order to make sure we produce and contribute in the community. My only concern though, is that

¹³⁰ Interviews, Svein Harald Løken (April 2010), Terje Olav Hansen (April 2010), Ørjan Robertsen (April 2010), Sigvald Rist (April 2009), Informant 3, April 2010

us living here in the north should have equal opportunities - that's what I'm concerned with. In that respect, I am not at all on the front lines concerning petroleum development (in LoVeSe, my insertion), if that's what you're asking."¹³¹

What I have found, then, is that reflections about belonging, identity and, ultimately, ontological security for oneself, family and community at large played a part in how informants connected to the business sector was spurred by the on-going petroleum debate. In retrospect, I also find that the assumption that being positive to - or at least curious about - petroleum development as detached from a particular *Lofoten*-identity (a claim in line with how some of the opponents have sought to annex *being a Lofoting* as something which predetermines a negative view on petroleum) in fact is an oversimplification that deflates and essentializes identity to an extent which strips it of its constructed nature as well as its inherent capacity to absorb cultural change. As the examples in this section was meant to illustrate, an identity-based, community focussed line of argument can be found on both sides of the divide, that between adversaries and advocates. For the business people here, belonging to the local community and a sense of obligation towards the continuation of their contribution to the *security* of their communities makes them reflect on both threats and risks *and* opportunities, come petroleum or not.

5.6 Trusting petroleum

During fieldwork, both proponents and opponents to the plans for petroleum development in LoVeSe emphasize the concept of trust. Therefore, I will here seek to show how in practice how trust is played out in connection with two specific themes; the matter of oil spill prevention in particular and the more general matter of risk assessments. And I start with another scene; this time, situated at Statoils Headquarters for their High North operations, in Harstad.

Scene: Trust and oil spill prevention

In November 2009, at Statoils Harstad-office, a small group of people - a colleague from the University of Tromsø, three Statoil-employees and myself - had gathered in the meeting room. Edd-Magne Torbergsen, previously the information manager for

¹³¹ Informant 3, April 2010

Statoils department in Harstad, but at the time of the meeting a part of the High North-project within Statoil, leaned backwards in his chair, and looked at me inquisitively. I had just asked him a question concerning what level of oil spill preparedness was sufficient, in Statoils view, for the LoVeSe-area to be opened. By then, we had talked about the geological potential of the area, the need for an impact study for the continuation of the process of mapping the potential for the region if petroleum development in the LoVeSe area was decided upon, and the management plan process, in which he had wanted to see more of a ‘practical’ and ‘realistic’ approach to management. “The area is defined as sensitive”, he said with a sigh. “But its not, actually. Most of it is extremely resilient and robust. It would be more accurate to say that there are vulnerable ‘pockets’ in the area” – an argument that is to be found also in the KONKRAFT-report about the high north published less than a year before. (KONKRAFT 2009). Robertsen had been a Statoil-employee for over twenty years, he said, and had worked on the first management plan of the area in 2006. Now he had been asked one of the questions he surely had prepared for. He leaned forward. “Environmental risks are always there, but we constantly assess probability of occurrence and probable consequence for all our activities, he said and continued: - Before we can be given an approval from the Petroleum Safety Authority of Norway (Petroleumstilsynet –abbr. Ptil), we have to provide an environmental risk assessment and an emergency preparedness analysis. Concerning preparedness, the Climate and Pollution Agency (Klima og forurensingstilsynet – abbr. Klif) sets the requirements. Now, there are no clear, objective demands in the Klif guidelines for oil spill preparedness. In Statoil, our attitude is that Norwegian petroleum operations shall be based on best available technology. Besides, concerning oil spill lenses, one often forget that bad weather - particularly braking waves common in the LoVeSe waters - often is the best protection against spill on land, as rough sea make the oil effervesce, blend into the sea and disperse.” “But is it good enough?” I asked. “It’s the best we have, and therefore, it has to be good enough,” he replied.

This meeting took place after a request from a colleague and myself, in order to get a broader view on how different actors looked at scenarios for the future of the region, with or without petroleum development. Interestingly, the Statoil – meeting was instead devoted to a presentation of the arguments for a petroleum opening of the regions they wanted to have conveyed, and was a possibility, it seemed, for the Statoil

representatives to ‘make sure the social researchers get it right’. The arguments were of a technical kind, and geared towards an introduction into the techno-scientific risk management and controlling system that Statoil had developed for their operations, enabling them to meet governmental requirements. We were shown and explained how they did preliminary and post-operational assessments of environmental impacts, how they had developed new drilling technology for the sake of minimizing cuttings spill and helped develop non-chemical dispersion fluids, and so on.

What is most interesting for my purpose here, is to show that with different starting points for discussing the matter of petroleum development in the regions, different acceptance of threats and risks may surface. For Torbergsen, it seems, the best available oil spill preparedness technology is good enough, not because it meets some objective level of security against oil spill soiling the shore, but because what is being used is the best we have. And as the governmental agency in charge of setting the requirements does not require a set quality standard (for instance that the oil lenses in use should handle waves up to three, four or five meters), he does not think it is necessary either. That is not to say that he does not believe in the importance of good preparedness systems, neither that his position reveals a certain ‘sloppiness’ in the face of environmental risk. Rather, I believe, it is a reflection of a particular stand on the matter of trust in expert systems which we have dealt with earlier in this thesis; that is, that the expert evaluations of the potential of an oil spill, the assessment of the damaging potential of such an oil spill and the available technology joint together is seen to enable them to manage the risk inherent in a possible future petroleum production in LoVeSe,- in a manner deemed ‘acceptable’.

Statoils representative, Mr. Torbergsen, is of course not alone in trusting the risk management systems built into the operational basis for the Norwegian petroleum industry. Indeed, many will state that the way in which the Norwegian state together with the industry has developed systems for managing threats and risks is exemplary, and well within the parameters of what generally would be accepted as ‘safe’. For instance, written statements to the hearing process ahead of the preparation of a new management plan for the Barents and Lofoten seas (IMP-BL) from representative of the national research community engaged in risk assessment and risk modelling show that most experts agree that the level of risk involved – be it for biological life in the ocean or the shoreline – is extremely low (see chapter 4). As we have discussed

earlier, the reason for composing risk assessments and risk models is twofold. One is to create a system through which the contingent future can be managed, that is a system in which the means and goals of a particular policy aimed at managing (the) risk(s) is listed, evaluated and operationalized; the other is to create *a sense of security* for those potentially affected: Calculations have been made, and the potential for something happening is overwhelmingly small. Low probability and a level of alertness deemed sufficient by experts and representatives for the managing state means that there is a low risk of something severe happening. Thus, the sense of insecurity propelled by anxiety for something *bad* happening should, in principle, be weakened in the population.

But trust in these expert systems is a fragile construction, and as I have shown, I have met both trust and distrust in these systems during my fieldwork. In fact, much of the basis for local opposition to petroleum development is based on distrust in both *ability* (that is, are they good enough at what they do?), and *willingness* (to perform on behalf of local interest and the environment) on the part of the petroleum industry.

5.7 The importance of identity construction to community based ontological security

In the following, I will present two scenes that aim to describe experiences I had during fieldwork that made me reflect in particular on the connections between identity construction, the identification of threats and risks and the security of both individuals and collectives. In the first scene, I describe a fishing trip together with two brothers, Ivar and Henrik, accounting for how reflexivity, interpretive choices and a description of ontological presumptions can offer an alternative way of presenting knowledge about lives that will be affected by a possible future petroleum development. The second scene is based on an interview I did with an elderly fisher whose storytelling exemplifies the way in which a constructed iconic past is an important part of the ontology (as in ‘world view’) that many of my informants, particularly in western Lofoten, adhere to.

Common in both scenes, is an interest in bodily practices as basis for identity and knowledge construction (see also section 3.2.3). As Gísli Pálsson have shown, the way the body responds to the surroundings that it is exposed to is both culturally embedded and reaffirmed through processes of learning, enabling and

(re)construction – processes which all include the possibility for adaptation and change as well as a strong inclination to preserve knowledge understood as important (Pálsson 1994). Several of my informants repeatedly told me that there are parts of the trade of being a fisher that is not to be taught in a classroom - statements that I – through my experiences on the boats that I have been invited onto – can concur with.¹³² This particular acquisition of knowledge – which Pálsson calls *enskilment*, is based upon “ ...very real, physical effects, durable dispositions inscribed in the *habitus*. The novice imitates the *actions* of others, not simply their models and discourses; practical schemes ‘pass directly from practice to practice without moving through discourse and consciousness’ ” (ibid: 920, paraphrasing Bourdieu). In this way, Pálsson argues for an approach to learning where the researcher exposes him/herself to “the nausea of the initial learning stages in ethnographic work” (ibid: 905), and where a theory of practice is what informs one epistemological stance.

With this in mind we turn to field, to lives lived at sea. The first scene I wish to present is based on field notes taken just after I had just finished a two-day fishing trip on the boat of Ivar and Henrik, - two brothers living in a small community in Western Lofoten called Skjelfjord, who for almost twenty years had worked together as fishers.

Scene: “We are fishers, and that’s all there is time for”. Going fishing with Ivar and Henrik.

I arrived at Ramberg around 11 at night, after having travelled with the coastal steamer ‘Hurtigruten’ from Tromsø to Stamsund, before travelling by car to the quay at Ramberg, where Ivar met me and provided me with a place to sleep on board the boat. Ten hours later, I was hanging over the rail of the MS Veine, experiencing how the same waves that the boat so easily tackled was transmitted onto my stomach as a direct, physical pain. In short, I was seasick. I had volunteered to smash and kill the edible crabs that had entangled themselves in the nets, as it is considered too time consuming to untangle them – at that time of the year, they were more or less empty shells with little foodstuff in them, and therefore of no commercial value to the fishers. I stood between Henrik, who operated the draw work which pulled the nets

¹³² This without implying that I have spent enough time on board fishing boats to have learned a great deal; rather, I mean simply that I have personally experienced that there are things to learn onboard which no book or theory could teach me. See also the scene to follow below.

out of the sea, and his brother Ivar who stood a bit further aft, pulling fish out of the nets, while simultaneously operating the device which straightened the nets and readied them for re-launch into the sea.



Henrik and Ivar Myklebust, fishers. Photo: Carsten Aniksdal

I completed the two last net chains before gratefully following Ivars suggestion of going to the wheelhouse to ‘make sure we don’t drift onto something’ – a suggestion that I saw as an invitation to me to have a short break indoors. This way, he also got me out of the way when the deck was to be hosed down and the catch moved below. MS Veine is equipped with autopilot, GPS, FM- and VHF radio, and a computer-based map device with a digital geocoding system of the positions of boats and fishing gear. A seasick PhD-student would hardly make a difference. But Ivar is a good judge of character, and understood that what I needed was an assignment, and sure enough, when it was time for us to set a new course, I was put to the task, following clear instructions, before the skipper went back to filling one of his many other statures on deck.

Later, we gathered in the wheelhouse to have coffee. In the local dialect, is initiated by the words ‘drek kaffe’ (literally ‘drink coffee’), and initiates a session which can occur at any moment of the day – if there’s time – of almost ritual importance (resembling in this respect the British tea time event); it may include both small chat, general discussions about local life, political discussion and private matters - and thus provide for a setting where knowledge around and about the fishers trade is reaffirmed, as well as social bonds. Both on board and onshore, the sessions amongst fishermen going on around the kettle (or filter coffee machine), warm cup in hand, are

settings in which social memory is (re)created.¹³³ During coffee, then, both Ivar and Henrik shared their opinions on the fisheries and the structural changes in the trade, on oil and gas and about life in general in the outskirts. They talked about the feeling of being lonely at sea, and that the decimation of the local fisheries now meant that even the old structural rules for usage of the seas during the Lofoten fisheries (regulated by a separate law; The Lofoten Act) had been abandoned – simply because there was no longer need for a regulation of access, due to the smaller number of boats involved in the fisheries:

“The old guys have been ‘structured out’ of the fisheries. Back in the days there could be hundreds of small boats on the fishing grounds out here, and we could be in contact with maybe around twenty each day. Yesterday - and today, as you have seen – we have had eye contact with two boats, and radio contact with two others. This is normal these days”, said skipper Ivar. “Last year we were fishing for days from Ballstad without seeing a single boat”. Technology is also a part of this ‘de-socializing’ of the fisheries: “We have installed this digital geocoding system¹³⁴ which enables us to see where the other boats go and where they set their nets. Then I can go home and check the web site of the Norwegian Fishermen’s Sales Organisation (Norges Råfisklag) and find out how much they have caught that day. This is the stuff we used to talk about back then, on the VHF (short wave radio) or on the quay, but now I can just access the information myself.”

As information about catches and good areas for fishing no longer formed the basis for negotiations, manipulation and the building of alliances, the fishers were thus deprived of those settings in which a commonality and joint identity could be (re)created. Technology sets new premises for information sharing, and thus of course influences how the community of fishers interacts. To Ivar and Henrik, it was important to bring forth that there are a number of different way of being a fisher today, and that the particular type of fisher they identified with is on the defensive.

¹³³ It is where – in the words of Paul Connerton – “the narrative of one life (becomes) part of an interconnecting set of narratives; it is embedded in the story of those groups from which individuals derive their identity” (Connerton 1989).

¹³⁴ In line with the tradition of the fisheries, it has been given a name heavily influenced by the local dialect – ‘kartplottar’.

“We are fishers, and that’s all there is time for”, Henrik said, and made reference to all those ‘others’ who either spend only parts of their time fishing, or work shifts on board larger vessels, with a different perspective on sea, equipment and way of life than the all-consuming fisher’s life. The two brothers run a full-year fishery business, and spoke about their annoyance with colleagues who had been ‘caught up’ in the brawl about the quotas for cod as being the only way of surviving as fishers:

“We fish all year round, and even though the Pollack fisheries are hard work with a marginal return rate, we still make money of it. One can manage doing this, you know, if you’re ready for some hard work!”

Ivar and Henrik cast four chains these days in March, each with 25 nets. This week, catches had been moderate. The first day I was out with them they caught about a thousand kilo, the second day just below 750. This led them to decide to go several nautical miles further out to sea, to a different fishing bank on a seabed slope where they believed the catches would be better. “There will also be less crabs to kill,” Ivar said, grinning. The downside to it was of course the amount of time and fuel it took to get them there and back.

From the catch area, it took us about an hour and a half to reach the Fish Dealer at Hamnøy, a small port a few miles west of Ramberg. The owner of the facility, the legendary Ole Karl Rostad, was in his mid-eighties, and stood firm in resistance to the wave of bankruptcies and discontinuations that hit many of his competitors that year. He still paid the sticker price for the fish – NOK 13,25 per kilo gutted skrei, unsorted – at a time when many dealers were very careful not to pay too much for small or poorer quality fish. Thus, Rostad was the one who paid most per haul in West-Lofoten, these winter days in March 2009. Ivar manoeuvred MS Reines alongside the quay, and Henrik – now wearing his oilskins – jumped onshore and moored, before manning the crane used to hoist the total two-day haul onshore. A worker in a forklift picked it up, and brought it inside. There, the fish was drained in fresh water, the crates belonging to MS Veines replaced before the catch was weighed. Ivar and Henrik wrote the amount on the note of purchase (a sign of mutual trust and understanding between seller and buyer, a gesture most appreciated by the autonomous fishers), before it was delivered at an office next door for further processing. The catch would then be reported in to the Fishermen’s Sales

Organisation, who was then obliged - within 20 days – to pay the fishers for the catch, on behalf of the original buyer.

Many stories has been told – also to me – about fishers warning their children about the danger and hardship of being a fisher, asking them to seize any opportunity to make something else of their lives. But, as Ivar said, back in the day, there were always enough youngsters who stayed behind anyway who either wanted to go to sea or simply lacked the skills or opportunity to do something else, - enough to maintain the number of fishers in the official registry.

Not so anymore. Both structural changes and possibilities beyond what the coastal fisheries can offer meant that the younger generation was leaving the smaller fishing communities. And the increase in percentage of elderly – in Norway a common enough trend to be given a specific term; ‘forgubbing’ – was clear enough without having to refer to statistics: Ivar told me that he and his brother were still – in the fishers community – considered to be ‘young fishers’ – after twenty years of fishing, and both around 40 years of age. “‘Cause there are so few coastal fishers out there younger than us”, Henrik said, and continued: “They want to work shifts and reap the benefits, a steady salary and a shower on board. They want to live in a big city, and spend Saturdays sipping Café Latte. All things considered, who can blame them?”

And lots of them take up work in the petroleum industry, the brothers told me, in the supply industry or on seismic vessels. Where the salaries were much higher, private insurance arrangements more solid, and shifts more preferable than on larger sea-going fishing vessels.

“There will be no employment opportunities coming out of oil in Western Lofoten”, Henrik said, gazing at the horizon as if oil drills were out there somewhere already, to be glimpsed if only one kept looking for them. “The coastal fishery is the only thing that will keep these settlements alive. We are close to the resources, and we catch it efficiently and with less environmental impact than any other branch of the fish industry. We create jobs as well as a surplus – and we bring the best quality fish to the market place. During the skrei-spawning season, our passive gear is what makes sure we don’t overexploit the stock. Others, like trawlers and purse seine boats, catch them while spawning. Our way is the most viable way – for the communities and for fish stocks.”

As catches were good, but not large, the last of the two days I spent at sea with Ivar and Henrik ended at a reasonable hour; the workday twelve hours long, which for the seasonal fisheries is regarded to be a relatively moderate working day.

From the gunwale, fishers saw that the bet was on the petroleum industry; the High North strategy was a preparation scheme designed to favour the oil business, many of my informants in west-Lofoten stated¹³⁵, and that all other trades were referred to in relation to it, be it as a supplement to petroleum, as a result of the potential that petroleum presumably brings, or as problematic due to the difficulties in finding a way to co-exist with it. Not because these trades necessarily created problems themselves, but because they created a problem for petroleum. Others would be more fatalistic than that, and claim that the fight for the coastal fisheries and the fishing communities was lost a long time ago, and that the arrival of petroleum in the north made things neither better nor worse. Ivar and Henrik could be counted among these. They did not want the industry in their waters, but thought it would end up there sooner or later anyway, regardless of what they might think. But they had no illusions concerning benefits for small-scale communities in the west, like the tiny settlement Fredvang, four to five kilometres out of Ramberg, due southwest, where they lived with their families.

Arguments in favour of the coastal fisheries were not only tied to communal or more eco-philosophical arguments about responsibilities for the common inheritance that these renewable resources represent. It was also about the right to a free choice, about the right to decide for oneself how to make a living. Another young fisher asked me during my first fieldwork stay in 2009 the following rhetorical question: “If I know how to behave at sea, how to pay my bills and create more income and make more resources available to society than what me and my family requires – then why is it not worth preserving?”¹³⁶ The answer to the question would be – to paraphrase the brothers Myklebust – that it *is* worth preserving, you just have to work so very hard to be obliged to do it. The admission ticket exists, as there are recruitment quotas on cod

¹³⁵ Interviews, Harald Eriksen, Steinar Friis, Håvard Jacobsen, Arnfinn Hay, Johs Røde, Stein Iversen, Ivar and Henrik Myklebust, winter and spring 2009.

¹³⁶ Informant 30, March 2009

available. But these are small, and the newly established fishers – with high investment costs and often efficiency challenges due to a lack of experience and embodied knowledge – will have to fish a lot of Pollack, Halibut, Haddock and Redfish in order to make business go around, species with a less restricted quota system attached to them, but with a marginal rate of return.

The brothers were at the mercy of the market place. The price rate for cod had dropped from up to NOK 27 per kilo in 2008, via NOK 17 in 2009 before settling at a mere NOK 13,25 in 2010. Developments like this spurred resentment and protests, but for a trade totally dependent on a fluctuating market heavily burdened by the implications of the financial crisis of 2008-2009 and its aftermath, the protests were for deaf ears. Even the Norwegian Fishermen's Sales Organisation – owned by the fishers organizations – had admitted that the fixed price was too high in 2008 and 2009, and the debate on whether the fisher's right to be protected from the most violent and abrupt fluctuations of the market through an historically based fixed price system for the whole fisheries remained heated and unresolved.

Ivar and Henriks positioning when it came to petroleum was clearly characterized by irritation and resentment. On several occasions, they conveyed to me stories about how everything seemed to be about petroleum these days and that all reference to other sectors concerned their relation to petroleum. As such, the fisheries was not seen as a sector in itself anymore, they contested, only as a 'problem' for the development of petroleum, and thus, the coexistence scheme was to a large extent defined based on the needs of petroleum. "Remember", Henrik said to me a few months later, sitting in his kitchen in Fredvang with yet another cup of coffee in hand, "we, as fishers, do not need the petroleum industry here. Of course, they do not need us either, but cannot demand that we disappear. Therefore, the idea of 'coexistence' emerged. It's not about *real* coexistence with the benefit of all in mind. It's about what is needed in order to have oil drilling here."

Neither Henrik and Ivar or most other fishers I met in western Lofoten opposed to petroleum development *in principle*. However, they opposed to the idea that the benefit for small communities like the ones they lived in would be greater if they allowed petroleum in. They saw that the risks that would have to be taken *would be taken by others*, on behalf of them and their communities. As such, the petroleum

industry, which for many represented an opportunity for progress and a starting point for a revival of many communities, was by these informants seen first and foremost as a threat. Thus, a feeling of alienation towards the processes through which decisions would be moulded and eventually taken was widespread. “We, out here (in the western part of Lofoten, my insertion) will not be the ones that makes the decisions anyway”, another fisher said, pointing to who the ‘local voices’ were that was listened to in Oslo. “The mayors in the Lofoten Council have all been blinded by all the money talk from the petroleum industry.”¹³⁷

As we see, then, the basis for a certain resentment towards the process towards a potential development of petroleum lies in what is seen as a threat to *ontological* security. Seen from Ramberg, Skjelfjord, Røst and other fishery dependent communities in Lofoten, the *technologies of security* aiming at securing population put in motion in this case (see chapter 4) also created a sense of insecurity for many. Biopolitically, we can assume that the identification of risks and the management of a contingent future through risk assessment and risk management only goes so far in securing population as the *trust in these systems* reaches. For those – like Ivar, Henrik and their colleagues - who did not feel that *their knowledge* was included in the knowledge systems aiming at securing population and managing the contingent future, distrust in the systems that ultimately regulated and framed the possible choices they had, made their everyday lives *more insecure*.

The coupling of knowledge and identity is tied to an understanding of stories and traditions, in which fisheries plays a part, as important for the reconstruction of identity in Lofoten. I will now describe a scene, based on a processed description of an interview I did with an elderly fisher in Ramberg in 2009.¹³⁸ In it, he described both his upbringing, his view on the development of the fisheries and offered his view on petroleum. The sequence is presented in some detail, the reason being that it represents a presentation-of-self - both in terms of detailed, personal information and of the sort of life he has lived – which should be understood not as an objective testimony about a past reality, but as a tale which both re-emphasizes core ideals

¹³⁷ Informant 31, May 2009

¹³⁸ Interview, Harald Eriksen, April 2009

connected to a specific way of life, an identity, and re-creates images of the past in a way that comes to signify these ideals. As Paul Connerton (1989), my focus here is on the way *societies* remember. However, stories are told by individuals, and here I present such a story in order to emphasize the social and cultural embeddedness of practices which helps societies remember, in the sense that they *recreate* specific occurrences, ideals and practices which are understood as vital for an understanding of *what this society is*. I take Connerton's focus on social and cultural processes of remembering as indicative of acts which emphasizes the connection between identity and knowledge within a society, and that the way social memory is maintained to a large extent is through stories *about what 'we' (that is, the social group, the community) know and how 'we' deal with things*. In my view, presentations of *representations-of-self* are important intakes for understanding the basis for a specific type of local knowledge which many – but as we have seen, not all – base much of their resentment towards petroleum development and what they see it represents, both in terms of risks and threats and in terms of a cultural – and *ontological* – difference in world view and way of life.

Scene: “My schooling took place elsewhere, on the quay and in the boat. And it was a good school”. Meeting a storyteller.

This story is a presentation of a representation-of-self, of a past already riddled with myths; of the cold, the wind, the storms – the hunger, physical duress and hardship, but also of the camaraderie of fishermen and the colloquial fight against petty kings, banks and authorities. The story told by Toralf is a merging of old and new experiences, a tale not necessarily bound by the linearity of space and time, but is expressed through a connection between events, emotion and interpretations based on a system of knowledge derived from lived experience.

Toralf invited me in, and we had been exchanging small talk for less than two minutes before he started commenting on the issue of which I wanted to know his opinion:

“... and there will be people who follow us, if the world's still standing. And if so, we have to manage things in such a way that those to come see that it has been done reasonably. 'Cause it would be a pain for those taking over if we were to raze it all. It's good that we can harvest and that we can get to the oil and money and all, but for

Christ's sake – we have to take care of it all, we cannot simply exploit everything, and that's that! “

Torleif was born and raised at Vareid, a small fisher-farmer community across the fjord from the parish locality Ramberg. “Back in the 1930s and 40s, my father had a small farm there,” Torleif says, “and we had around four grown cattle, a couple of calves, a horse, fourteen-fifteen sheep, a ram – that turned fierce with time –and after some time, a couple of pigs. We had a pig house for use in the summer, but during the wintertime, they were indoors. And we kept poultry, of course. So during the war things were not so bad for us, actually. There was a war, of course, with war camps and stuff around here. And the Germans imposed on all farmers around to harvest so-and-so much potato and whatnot. But at Vareid, the soil was perfect for growing potatoes, so the Germans could easily get a share.”

“So it was one of those classical farmer-fisherman households, then,” I asked.

“Yes. A fisher-farmer household, best way to survive along the coast. And in our family, we were many – nine siblings in all, three boys and six girls. I was the second born, and had left when many of them grew up.”

“Where did you go to school?”

“At Napp. In a boarding school there. But when the Germans came and needed housing (during the Second World War, my comment) – they wanted the school, and they wanted heating – so I was left with the option of taking on small jobs by the quay at Ballstad, baiting hooks for the fishermen.”

Torleif spent his early youth there, slowly learning how to fish, through preparatory work onshore, and spending time and listening to the grown fishermen.

“So your school days were over, then?”

“Yes, I do not even have seven years of public school attendance. No, my schooling took place elsewhere, on the quay and in the boat. And it was a good school. As the fog sat in, you were supposed to learn how to spot the sun anyway, enabling you to know where the mountains were, so that you could navigate your way through Værøysundet and into the Vestfjord. Not a bad thing to know at all, that. Very good indeed. Folks are worse off now.”

“You would fish using ‘mea’?”¹³⁹

“Yes, I have used ‘mea’ all the way up ‘till now.”

“Really? I thought it was all about echo sounders now...?”

“No, I have always used the mountains. Even with all sorts of modern equipment, I always look for the me’. There was this one time, we had cast our nets, in fair weather, and we went to fetch them. We knew from the instruments that we were a good way west of the position. And we did see the markings on the GPS, but when I checked with the ‘mea’, I saw that we were way off target. I told my son Ivar, but he refused, and showed me the GPS markings again. But I insisted, and it was only afterwards that they realized I was right; the satellite had failed for some time, and ... so I told Ivar that we should be further north! ‘Look, there’s our markings’, I said, pointing to the mountains, ‘and we left our nets north of them!’ No, I tell you – we were two boats that day, so we were all right anyhow – but if you’re alone and stuff like that happens, it could be for the worse. No, the GPS, I have never been comfortable with it. ‘Cause it can be a bit ... unpredictable, when the satellites fall out. But I’m just an old man, with my own ways.”

Torleif has learned the old school way. His training to become a fisherman was one where theoretical knowledge about gear, equipment, regulations and law were tied to the learning of bodily practices; it was hard work, manual labour, intense and repetitive (so as the body would remember and act instinctively, in critical situations as well as in everyday practice), and the knowledge about local surroundings absolutely vital for navigation and identification of fishing grounds. In stories about accidents, storms and cold like the ones Harald and other experienced fishermen tell, the focus on necessary knowledge is always present, - also the knowledge about when to respect nature and when to back off, - stories like this one:

“My grandfather was a hard, tough bloke – a master of small boats! And we never lost a single man to the sea! This one time though, it almost went wrong. Not that it was

¹³⁹ ‘Mea’ is a local term describing a system of geographical visual landmarks onshore – mostly in the mountainside – which assists fishers in locating the best fishing grounds. With the introduction of GPS and echo sounders, the importance of these markers for positioning became weaker. However, many fishermen use them still, as a way of controlling their position.

the fault of anyone on board, no, the storm came suddenly, so it was all about the weather. This was in 1955, we were in that cutter you see over there by the quay (at Ramberg, my comment), six men in all. Back in those days, the engines were small, and as the waves broke over the mast, we were really in it for the worst. For four days the storm raged, and we surely looked beaten there at times, but in the end, with cleverness and proper respect for the seas, we returned with men and boat for Christmas.”

In term of identity construction, I assert that this and other stories like it have great symbolic value, both for the speaker and for those who can relate to the possible loss this kind of encounter could have been for them and for the community as a whole. In that sense, the story reifies culture-specific ideas about a strong relationship to nature in general, and the sea in particular. Indeed, the relationship is so close that people tend for instance to give the sea, the wind, the storms and the mountains gendered appellations, almost as if they are seen as ‘subjectified objects’, with whom people can have a relationship. ‘The sea gives and the sea takes’, is a common saying all along the Norwegian coast, a saying so familiar to all Norwegians, in fact, that it has become an *emic symbol* of a symbiotic relationship between sea and the people living along the coast.

Similar iconic tales of hardship and endurance as that which Harald told me can be found in prose about living conditions for the ‘common people’ in the north. In a novel published by newspaper editor and politician Alfred Skar in 1936 called *Lofotkarer* (‘Lofoten Lads’), similar tales of hardship and struggles – with weather, wind, decease, malnutrition, bad catches, fishing authorities and debt collectors – are told (Skar 1936). The story evolves around a group of fishers from a village in Nordland County south of Lofoten who prepare for their annual travel to the Islands for the *skrei*-season. The following transcript (and translation) is a description of the threats and risks of fishing in a harsh environment, and describes some of the accidental deaths of the annual Lofoten fisheries, probably for the year before the books release, the winter of 1935:

The ocean gives. But the ocean also takes. A two-man boat from Hamarøy came to close to a couple of skerries due east of Svolvær and got caught in the

breakers. One of the lads in the boat got rescued by small boats close by. The body of the other was not recovered.

During the departure from Henningsvær a four-man boat from Tysfjord was thrown over by a heavy breaker. All on board got themselves up on the turned hull,- three were rescued by a motorized small boat, the last one jumped into the sea to get to a nearby dory which had come to his rescue. The boat was salvaged, but the fishing gear and most of the inventory was lost.

The other day a storm raged over Lofoten. Only a part of the fishing fleet went ashore. The small boats from Reine went to the 'outside' of the Lofoten mountain range.¹⁴⁰ But the weather got worse and worse, and they had to turn back. On the way home, one of the small boats was caught in the most horrible breaker. It totally covered the boat, and the two men on deck were immediately thrown overboard. One of them was lucky and got thrown back onto the boat, the other was lost. The rescue was very difficult in the tremendous weather. Rescue buoys were thrown in, from both other small boats and the Coastal Rescue Boat, but the man on the now sinking small boat could not get a hold of them. He went down while his mates were watching.

Two open motorboats were approaching Stamsund, the boat masters two brothers from Alstadhaug. In a heavy snowshower storm the boats were separated,- one brother's boat arrived safely, the other never showed. More is not known about its destiny, other than that inventory from the boat was found the next day, during rescue operations. The boat had been struck down, sent to the bottom by a single breaker. Four lives extinguished in seconds. A brother stands in silence, head low, fists clenched, steering at the floatsam floating onshore. The preacher at Alstadhaug puts on his gown and walks out into the village. A widow, a child, a couple of old parents needs to be given notice.

¹⁴⁰ The area north of the Lofoten mountain range is locally called *yttersida*, which means *the outside*. The implicit meaning is that the *innsida*, the *inner side*, in Vestfjorden, is more protected from the currents, weather and rough seas coming in from the polar regions of the Barents Sea. (MAP!) In rough weather, there is always a concern connected to going to the *outside*, even today, and the fact that many did go there in rough weather, in smaller vessels, often indicated that catches were small and thus the risk-averting measure of staying onshore less of an option for fishermen who's debt rose and income from the Lofoten fisheries was ment to last them for months to come.

The day after the wind stands to the northwest. Out on the fishing ground, the small boats and motorboats lie in head sea. Breaking waves, white spray on the bow, working their way over the deep grave of those here lost yesterday. This year, eight men the Lofoten Sea has taken. The previous ten winters, 76 in all.

The Northwest winds sings for them all. (Skar 1936: 90-92)

Here we see that the way the embedded risks of a particular way of life (fishing) in a particular area (Lofoten) is in focus serves to re-establish the notion of stamina, resistance and endurance which serves as identity markers for *nordlendinga* in general, but typically as well for *lofotinga*. Experiences and knowledge derived from the practice of fishing reaches beyond those who exercise the practical knowledge needed at sea, the fishers, and novels like *Lofotkarer* thus serve to strengthen the identity construction of people in fishing villages who themselves are not directly involved in the fisheries. Similarly, Svenn-Erik Jensen reported the following, from his fieldwork experience in the village of Stamsund, Lofoten, and on board the fishing vessel *Polaris*:

“During my fieldwork, I repeatedly experienced that the practical knowledge that the Lofoten fishers held reached beyond the borders of the profession. The local population in the fisher villages, who themselves did not participate in the Lofoten fisheries, clearly expressed that they knew things about the practices of fishing at sea, an example being their knowledge of the common practices of fishing on board, without holding the concrete practical skills necessary. One can say that the long-term affiliation the village has to the fisheries renders it possible to talk about a specific local knowledge tradition” (Jensen 2004: 10, my translation)

There are two parallel story lines about the fishers legacy that underpins the importance of local, embodied knowledge based on lived experience; one is about the hardships, the threats and risks and the strength of nature which should be met with respect and a due portion of humility, the other is about the good life made possible by the strength and knowledge of those harvesting from an environment with which there is a strong sense of commonality and dependence. As the saying goes: The sea gives, and the sea takes. Now, for these communities in Lofoten I am writing about

here, the world is of course a fundamentally different place from that in which Torleif grew up, or from which Alfred Skår got the inspiration to write his novel about the heroic fishermen fighting the treacherous seas with the simplest of equipment. But, as we shall see, many identify the inherited flexibility and adaptive capacity of these villages as being their most important asset when facing the structural changes that fundamentally altered their very basis for existence.

5.8 The Dynamic Village

In following, I will show how the notion of *a village* (see section 2.6.2) is made more complex, fluid and situational when seen through the lens of ethnographic descriptions and an analytical approach aiming at taking as a point of departure the ways in which people themselves reflects over their possibilities to secure their own futures. Typically, in descriptions of village life, there is a tendency for oversimplification of what is seen as typical small-scale community structural traits; intimacy, traditionalism, dependence on primary industry and an inherent skepticism to rapid change overshadow adaptational capabilities often inherent in these communities. Ethnographic records from small places and depictions of their ability to change and survive is often – in retrospect – seen as an anomaly in a constructed historicism where progress and change inevitably places societies on a scale of progress and backwardness defined within a cultural trend of neo-liberalism, large-scale globalization, centralization and theoretical expertise. In small-scale societies, practice just as much as theoretical knowledge is what defines the realms of knowledge deemed relevant for community survival, it seems. People in the outskirts are satisfied with less, their lives less affected by the many influences of more complex, urbanized societies.

This oversimplification of village life is deeply rooted within the meta-narrative of modernity that deals with the inevitability of progress, enhanced prosperity and accumulation of objective knowledge as the only path taking humanity to a better future. ‘The Village’ is in many respects *the relevant other* for modern life typically lived in urbanized, technocratic centers, and the villager thus antithetical to modern (wo)man. As a member of greater (globalized) society, one will often refer to typical traits of liberalism like freedom of movement, freedom of choice and the accessibility of commodities as important markers of modern identity. Additionally, the right to a secured life provided by the (political) leadership that the enlightened population has

selected in free, democratic elections are mentioned. So too is *rationality* and therefore, political decisions are more and more based on rationalized decision-making based on accumulation of knowledge on the matter at hand. Modern society lived in urban centers has climbed the ladder of development, leaving behind barbarism, religion and tradition along the way. Yesteryears knowledge no longer adds up to anything; it's the world of measurability and objectified rationality that matters.

Conversely, village life is typically portrayed as guided by tradition, with knowledge based just as much on emotional speculation, hearsay, misinterpretations, superstition and oversimplifications as on 'rational truth'. However, I will here assert that 'a village' (the concept that is described in depth in chapter 2) is today just as much a dynamic community as any neighbourhood or city block, and not a passive receiver of impulses of change. The contradiction upon which a notion of the passive village is based (the *gemeinschaft-gesellschaft* divide, here operationalized as a dichotomy embracing the ability to secure population in a globalized, complex world) presupposes a notion of the village as somewhat detached from the outside world, unable to cope with its complexities. This presumption as a premise for arguments about impulses of change is also to be found in the debate over petroleum in Lofoten, as the possibilities rendered likely in the debate all, it seems, are coming from *outside* these communities, and that local voices are striving to get acknowledgement for the possibilities that lies in local traditions and ambitions. This, I suggest, also contradicts the understanding of ontological security as something that is of less importance for the globalized, impersonal modern life, in which modern institutions aiming at securing individual freedom is seen to have replaced *community*, and where "... meaning and stability are sought in the inner self" (Giddens 1990: 115). In fact, my findings suggest that *both* trust in abstract systems *and* the way in which a community handles inherited knowledge (or 'tradition') as a means to identify threats and manage risks are at play when local actors argue either for or against petroleum development. In other words, the way one approaches 'risks' and 'threats' are still embedded in ways of understanding which are locally rooted – *and* understood in terms of global trends and a trust in the expertise of 'complex' society (a *gesellschaft*, or, in Giddensian terms, a society where trust is based on *faceless commitments* (ibid: 80)). In short, acknowledging the importance of global trends and the interconnectivity of local lives with the lives of others elsewhere does not necessarily diminish the importance of neither state nor (local) community, when local security concerns are

scrutinized. In fact, I see that both state and community are rallied when the issue of petroleum is discussed in Lofoten, and that both state and community based actors still are seen as important providers of security.

In my fieldwork notes as well as in interviews, a focus has been on flexibility as a means of adaptation, to both the nature-given preconditions as well as to the human-induced conditions under which communities thrive. As an example of this, I will here present how some of my informants describe the village Henningsvær in terms of flexibility and adaptability – as an answer to the condition of the (post)modern, global society, and that both a ‘postmodern’ and an *inherited, local* flexibility enables people to continue to live there. I will thus in the following show how informants describe what Henningsvær was like, in a mythical ‘original past’, re-created as a symbol for what is seen as the inherent capabilities of the village that makes it reconstruct itself in the face of tourism, world trade possibilities and limitation and a new notion of ‘regionality’. In short, my informants told of an adaptability and flexibility which was seen as the very basis for the trade which kept things going for the village, together with the fisheries: Tourism. And not any kind of tourism, no, they wanted ‘the right kind of tourists, the cool people’!¹⁴¹

Scene: “We have to take care of all of them because they are so few, and so valuable”

In Henningsvær, the small fishing village about 25 kilometers west of Svolvær, I met up with Ragnar, who still remembers well the days when Henningsvær housed up to 10000 fishers during the skrei season which normally takes place between January and April. This was in the 1950s, and the then young boy spent his time during winter amongst the fishers on the quays where his father and grandfather were busy buying fish. At the time, more than fifty buyers would fill all available space on quays, in warehouses and on sea cliffs, and hundreds of men were kept busy transporting, gutting, salting and hanging fish to dry on traditional drying racks for fish, called ‘fiskehjell’. When we met, in the spring of 2010, Ragnar was the owner of the last permanent fish-buyer facility still operating in Henningsvær.

¹⁴¹ Interview, Cecilie Haaland, April 2010.

“As for changes goes, I think I have seen most of what has come,” Ragnar said, lighting up a cigarette. “When I grew up here, the amount of small-scale fishing boats was phenomenal. We had things up and running all year long, with a specific focus on the skrei season, of course. I am third generation fish buyer at this facility. My granddad started it in 1920. I remember when I was a little kid, we all lived here on the island (just outside Henningsvær), and this was before the large fish processing plant was built out here. Everything was handled onboard boats, and the harbor here was so full of boats that entry was impossible for those coming in late with their catch. A true adventure, I can tell you! Inside Henningsvær proper, there were four or five bakeries, ten coffee shops - a lively place indeed! And as I said, up to fifty fish buyers. This year, we’re only two. In Henningsvær one year – I think it must have been in the 1950s – they received and processed 12000 tonnes of skrei and hung it all to dry! It must’ve been before prohibition for the Danish seine in 1957 or – 58 ... but my dad told me about the time he bought 100 tonnes per day, and hung it all. Per day! We had over 100 men here, back then, working, and when you see those pictures, of men working up in those fish racks, I mean – that sort of life is no more. Today is nothing, compared to that. There were some good years left after that as well, during the 1970s and 1990s – so I do believe that there are still good years to come. You should know that if one goes back in time... in 1906-07, things were so bad that people dismantled their houses and moved to Verøy and Røst. ‘Cause that’s where the skrei ended its journey those years. But it came back here, too. It’s cyclical, you see!”

Ragnar Riksheim here referred to the cyclical disappearance of the skrei from the Vestfjord, a phenomenon which modern fishery management still do not understand in its full complexity. The migration pattern of the North-Atlantic Cod, the skrei, is related to a number of variables, some of which are observable, others not.¹⁴² Locally, the contingent availability of the skrei has resulted in a community well acquainted with change and with an ability to adapt which larger communities would have a hard time exhibiting.

“When I went to school in the 1950s, there were around 12-1500 inhabitants here, and as much as 10 000 during the skrei-season. We’re talking similar to a small North-

¹⁴² See for instance Jentoft (1993) and Utne (2007) concerning migration trends, cyclic variations and systemic changes which all influence the availability of cod along the Norwegian coast.

Norwegian town! Out here, in the ocean, on these few rocks! Of course, there were ten people living together in small rooms and ... but as for those living here, the visitors were more than welcome. And we adapted; there was no need for ten coffee shops all year, to put it like that. People had other business the rest of the year.”

Today, Henningsvær still benefits from this culture of seasonal adaptability. But nowadays, it is not only the fisheries that on a seasonal basis provide visitors to the village; today, the typical visitor is a tourist, and peak season is in July, not February. Cecilie, a ceramist living and working in Henningsvær, explained how she regarded this heritage as an invaluable asset for the community, enabling the village to survive still, in spite of large seasonal changes:

“We’re around 500 now, living here, and many have work elsewhere, mostly in Svolvær. Still there are those working in the fisheries, but there are not many left. Most who work here are employed either in the tourism sector or in public administration. But then there’s this ... this new trend, which has exploded these last four or five years, what I call ‘green tourism’ – those young, hip travellers coming here to ski, to surf, to fish and to climb. They are the kind of visitors we want! They are informed, skilled and quality-conscious; they gladly pay for what they want, and they want quality products back. This keeps the business on its toes, which is good – mass tourism tends to be stultifying for small communities. We have to take care of all of them because they are so few, and so valuable. ‘Till now, people here have tended to live on the name, tourism wise, charged a buck or two for people to come and have look, but this is not sufficient anymore. Now people in the tourism industry say that Lofoten is for the advanced traveller. There are still those coming in buses and on cruise ships, but that group is in demise, while the more active traveller is coming in, people who are truly engaged and involved, and who to a lesser degree separates their travelling from their lifestyle and identity.”

The flexibility here described is seen as an asset, an ability that is an asset in terms of being able to procure viability in a community based on seasonal activities. Together with an **image** of purity, of living-with-nature, and a sense of authenticity, it provides the necessary surroundings for a breed of visitors who are not anymore satisfied with regarding nature and culture as merely a stage set for unbelievable photo opportunities. These visitors wants to interact, is the message, and this is one of the

reasons why so many involved in tourism, either directly or indirectly, are sceptical to petroleum development, according to Cecilie:

“It’s a threat to my business, simply because the moment we destroy the image people have in their heads when you say Lofoten – you close your eyes and see ... - well, that threat is very real for my business. The image we have spent all this time building, - the crispy-fresh-clean – and then you add the image ‘oil in Lofoten’, and you loose some of that feeling, and if that feeling is lost in people’s heads, then I will loose my customers. My customers are typically those – I call them ‘power-tourists’ - those we talked about earlier. They are my best customers, If we soil Lofoten, these tourists will go somewhere else, and I would also have to move, I think – and I don’t know if I would visit here either. And I don’t see those others, those that the petroleum business will bring - construction workers and whatnot – as being interested in my things. They drink their coffee from any coffee mug.”¹⁴³

5.8.1 The reinvention of tradition

Today, the size of the Lofoten communities and their apparent dependency on fisheries is being seen as one of the primary reasons why young people move away from the region. The annual statistics for settlement patterns have since the mid-1980s shown a steady decrease in population, and as the figures here shows (fig. 4 and 5), the steady stream of people moving from the north to the south and from peripheral areas to regional and national centers is a dominant feature of the flow of Norwegian population. Similarly, a look at the statistics for the last 10 years of updated figures (1999-2009)¹⁴⁴, the total population of the Lofoten region went from 24280 to 23561, a decrease of 719 individuals. This trend, combined with an ageing population staying behind, has been a source of concern for local politicians and bureaucrats for many years, and an important background for many of the arguments backing a petroleum development where the potential for new, high-tech work places is thought to minimize or even reverse the population trends here outlined.

¹⁴³ A comment made based on the fact that a large piece of Cecilies income is based on arts-and-crafts products, where pricy coffee-mugs of high quality is one of the most important.

¹⁴⁴ Accessed statistics from Statistics Norway, May 18th, 2011. Webpage: <http://statbank.ssb.no/statistikbanken/Default.FR.asp?PXSid=0&nvl=true&PLanguage=0&tilside=selecttable/MenuSelS.asp&SubjectCode=02>



Figure 4

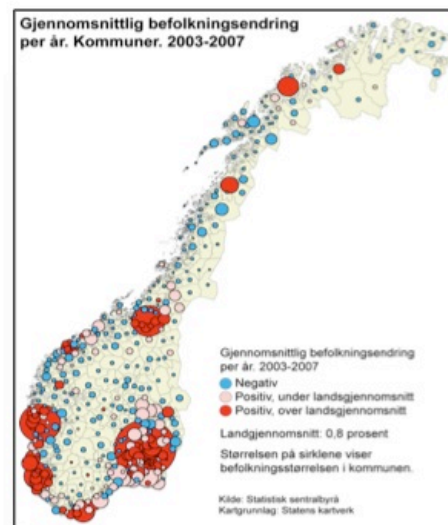


Figure 5

Population movement patterns in Norway. The left indicates flow of movement between provinces in 2007, to the right, the changes in population for municipalities are demarcated. Blue circles indicate a negative development in population, red an increasing population development. For the years 2003-2007. Source: Statistics Norway.

However, as we see, there are those opposing this way of analyzing the development trend. Amongst my informants, there are many who think that this way of thinking about development – seeking industrialization and an influx of a technological work force based on non-renewable resources – would be to turn ones back to the traditions and the past experiences of those living here before them, and that these experiences and the potential it holds, should point the way towards the future. Ola is one of these informants, and we meet him in this next scene.

Scene: “Is it only oil and fish that is to have a say in this? What about tourism?”

In the beginning of the 1990s, Ola had just finished high school and was looking for work. He had spent a lot of time in his youth ‘chasing powder’¹⁴⁵ in the mountains and fish in the sea – more so than parents and teachers usually find constructive – and had during his upbringing developed stronger ties to his home place than most of his school mates, many of who in this period sought elsewhere for opportunities; be it for studying or for starting their professional careers. Ola had been working part-time as a social worker in the social sector in his community since he was around fifteen years

¹⁴⁵ Meaning searching for fresh, powdery snow for free-ride skiing.

old, but was open for anything, as he himself put it. To me, he presented his entrance into the tourist industry like this:

“I attended a party celebrating a fifty-year-old (in Norwegian called ‘femtiårslag’), and there was a carpenter there who had been hired to renovate the old fisherman’s shacks (‘rorbu’) at Svinøya in Svolvær. He needed a busboy there, and asked if I was interested. I was around twenty at the time, and had nothing to do, really, so I said yes. I had never hit a nail in my life, but I was after a few days given a hammer and told to get cracking. Gradually I was allowed to do more and more things, carpentering and painting and so on, and soon I was the house carpenter, so to speak, at Svinøya. So you could say that my entrance into the tourist industry was more or less coincidental.”¹⁴⁶

Ola knows both the fishery sector and the tourism industry well, and argued strongly that the possibilities for a more ‘organic’ growth, stemming from local knowledge, local initiative, local preconditions, were many - but vulnerable. Ola said:

“It’s part of our strategy to sell Lofoten as a tourist destination based on it being ‘the most beautiful coastline of the world’. That’s a national strategy too, you know! To sell the whole of Norway as a tourist destination based on the imagery of Lofoten and some few other places. And, so, when the debate started, I asked myself: ‘is it only oil and fish that is to have a say in this? What about tourism?’ So I started looking into it, what it would mean for me as a tour operator and hotel owner. What will it look like? What is an LNG-facility? What are the dangers we might face, what are the risks we are faced with? And here’s the paradox: Destination Lofoten¹⁴⁷, The Norwegian Hospitality Association¹⁴⁸, the municipalities – even the state itself! –are all out there advertising for the world the crisp, pristine, pure beautiful Lofoten Islands, but they can’t seem to go public and say ‘we should take care of this place!’. And I raised my

¹⁴⁶ Interview, Ola Skjeseth, October 2010

¹⁴⁷ A destination agency, owned in part by the municipalities of Lofoten, with responsibility for streamlining and managing booking, advertising and tourist information services for local tourism businesses who have signed up for membership.

¹⁴⁸ ‘NHO Reiseliv’, One of 21 sectorial organizations of The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) dealing with travel and tourism.

concerns with Nordland Reiseliv¹⁴⁹ who are state funded, and who have spent millions on the Lofoten brand. I asked them: Is an LNG-facility a natural part of ‘the most beautiful coast of the world’? They could not say anything either. And then, finally, Innovation Norway¹⁵⁰ - who has spent a lot of time, money and effort selling the images of Lofoten worldwide – they didn’t either enter into the debate. So, cutting it short, you might say that in opposing petroleum, I began feeling very much alone, as no-one would lobby for us – we have no organization who will stand up for us.”¹⁵¹

Ola’s concern about Lofoten being fragile had little to do with conservation, as many of his opponents would argue is the position of most of those against petroleum. Rather, he painted a picture of a region with plenty of ‘given’ opportunities – both within the fisheries and in tourism – that would be seriously threatened by petroleum.

Many a youngster in Lofoten – and especially those living close to a tourist facility – has had some contact with the tourist industry as employees before ending their teenage years. As the tourism season primarily takes place during school holidays in the summer, hotels, café’s, restaurants and rorbu-facilities are typical places for youngsters to look for summer jobs. During the late 1990s, the tourism industry slowly but surely gained momentum and gradually gained to position as an independent trade.

The links to the Lofoten fisheries are obvious, though. For centuries, these small communities have been used to a seasonal influx of fishers, traders, mechanics and day laborers enabling for instance an increase during fishing season in the number of bakeries in the fishing community of Henningsvær from one to five.¹⁵² This to show that the flexibility needed for a seasonal approach to doing business – not only in the fishing industry, but also within other sectors and indeed in whole communities as such – are deeply rooted in Lofoten, in its historical *raison d’être*, fishing. In addition,

¹⁴⁹ The regional destination agency, for the whole of Nordland County.

¹⁵⁰ Governmental agency for innovation and development support which has spent much time and effort both nationally and internationally on promoting Norway in general – and Northern Norway in particular – as a travel destination.

¹⁵¹ Interview, Ola Skjeseth, October 2010

¹⁵² Interview, Ragnar Riksheim, April 2010

in the minds of those visiting the region for generations, the image of Lofoten as a place of importance - a place where scenic beauty and existential struggle feeds into its symbolic image as a place of nature – has meant that thousands and thousands of Norwegians along the coast have been familiar with the place. Infrastructural changes during the post-WW2-period that connected the Lofoten islands together, first with ferries, later – in the 1980s – with bridges enabled easier access for the booming recreational holiday driving, and sure enough; during the period up to the mid 1990s saw a moderate, but steady rise in holiday visitors, especially from cruiseships and camping tourism. During a conversation I had with the head of the destination company Destination Lofoten, Yanni Vikan, he outlined the development trends like this:

“Up to around mid-1990s, tourism in Lofoten was more or less a passive, ‘receiving’ tourism. The destination company then started working with guided PR-tours for media and destination developers in Europe, thus starting to cash in and develop as a tourism product some of the natural and cultural premises the destination has to offer. Here we see the beginning of a change, from the mid-1990s up to today. In 1994-95, the new hotel at Langholmen was finished, and a steady stream of buses with tourists arriving at the Rica hotel, managed by the Rica consortium, ensured a minimum of stability in terms of visitors. Then, from 2002 onwards, renovation, building and development of tourist facilities and a general touching up of the destinations occurred – with Svolvær in the forefront – which visualizes the change of hands within the tourism sector; new, younger people enter the business and capital is being invested, also from the fishing industry. There’s a generational shift, one might say, but simultaneously, the fisheries are heavily downscaled – especially in the east. This means that both capital, an infrastructure geared at hosting thousands of fishers and a potential work force is available for the growing tourist industry. The culturally based infrastructure is perhaps the most important part here, as it is an attraction in itself – the ‘rorbu’ facilities, the fishing quays, the small boats and the dry-fish racks (‘gjell’) – and because it is easily reconstructed for use in tourism.”

It was in this process Ola was to play his part. During the 1990s, he worked his way through every job within of the business, at the facilities soon to be known as Svinøya Rorbuer, a business that with time included a gourmet restaurant in addition to the rorbu-facility.

This local entrepreneur, expressing a strong sense of belonging to a region and a community, held strong opinions concerning the responsibility both he personally, his colleagues and the rest of us holds when it comes to taking care of and developing the environment (here meaning both ‘nature’ and culturally developed landscapes) in (and on) which he had built his business.¹⁵³ Ola’s concerns stretched beyond the possible effects, be they positive or negative, of petroleum for the company he is responsible for; just as for the fisherman Harald, who we met earlier in this chapter, his argumentation also included a sense of responsibility *vis-à-vis* future generations and what they would be left with. But in contrast to Harald’s one-sided focus on the resources connected to fisheries and how we harvest from the sea, Ola presented concerns about the future that had both global and local connotations. In this respect, the difference between the positions which Ola and Harald took towards possible petroleum development outside Lofoten – even though they were both against it – could be regarded as symptomatic for the difference between an opposition to petroleum mainly concerned with the impacts it may have on the fisheries locally (in that sense an ontological security concern based on an emphasis on heritage, local knowledge and adaptational skills) and that which adds a global, more environmentalist argument, arguing that this fight against petroleum is but one of several which should be fought in order to promote a ‘greener’ future.¹⁵⁴

5.9 Can ‘they’ be trusted?

“Seeing oil spill on a seemingly constant basis over the course of my life, it started to bother me that what I did see was the same reaction: it always ended

¹⁵³ As Ola is a businessman, one should not forget that part of the rationale for being a stern opponent to petroleum lies in what he sees as a threat to his way of doing business, to his product (pristine nature, a notion of ‘natural purity’) as well as to his chosen way of life, as a dedicated outdoorsman.

¹⁵⁴ There is, however, a discrepancy between the focus on the environment as both a local and a global concern being raised in this respect from representatives of the tourist industry, and that is the fact that tourists, both at their destinations and on their way to them, could be described as heavy polluters. In Lofoten, however, the argument is not a part of the debate, not even amongst the most rigorous environmentalist groups – who sees global climate change as a major, if not *the* most serious, concern in their fight for a viable future. Both the local resistance movement, the political parties against petroleum in the area as well as the environmentalist movement all support the idea of growth in the tourism sector, seemingly without concern for the size of the environmental prize tag that must be put on it, due to the increase in air, land and sea travel it will surely bring about.

up with the people who didn't cause it were the ones on the beach trying to stop it”¹⁵⁵.

The examples in this last section was meant to illustrate how changes in the communities in the Lofoten in many ways are handled differently in the eastern and western parts, a difference which in turn puts its mark on the way the petroleum debate is played out. Again, it does *not* delineate a clear demarcation between east and west in terms of who is for or against petroleum development, but rather that there are specific traits in lines of argument that can be ascribed to an east-west axis in Lofoten. And has been indicated, the notion of *trust* becomes an important variable in understanding to what extent a reliance on an alternative ontology permeates for the sake of constructing the basis for securing population.

From the deck of *MS Svana* or the *MS Veines* - the fishing boats I was invited onto during my fieldwork - the matter of Norway being a stable energy provider for Europe (and thus an energy security provider), the continuation of petroleum activity as basis for societal security (i.e. the Norwegian state being able to uphold the welfare state) or the question of sustainable development being linked to petroleum all seemed to be of secondary importance to the rights and possibilities of fishers and their families to earn a living in the manner that custom, tradition and cultural values outline for them. The coastal fisheries of Lofoten – now most influential in the west - are loaded with tradition. For thousands of years, people in these islands have lived on and with the sea. Even with the crudest of fishing gear, food was in abundance, for those who dared challenge the sea. And many did dare, as the fisheries have been the basis for settlement and flourishing trades, connecting these outskirts areas of Europe to the continent. But the sea has also represented considerable risks, both for those directly involved in fisheries as well as for those depending on fishers coming home from the fishing grounds. Casualties have been plentiful, and the nature of things such that no catch is a guaranteed success; for years, the *skrei* would suddenly be absent, leaving those dependent on its annual visit in poverty and despair. Today, the threats to survival are less profound, as total annihilation of family and community is

¹⁵⁵ Kevin Costner, Investor, Blue Planet Solutions, at the ONS Petroleum Fair, Stavanger 2010. Quoted from web-TV broadcast at: <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article3783462.ece> , accessed 26/8-2010.

difficult to imagine in Norway. The fishers live their lives within the controlling and securing parameters of the welfare state, which ensures a minimum of security in terms of livelihood and fulfilling of basic needs.¹⁵⁶ As with all things mythical, the scenery of yesteryears portrayed in personal stories and narratives *as constitutive tales about who I am (or we are)* are often romanticized and thus representative *as symbolic constructions*, not as more or less objectifiable testimonies of the past. As with most traditional fisheries, the tales of the hardships of the past remains a dubious source for recruitment; therefore, stories told are adaptable to the present situation upon which it is meant to be a reflection (just as much as of the past). ‘The good life’ portrayed, the freedom and pride of being one’s own master, is a portrait in need of modification as fishers of past generations more often than not fought their battles not only against the sea and weather, but also against creditors and petty kings.

In fact, my research shows that in developmental concerns, environmental protective measures as well as national and global concerns influence the debate over petroleum development in LoVeSe and therefore in what way people experience it as a security matter. My intention in bringing forth these stories and scenes from my fieldwork is to show how the concerns of industrialists, businessmen, fishers and tourism entrepreneurs derive from a particular notion of *belonging*, from a need to *feel secure*. In other words, they all are involved in the complex interactions that create the basis for ontological security within their communities. They all reflected on the matter of who ‘we’ are, and would include in their reflections about the potential futures of Lofoten – that is, with or without oil – broader discussions about how measures taken in order to secure the future might have consequences that reaches far beyond the question of what sort of jobs one might have there, or to what extent one will be able to conserve vulnerable ecosystems or ‘the purity of nature’ in Lofoten.

Through debating petroleum in Lofoten, people locally have been provided with an opportunity to reflect upon their identity, both as *Lofotinga*, *Nordlændinga* and *Norwegians*. Certain assumptions about the relationship between the national (southern) center and the (northern) periphery are re-established by some, opposed by others. For instance, informants have referred to what they experienced as being

¹⁵⁶ See chapter 2 for a discussion of the state as provider also of ontological security.

forced into a world view in which the needs, ambitions and aspirations of the mainstream center is implicitly understood as ‘the right thing’, while the periphery way of understanding – connected to a certain way of life – is only seen as possible as long as it does not conflict mainstream understanding of development, progress (which is the basis for a more sociological understanding of obtaining security for population, in a neo-liberalist world) and rational way of life.

Another factor that heavily influenced the positions of many informants, was in what way they found that they could *trust* the governmental technologies through which government seek to secure population (Foucault 2007). In Lofoten, *trust in expert systems* (Beck 1992) has for a long time been under some strain, as the ‘rule of experts’ within the fisheries has been the basis upon which government sought to solve the fishery crisis of the late 1980’s and early 1990 through massive cuts in quotas and the subsequent establishment of a regulation scheme which in effect forced thousands of fishers out of the trade (Jentoft 1993; Jentoft and Chuenpagdee 2009). This scepticism to expert opinions from the fishers, combined with a similar scepticism within the environmentalist movement to the techno-scientific risk assessment and risk management schemes of the petroleum industry was an important basis for much of the opposition against petroleum in Lofoten. I have found that the case in question makes for surprising collaborations; in Norway, fishers and environmentalists have often been on opposite sides of disputes about pollution and the preservation of flora and fauna at sea. Now, when arguing against petroleum, we saw how environmentalist argumentation and concerns for the future of the fisheries walked combined made for the establishment of an *ad hoc* – companionship in which one questioned the very rationale upon which the petroleum industry sought access to the sea areas outside Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja. On the other hand, advocates for petroleum argued for securing communities through inviting new industrial sectors who could invigorate a stalled business sector heavily dependent on a diminishing fishery sector. For this to happen, while simultaneously maintaining the surrounding environment and other business sectors, trusting the experts was of paramount importance. As was told to me by an informant, referring to the lack of sufficiently

effective oil spill lenses: “If it hasn’t been fixed by now, they will get around to it when they need to.”¹⁵⁷

So there’s the matter of *trusting the experts*. But also when discussing *what sort of contingent future* we are to secure, opinions differ. Some argue that if the only medication for depopulation is to bring petroleum in, industrialize and centralize at the expense of community-based fisheries and a mechanics and shipyard industry unable to compete with the rising salary levels, the result will be a fundamental *change of who ‘we’ are* which in many evokes insecurities about the future. In other words, it’s a matter of values, of *what is worth the effort of securing*.

6 Summary and conclusion

In this final chapter, I will summarize the analysis, the operationalization challenges I have encountered and how the results of this work points to research possibilities concerning the way we seek to understand local perceptions of threats, risks and security matters. It has been of particular concern to operationalize concepts for analysis of *this particular context*, and not *per se* engage in a debate concerning (a perceived) universalist conception of concepts like security, threats, risks and identity (to mention but a few). However, as I believe that the interaction between empirical research and theoretical discussions is what is needed for new, relevant social science research to emerge, it has been my intention to empirically test the concepts often used in theoretical discussion, to ‘ground’ them empirically, and to seek to show how they enable research to look beyond established notions of *what a particular concept (should) mean*. Paraphrasing Douglas and Wildavsky (1982), I would support the notion that *we all evaluate threats, risks and security* in all actions, and that an understanding of *the social construction of meaning* (that is, *ontologies*) is what enables us as social scientists to analyze how these concepts are understood by individuals and communities. Therefore, theoretical concepts concerning the relationship between government, power and knowledge (such a *governmentality, biopolitics, population and management of the contingent future*) has here been combined with risk theory/ risk assessment theory *and* theories about identity

¹⁵⁷ Informant 33, April 2009.

construction and ontological security, aiming at an empirical investigation of how a broadened and deepened security concept enables a focus on multiple actors and security perspectives (see chapter 1). In other words, I will here show how my research interests outlined in the introduction have been sought answered in this thesis. In particular, this means that I will be referring to the way I used debates on risk theory, identity and cultural theory and governmentality studies in particular to meet the challenge of operationalizing relevant theoretical concepts which helped me answer this question: How can a broadened and deepened security concept enable an analysis of multiple security actors and perspectives in the debate over petroleum in Lofoten?

An important point from the theory chapter is worth repeating here (see p. 37-38). In referring to and explaining concepts and debates concerned with security, identity construction, risk assessment and policy, resource management and so on, I have not meant to indicate that *all* concepts presented were to be used analytically. Rather, the aim was to show how these theoretical debates - and the discussion of whether or not the concepts can be operationalized for the purpose of analysis of my material - has influenced my take on *a deepened and broadened security concept* and a *multiple actor perspective*. In particular, I have found that much of the writings by Michel Foucault presented in the theory chapter were inspirational but also difficult to operationalize for use in analysis of concrete empirical material. The reason for this is I believe that the concepts used in his analysis are predominantly aimed at a level of abstraction that makes them less accessible to operationalization when seeking to analyze everyday lives of individuals in small communities. His is first and foremost an analysis of state practices and power, and of *the mentality behind a specific way of governing* which has been paramount for the development of the post-Westhalian nations state and their relation to their populations (Foucault 2007), and not an analysis of *how individuals make this relevant for construction of a meaningful existence*, including notions of what secures them. Therefore, as background for the analysis of a particular political *rationale*, Foucaults writings on governmentality and biopolitics have been important for the way I have presented the Norwegian resource management scheme and the way the Norwegian state seeks to secure population. What I have added, influenced by post-Foucauldian *governmentality*-scholars like Mitchell Dean (2010), Jim Marlow (2002) and Thomas Lemke (2002) among others,

is a perspective that seeks to analyze how these attempts at securing population *is understood locally*, when analyzing a particular political issue. The analysis of *a system of power/knowledge and governmental practices* was thus here followed by an analysis of *responses to those processes*, an analysis influenced by cultural theory and ethnography, theories on identity construction, and the debate on the content, relevance and analytical vigor of the human security concept, to name but a few. In this way, the Foucauldian perspective has had an impact on the broadened and deepened security concept developed here.

With these influences in mind, then, I have aimed at meeting the theoretical calls for a broadened and deepened approach to empirical studies on security matters. The methodological rationale has been to combine Foucault's notion of governmentality (which implies asking those critical questions concerning *who secures what, how do they do it and why*, presented in chapter 3) with an ethnographic approach to knowledge acquisition (chapter 2), seeking to show how a focus on multiple security actors and a broadened and deepened security concept has enabled me to describe how people in Lofoten reflected upon what makes them secure when discussing possible petroleum production and its possible ramifications. With reference to writers like Kyle Grayson (2008), Michael Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero (2008), Gunhild Hoogensen and Kristi Stuvøy (Hoogensen and Stuvoy 2006; Stuvøy 2009) and others, I have shown that there *is* a space for studies of those 'other' fields of security (beyond and 'below' the state) which neither traditional security studies nor securitization theory (through its lack of concern for the security ramifications of inclusion/exclusion processes defined by power relations) has provided. I therefore believe that a *broadened and deepened security perspective* as it has been used here can contribute to the theoretical security debate in general, as well as provide a novel, fresh and reviling approach to the LoVeSe case which will bring new insight into the complexities of security issues in everyday lives in communities influenced by petroleum development. A *broadening* of the security concept was here meant to indicate a focus on *what might be seen as a security issue* that transcends the imagery of a pre-determined, 'traditionalist', more state-centred notion of the concept (McSweeney 1999; Bigo 2008; Dillon 2008; Burgess 2010). A *deepened focus* is in many ways a consequence of the broadened focus, as a wider range of potential issues necessarily means asking *other questions* to *other people*, a focus resembling that

stemming from the ethnographic tradition. Therefore, a *deepening* of the security concept has also required a methodological focus on the way in which I conducted this research, to whom I asked questions and within which ontological frames I chose to position the debate, *and made these concerns explicit*. This focus has also been inspired by Hoogensen et al's *multiple actor model* (Hoogensen, Bazely et al. 2009; Hoogensen, Dale et al. 2009; Hoogensen Gjørsv Forthcoming), in which more actors than those usually seen as relevant security actors are included.

In this thesis, the debate over whether or not to allow petroleum development in the coastal areas outside of Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja (LoVeSe) has been scrutinized. The aim has been to understand how this particular debate spurred local reflections on threats, risks and security, and how these concerns were tied to matters of identity, power and knowledge. Through a governmentality approach, I have sought to understand the rationale behind the management practices of the Norwegian political regime, and analyze how it was understood and interpreted by protagonists in field. In addition, fieldwork enabled me to establish a description of how local understandings of the petroleum debate was influenced by constructed identity, based on locally embedded and inherited knowledge, and how it influenced notions of ontological security.

I believe that a broadened and deepened security concept like the one I have described enables a multiple actors perspective, which in turn strengthens the overall understanding of the local debate on petroleum in Lofoten. However, this broadening and deepening of security required that I made my theoretical sources of inspiration explicit. Therefore, I have here referred to three main theoretical influences: The human security debate, theories on risk and risk society, and the Foucauldian approach to security as it has been described through the presentation of the concepts biopolitics and governmentality. Central to the analysis has been the way a particular way of governing (called governmentality) manages *population*, and how this both enables and unables individuals and communities when it comes to securing a meaningful, but nevertheless contingent future. It has been the intention to show how political decisions aiming at securing population can create both *security* and *insecurity*, and that the security 'effect' of politics can not be understood without empirical investigations of its perceived consequences. The ambition has therefore been to perform this analysis 'from the outskirts', from Lofoten, and basing it on data

from fieldwork performed locally as well as on a theoretical stance which underlines the importance of a critical approach to pre-determined notions of what should and should not be (a) security issue(s) and to which actors can be acknowledged as relevant security actors.

With the human security debate, and in particular the concerns being raised about its analytical vigor, the division between those who favored a narrower, threshold-based definition and those in favor of a more constructivist, situational and flexible analytical stance concerning human security has for me been instructive in the way I have sought to position my take on the concept. As was shown in chapter 3, I have found it appropriate to point out that a threshold definition (which would in essence mean that there would have to exist pre-determined notions of how severe a security matter should be for it to be labelled a security issue) fails to include into its analytical realm the power inherent in the decisions leading to an acceptance of these preconditions.

In other words, the power to decide what is and what is not a security issue is not scrutinized with the understanding of a threshold based definition of human security. Likewise, the focus of the Copenhagen school on securitizing acts has brought to our attention the performative, constructivist aspects of security, but failed to include the inherent power of those performing these acts into the realm of security analysis. In addition, the proclaimed intentions of the Copenhagen school was never to break the monopoly of state-centrism; likewise, an open adherence to a notion of pre-determined definition of what should be regarded as 'real' security issues in fact leaves the concept useless, if one seeks to operationalize it for use in local communities and on individual conceptions of security.

With these concerns in mind, I would make the claim that a governmentality approach has enabled me to analyse the way in which power is embedded in management structures and technologies of security, aimed at population. Also, a focus on the rationale upon which governing is based requires a critical examination of taken-for-granted preconditions of power, - an approach in which alternative understandings of *how* population is secure(d), *and by whom* is central. In traditional notions of security, the population is secured first and foremost by the narrowly defined, state-centered actors evoking the responsibilities of the state towards its (passive) citizens. With

governmentality then, a focus is set on not only analyzing the *rationale* behind the conduct through which a specific governmentality is practiced (from the state), but also on what other possible definitions and understandings of a political case such as the matter of allowing for petroleum development in the LoVeSe area might exist. In other words, with this approach, we are again encouraged to investigate *broader* and *deeper*.

When this is written, in November 2011, the question concerning petroleum development on the LoVeSe are has cooled off considerably in the public debate. The reason for this, is that the decision was made by the Stoltenberg Cabinet to continue to define the sea areas outside of Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja as ‘particularly vulnerable’ in the renewed ‘Integrated Management Plan for the Barents and Lofoten Seas’ (the IMP-BL), which was ratified by the Norwegian Parliament in the spring session of 2011. Contrary to the expectations of many political commentators, the issue was not given high priority during the local election campaigns of September this year, an election carried out under the shadows of the atrocities committed against the Norwegian people with the Oslo bombing and the Utøya massacre on July 22nd. In Lofoten, common concerns across the political spectrum – about health care, road repairs, education politics and taxation – overshadowed the question of petroleum to the extent that it seemed to confirm that the matter first and foremost was to be dealt with on the national level. A battle had been fought concerning the finalizing of the management plan, and both sides, both proponents and opponents to petroleum development, claimed to having succeeded in having their voice heard, and claimed the new management plan to be a victory for their position. The decision not to initiate petroleum activities in the LoVeSe area under the prevailing parliamentary period was of course seen as a necessary victory by the opponents of petroleum development. The proponents, on the other hand, argued that the test-drilling blockade that was to last to 2013 - when it would be re-evaluated by a new constitutionalized parliament, after the elections - in fact did not slow the desired pace down, as the analysis of data from the seismic shooting had to be performed anyway – a task which is so time-consuming that a postponement (which was what the proponents called the management plan decision) was unproblematic. As an effect, the Stoltenberg cabinet, and in particular the Prime Minister himself, was hailed by political analysts for the ability to maneuver in a way that left both sides – they are

both represented in the Stoltenberg Cabinet – content with the result. The sentiment therefore, as I write the final words of this thesis, is that we are at a temporary standstill – in the eye of the storm, so to speak – as developments inevitably will bring the issue back on the political agenda.

On Wednesdays, a few friends (a ‘men only’ socializing event) gather at the local pub in Kabelvåg, a rebuilt old jetty warehouse close by the village main square. Many of these men are active in local politics, and political issues are amongst the topics vividly discussed. It took a few weeks after the election, however, before I asked the question that had been nagging me ever since the campaign period had ended: What happened to the local engagement concerning petroleum in the election? Clear answers to my question were hard to come by around the table, as several of those present seemed to have been reminded of a political issue which they had at least temporarily forgotten. One person present then simply stated that the case itself had little actual relevance for this next election period anyway, as a final decision seemed to be some time away. Others argued that in fact, regardless of which parties was represented in local municipal and county councils and who became mayors in the Lofoten municipalities, they would still expect that the arguments from their local political representatives would argue for the inclusion of local concerns and opinions in the national debate. Others again said that a battle had been fought – and believed won by both sides, really – but that it was not anything more than a delay, as the definitive battle politically was expected to be fought in connection with the 2013 parliamentary elections.

On the basis of these reflections, it is of course pertinent to point at the possibility for future research concerning to what extent and in what way the local concerns on threats, risks and security matters here presented will be present in the debate to come concerning petroleum development in these waters. Similarly, and in parallel, the concerns about petroleum has, as I have shown, spurred other debates about what kind of communities are developed in the Lofoten region, as the traditional fisheries as well as the upcoming, commercialized tourism sector undergoes changes which has implications for the potential upon which development can be built. As we have seen, some saw the matter of petroleum development in these waters as being of minor importance for the development of the region, as the possibilities which petroleum ‘going north’ represents does not depend on an opening of these vulnerable areas *per*

se. Instead, local entrepreneurs like Svein Harald Løken (who we met in chapter 5.5) would focus on the possibilities that petroleum development in the north *as such* represented, and not on a perceived need for *these areas in particular* to be opened. Others, like LoVe Petros Ørjan Robertsen, expressed a different approach to the matter. As seen in chapter 4.3, his concerns about future development possibilities led him to see local ripple effects from petroleum production in the LoVeSe area as the best option for local industry and businesses in facing the inevitable downscaling of the fisheries. New jobs are needed, and petroleum can provide it, he concluded, presupposing that political processes were successful in demanding that local ripple effects would be an absolute demand, if petroleum development is to be permitted in the future.

At the same time, the fears of many opponents that people locally are stuck with most of the risk connected to petroleum while other actors elsewhere will capitalize on them are not shared by those whose trust in scientific assessments of the risks involved means that they see potential petroleum development as ‘secure enough’ for the Norwegian society at large, and that the risk therefore is worth taking. The benefits are vast, they would argue, and the risks minimal. For fishers and for developers of the brand *Lofoten* though (first and foremost the tourism sector, but also a small, but growing fish food industry), the damaging effect petroleum development is believed to have on their product is not connected to the questions of whether or not future petroleum development is ‘safe’ or not. They argued that for a brand based on notions of unspoiled, pristine nature, the very thought of petroleum production in their midst is threatening enough in itself, and could potentially destroy the possibility of future success in a highly competitive international market. The concerns about *who secures who from what* is still politically contested in the petroleum issue, and a fair prediction would be that it will still be questioned as the matter regains political significance as we approach the next parliamentary elections in 2013. It is also pertinent to assume that local concerns will prevail, as nationally initiated knowledge processes, if not fundamentally altered in structure and aim this next time around, will continue to be met with skepticism and discontent, as they will still fail to meet some of the core concerns about threats, risks and security being raised locally.

I have in this thesis presented some of these local concerns about petroleum that I encountered during my fieldwork in Lofoten. In meeting people all over the region, I

have discussed what threats, risks and possibilities petroleum might represent, and through these discussions shown how discussions concerning identity and what kind of future prospects people see for the region have influenced the way different actors and actions positioned themselves in the debate. With a focus on a broadened and deepened approach to security matters, the (in)security dilemma of all social acts – also those aiming concretely at *securing population* – has been made apparent. Indeed, no matter how hard we try to manage the future, it is intrinsically contingent and thus, inevitably risky.

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